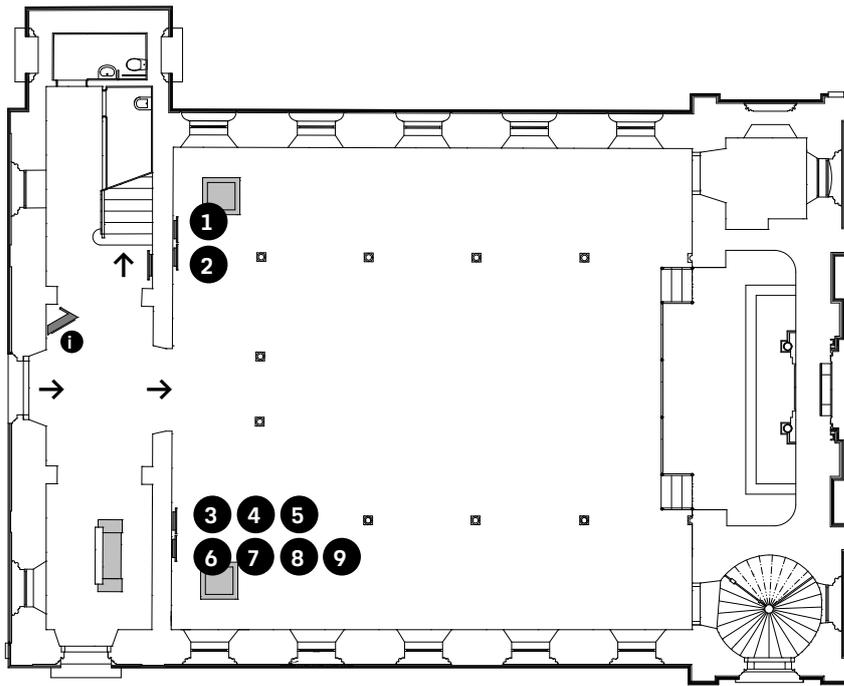


Krnov Synagogue – Ground floor



Regional exhibition

1 | The History of the Jewish Community in Krnov

The first mention of Jews living in Krnov comes from the first decades of the town's existence, which was founded around the mid-13th century. In 1523, six Jewish families lived here (a total of 40-50 individuals). About twelve years later, however, they were expelled from the whole of the Duchy of Krnov on the false accusation of wanting to butcher Christians. For more than 300 hundred years thereafter, until the mid-19th century, Jews could not own property within the territory of Krnov. By the end of the 18th century, however, they were allowed to acquire temporary residency as renters of property. After a fire in 1802 destroyed the Jewish ghetto in Osoblaha, many of its inhabitants moved to Krnov and the surrounding area, and despite the opposition of the townspeople, they settled here for good. The modern Jewish settlement in Krnov began in the latter half of the 19th century. A religious association was established in 1853, and held services in a rented hall. In 1877, the now populous religious association was converted into an independent Jewish community – *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Jägerndorf* – with 450 members. In 1870–71 the Krnov synagogue was built and in 1873 a new Jewish cemetery with ceremonial hall was opened. The head of the Jewish community was an elected elder (president) and comprised two councilors (advisors) and seven members of an administrative board. The membership of the community was composed of merchants, teachers, lawyers, and doctors. During its entire existence, the Jewish Community of Krnov had only two rabbis: Anselm Anshlowitz from 1872 to 1907 and Dr. David Rudolfer from 1907 to 1938. Over the community's existence, and including the outlying areas of Bruntál, Frývaldov (today's Jeseník), and later Osoblaha, the membership was always around 500, but in the early 1930s this started to decline. Most members of the Jewish Community of Krnov ultimately became victims of Hitler's Final Solution, except for a few families who managed to

emigrate in 1938 and 1939. The Jewish Community of Krnov was revived after the Second World War with a membership largely from the eastern areas of Czechoslovakia. Yet emigration over the subsequent years decimated its numbers, and the communist regime ultimately forced the community to end its existence.

Labels:

- The stamp of the religious association in Krnov from 1853–1876
- From left: Karl Fried – vice-chairman of the Jewish Religious Community of Krnov; Dr. David Rudolfer – Krnov's last rabbi; Hermann Behr – Krnov's head cantor
- The Krnov Synagogue as shown on an early-20th-century postcard
- The Krnov Jewish Youth association – from left: the son of Krnov rabbi Max Rudolfer, Adolf Rossner, Erina Ambros, Kurt Behr, 1918
- An invitation from the Krnov Jewish Community to a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the Krnov synagogue, 1922

2 | Prominent Individuals from the Krnov Jewish Community

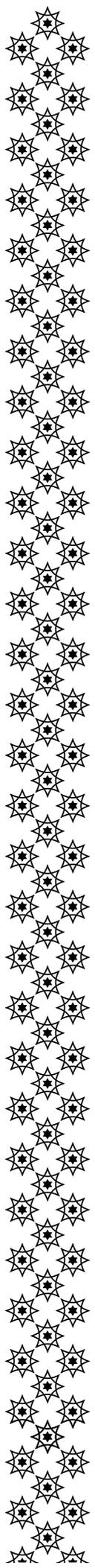
Rabbis

Samuel Hahn (Mikulov, Dec. 18, 1836–Vienna, Nov. 2, 1917)

At the age of twenty-four, he took a position as rabbi and religious instructor for the Krnov Prayer Association. He served as rabbi here from 1860 to 1863. He then moved to Dambořice near Brno where he served as rabbi for another fifty-three years until 1916.

Anselm Anshlowitz (Kyjov, 1837–Krnov, March 16, 1911)

The first rabbi of the modern Jewish Religious Community of Krnov. He is buried in the Krnov Jewish Cemetery, but the headstone has not survived. Extant photographs show that the inscription on the headstone read: "Rabbi Anselm Anshlowitz, died 16. 3. 1911 in his 75th year of life. His grateful students dedicate this headstone to their unforgettable teacher and friend."



Dr. David Rudolfer (Oradea Mare, Romania, June 16, 1871–Terezín, Sept. 14, 1942)

Rudolfer became rabbi in Krnov in September 1907, after Anselm Anshlowitz retired. It seems that in autumn 1938 Rudolfer moved from Krnov to Brno. Rudolfer was deported from here on March 23, 1942, to the Terezín Ghetto, where he died on September 14 of that year.

Teachers

Dr. Siegmund Langschur (Poběžovice, 1884–Baranovich, Belarus, 1942)

From 1909 to 1938, Langschur taught German and French at the Higher Real-Gymnasium in Krnov.

Hermann Behr (Jelgava, Latvia, 1882–Helsingborg, Sweden, 1958)

Hermann Behr was the last prewar cantor for the Krnov Jewish Community. Behr was a proponent of using the organ and mixed choir for Jewish religious services. On numerous occasions he composed music for services held for Jewish holidays. During the war, the Behrs left Krnov for Malmö, Sweden. Hermann Behr served as cantor in a synagogue in Helsingborg, Sweden, until his death in 1958.

Physicians

Dr. Heinrich Husserl (1839–Krnov, May 19, 1921)

Heinrich Husserl served as Head District Physician in the district seat of Krnov.

3 | The Jewish Community in Opava

The first Jews settled in Opava during the 13th century. In the period after this, a relatively populous Jewish community developed here with its own synagogue and cemetery. They remained in the city until the early 16th century, when they were expelled. It was only after 1848 that three Jewish families obtained the official right of permanent residence in Opava, but in reality there were many more Jews living in the city, and the Jewish community had its own shochet (butcher), religious instructor, and public prayer room. In subsequent years, Jews moved to Opava from Osoblaha and from the overcrowded ghettos of Moravia. In 1863, a religious community was established in Opava; it was the most populous Jewish community in the part of Silesia surrounding Opava. Around 1,000 Jews lived here consistently between 1880 and 1938. Many prominent Jews came from Opava, such as the painter Leo Haas, the dramaturge Pavel Eckstein, the director of popular educational films Kurt Goldberger, and violin virtuoso Paul Kling. The Jewish Community of Opava was abolished with the Nazi occupation in 1938.

4 | The Jewish Community in Bruntál

At first, Bruntál's Jews were formally part of the Jewish Community of Osoblaha, but in 1886 they were shifted to the jurisdiction of the Jewish Religious Community of Krnov. At the turn of the 19th century, Bruntál did have a functioning prayer society with around 100–150 members. Prayer services were held in the local prayer room until the Nazi occupation of the Czechoslovak border regions in autumn 1938.

5 | The Jewish Community in Osoblaha

Jewish settlement here is documented in the early 14th century. In the Middle Ages, it formed part of the so-called Moravian enclaves in Silesia, which were governed by Moravian laws, so the existence of the local Jewish community was enabled by the economic interests and tolerant stance of the Diocese of Olomouc. From the 16th to the 19th centuries, a period when Jews were prohibited from living in Silesia, Osoblaha became an important Jewish center. Osoblaha's Jews prospered by facilitating trade between Moravia and Silesia. A number of learned rabbis served the community, such as Gerson ben Abraham Chayes from 1750, later the Chief Rabbi of Moravia in Mikulov. The Jewish Religious Community of Osoblaha reached a height of 880 permanent residents in 1847 (approximately 20% of the town's population). By the early 20th century only around 100 Jews lived in the area encompassed by the Jewish Religious Community of Osoblaha. In 1928, the Jewish Community of Osoblaha was dissolved and its membership incorporated into the Jewish communities in Krnov and Frývaldov. The Jewish quarter was destroyed along with the town during fighting in 1945. What have survived to this day in Osoblaha are the Old Jewish Cemetery from the second half of the 14th century and the New Jewish Cemetery established in 1894.

Labels:

- The Osoblaha Synagogue

6 | The Holocaust

The signing of the Munich Agreement and the occupation of Czechoslovakia's borderlands in October 1938 brought a definitive end to the activities of the local Jewish populations. The October occupation was catastrophic for the local Jews as there was nothing to prevent persecution by the German occupiers. The occupation brought a prohibition on all activities by Jewish religious communities and prayer societies. Before long, the systematic and calculated Nazi terror achieved the desired results in the Sudetenland. Only very few regions of comparable size in the Third Reich were as "cleansed of Jews" by the start of 1939 as the Reichsgau Sudetenland. Thus in the following years, local Nazis had a relatively easy situation as regards "solving the Jewish question."

Labels:

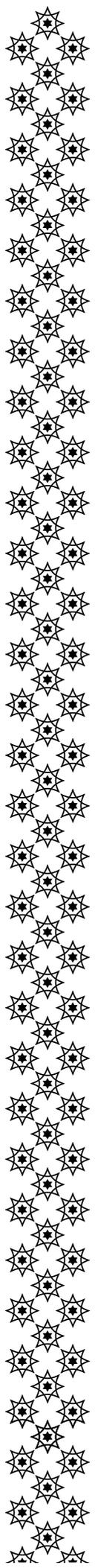
- The Opava Synagogue on fire during the November 1938 Kristallnacht

7 | Kristallnacht

A Germany-wide pogrom against Jews took place on the night of November 9–10, 1938, known as *Kristallnacht*, the "Night of Broken Glass." The events of that night and the following days marked a turning point in the life of Jewish inhabitants in the occupied borderlands of Czechoslovakia. Here, just as within the Reich, a number of synagogues were burned down, and Jewish shops, buildings, and residences were destroyed. On the morning of November 10 in Opava, the synagogue was burned to the ground, to the great interest of the local population. Only a miracle saved the synagogue in Krnov, where only the ceremonial hall at the Jewish

Labels:

- Passersby could not help but notice the fire in the Opava Synagogue.



8 | The Laws of the Third Reich

The Nuremberg Laws on race entered into effect in the Sudetenland on December 27, 1938; combined with other measures, they affected all aspects of the lives of Jews, who were now relegated to "secondary status." They were eventually prohibited from pursuing most professions and from entering restaurants, parks, bathhouses, or swimming pools. The bans also extended to the cultural realm: Jews could not go to the cinema, concerts, the theater, and other public establishments. From mid-November 1939, they were required to adopt the middle name of "Israel" for men and "Sara" for women. The requirement that Jews wear a yellow Star of David sewn to their garments entered into force on September 1, 1941.

Labels:

- The title page of an anti-Semitic handbook on Silesian Jews, Krnov, 1939

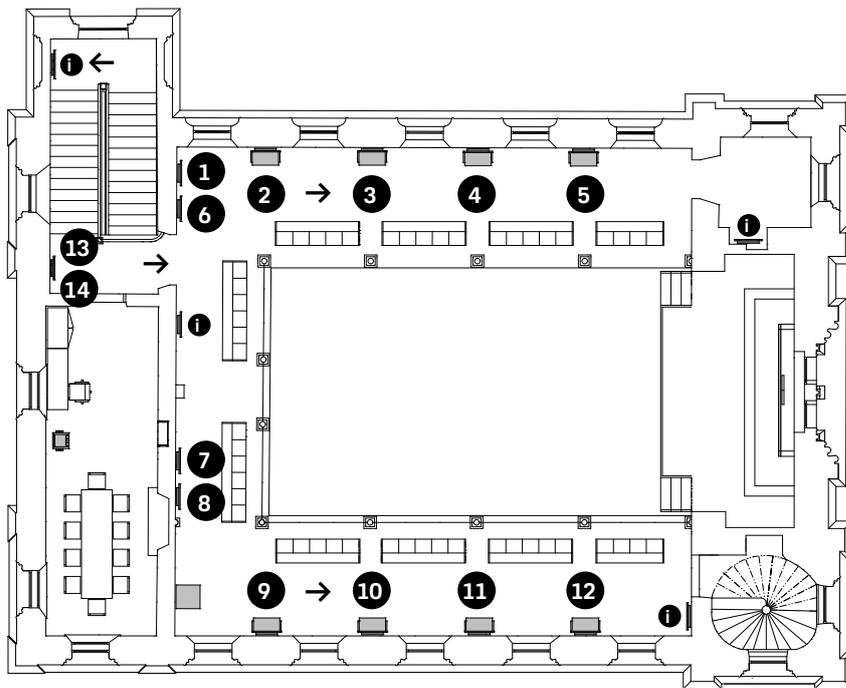
9 | Deportation of Jews from the Opava Administrative District

The deportation of Jews began in the Sudetenland during 1942. As with Jews from the Protectorate, the Terezín Ghetto became the final or transfer station for Jews from the Sudetengau. Between 1942 and 1944 the Nazi authorities dispatched a total of seven transports from the Opava Administrative District to Terezín. The assembly point here was the Opava stockade, and the Opava-východ train station was the departure point. Only 22 individuals who were deported to Terezín survived until liberation, while everyone transported to the east perished.

Labels:

- Signboard with anti-Semitic contents at Opava institute of higher education, 1942

Krnov Synagogue – First floor



Jewish Industrialists, Entrepreneurs, and Inventors

1 | The Coal Industry

As the iron and steel industry and other industrial sectors expanded once the Industrial Revolution hit the Czech lands, so too did the demand for coal. The 19th century saw the rapid expansion of mining. The most important source of black coal was the Ostrava-Karviná coalfield, with brown coal being mined primarily in the North Bohemia coal basin.

The Gutmann Brothers

After completing school, Wilhelm Gutmann was supposed to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather and, as the oldest male child, become a rabbi. However, he left rabbinical studies and began devoting himself to entrepreneurship. Gutmann's big break came in 1856 when he managed to contract for partial, and then later exclusive, distribution of all the commercial coal from the mines in the Ostrava District, and also acquired a major share of mines in Upper (Prussian) Silesia. He took on his younger brother David as a partner and founded the Gebrüder Gutmann Company in Vienna. Soon, the Gebrüder Gutmann Company was distributing quality coal to homes throughout the monarchy. The brothers gradually gained control of nearly half of coal mining and coke production operations in the Ostrava-Karviná coal basin. But business was not their only interest. They were also active in the cultural, social, and religious life of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. They financially supported many social, religious, and philanthropic institutions, donating tens of thousands of Gulden. For this service, the Emperor knighted them.

Labels:

- Wilhelm Gutmann (Lipník nad Bečvou, August 18, 1826 – Vienna, May 17, 1895)
- David Gutmann (Lipník nad Bečvou, December 2, 1834 – Baden, Austria, May 14, 1912)

Eduard Jakob Weinmann (September 25, 1852 – October 6, 1928)

In 1874, the Prague Bank Company sent Weinmann to Ústí nad Labem to conduct wholesale coal operations. When the bank folded in 1876, Eduard Weinmann purchased its offices and set up his own firm. Thanks to his unflagging industriousness and talent for business the company soon became a giant concern controlling the brown coal market in Central Europe. Weinmann's business ventures brought him great wealth, and he became a generous benefactor for a variety of charitable and philanthropic organizations in Ústí nad Labem.

Ignaz Petschek (Kolín, June 14, 1857 – Ústí nad Labem, Feb. 15, 1934)

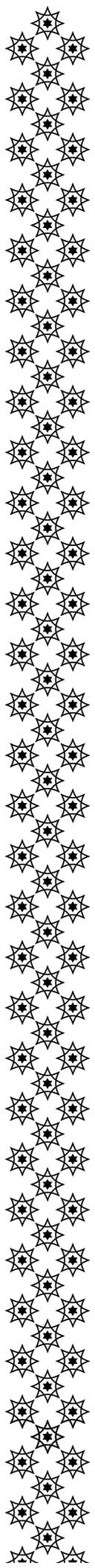
Petschek was born in Kolín into the family of the Jewish businessman Moses Petschek. He began as a trainee at Prague Bank. In 1880 he established his own commercial brown coal company. His business focused primarily on the sale of coal, and by introducing new practices he was able to gain an edge on the competition, including Weinmann. By the end of the 19th century, Petschek's company was in control of half of the North Bohemian brown coal industry. Later he joined his brothers to form a syndicate that controlled half of the brown coal industry in Europe. Like Jakob Weinmann, Petschek was a leading philanthropist in Ústí nad Labem, and the two rivals liked to try to outdo one another in this area.

2 | The Electrotechnical Industry

Starting in the mid-19th century, electrical engineering became a part of daily life. It was very important for the Czech lands as well. One giant of Czech electrical engineering was the Jewish entrepreneur Emil Kolben, an outstanding theorist and expert in strong-current electrical engineering.

Emil Kolben (Strančice, Nov. 1, 1862 – Terezín, July 3, 1943)

After attending the German Technical University in Prague, Kolben took a study trip around Europe and the United



States. In 1888, he began working closely with Thomas Edison. After returning to Prague in 1896, he founded his own electrotechnical company, Kolben & Co., in the city's Vysočany district; in the late 1920s the company was transformed into the well-known Českomoravská Kolben-Daněk (ČKD), of which Kolben was general director. Emil Kolben received many honors during his life for his electrotechnical contributions. Refusing to emigrate in the face of the Nazi threat, he was deported along with his family to Terezín at age 81, where he died on June 3, 1943.

Labels:

- Emil Kolben (in front with wristwatch) among engineers at Edison's firm, Schenectady, 1889
- Emil Kolben's electromobile

Hanuš Kolben (Zurich, Dec. 20, 1895 – Auschwitz, July 10, 1944)

At the behest of his father, Hanuš Kolben attended the Technical University in Prague. During the First World War he worked as a constructor of electrical machines in his father's business. Between the wars he led several ironworks in and near Prague. In his free time he was a dedicated painter of landscapes and still-lives in the Fauvist and Expressionist styles. In June 1943 he was deported to Terezín along with his father Emil, his son Jindřich, and the rest of his family. A year later he was killed in the Auschwitz gas chambers.

Jindřich Kolben (Prague, October 30, 1926)

The youngest Kolben was also deported to Terezín, but was one of the few family members to survive the war. After demobilization, he began studying at the Czech Technical University in Prague (ČVUT). In 1968 he and his family fled to Munich. In the following years he became a leading expert in the field of aircraft engine design, thereby continuing the family tradition.

3 | Inventors

The moniker "inventor" indicates a person who has discovered or invented a new technology or a technological principle or method. Never before in history were there so many innovations and so many discoveries and inventions as in the period from the early 19th century until the present.

Labels:

- Josef Popper-Lynkeus worked on more than just science and technology. Some of his philosophical works have been translated to Czech, to readers' great interest.

Josef Popper-Lynkeus (Kolín, Feb. 21, 1838–Vienna, Dec. 22, 1921)

In 1867, Popper presented his first invention, used primarily in the sugar industry. He also worked intensively in electrotechnics. In terms of theory, he was probably the first to suggest the possibility of transmitting electric power, a fact that has never been fully acknowledged. Popper had a lifelong interest in aeronautics, systematically devoting himself to the problems of aerodynamics and flight. His universal knowledge and broad range of interests are also reflected in the fact that besides being a mathematician, physicist, structural, electrical, and aeronautics engineer, he also wrote on ethics, religion, Chinese literature, and philosophy. His friends and admirers included Ernst Mach and Albert Einstein.

Ernst Berl (Bruntál, July 7, 1877–Pittsburgh, USA, Feb. 16, 1946)

Berl was born into the large family of Bruntál industrialist Max Berl. Besides working as the head chemist for a synthetic silk factory, from 1919 to 1933, he taught at the Technical University of Darmstadt in Germany. When Hitler came to power in 1933, Berl emigrated and his two sons emigrated to the United States. The Ernst-Berl-Institute for Technical and Macromolecular Chemistry at the Technical University of Darmstadt bears his name.

Rudolf Eibuschitz (Vienna, April 23, 1883–Sobibor, 1942)

The owner of an engineering company in Krnov, Eibuschitz registered numerous his inventions at the Czechoslovak Patent Office between the wars. One of the most remarkable was a machine for delivering lectures with projected images. He and his wife perished at the Sobibor extermination camp.

Vilém Klíma (April 10, 1906–Oct. 6, 1985)

Klíma worked at ČKD before the war, where he implemented a number of his inventions for three-phase commutator motors and welding equipment. He soon became a respected specialist throughout Europe and played a large role in the construction of the engine for the celebrated high-speed train known as the Blue Dart. In 1941, he and his entire family were deported to Terezín, where he was responsible for the operation of the electrical grid. He survived the war.

Itzhak Bentov (1923–Chicago, May 25, 1979)

Bentov moved to Palestine during the Second World War, later becoming a member of the Science Corps of the Israeli Defense Forces, and designing Israel's first rockets during the War of Independence in the late 1940s. In 1954 Bentov emigrated to America, where he pursued his interests as an inventor.

4 | The Glass Industry

Glassmaking has a long tradition in the Czech lands. Because of easier access to the necessary raw materials, it developed largely in the mountainous border regions of Bohemia. Over the past centuries, Bohemian glass has become very popular around the world and is valued on the international market for its high quality and value. Even today, Bohemian crystal is considered the absolute best of its kind.

Ludwig Löwi Moser (Karlovy Vary, June 18, 1833–Sept. 27, 1916)

In 1848, Moser apprenticed with the engraver Andreas Mattoni, who was one of the foremost glasscutters in the region. Moser eventually set up an engraver's shop and glass outlet in Karlovy Vary, and by the age of twenty-four had laid the foundations for what was to become a world-famous glass producer. His high-quality glass products were sent to the royal families throughout Europe, and even Persia. Ludwig Moser was also actively involved in the Jewish Religious Community of Karlovy Vary, established in 1868, where he served as chairman until his death.

Leo Moser (Karlovy Vary, 1879–New York, Nov. 28, 1974)

After his father's death in 1916, Leo Moser became the company's sole owner. He used his knowledge of chemistry to upgrade the manufacturing process to produce unique colored glass. As a result, the glassworks intro-

duced new product types and continued to meet with success at international exhibitions.

The Moser Glassworks

This modern glassworks near Karlovy Vary quickly earned a reputation as the most prestigious producer of crystal in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Later, the company became the largest producer of drinking glasses and glass tableware in the new Czechoslovakia as well. At present, it is a joint stock company once again operating under the "Moser Glass" brand.

Labels:

– Shapes and decorations of glassware from 1895–1909

Karl Amadeus Zdekauer (Prague, Oct. 23, 1849–?)

During his life, Zdekauer expanded the entrepreneurial activities of the already very significant Zdekauer banking family: In 1884, he purchased a porcelain factory in Stará Role near Karlovy Vary, reviving its export potential and beginning to send porcelain products to North and South America, Holland, and the Dutch colonies. During its heyday, the factory employed as many as 1,000 employees. Zdekauer was also a patron of the fine arts and music.

5 | The Leather Boot and Shoemaking Industry

Tanning

The leather boot industry was one of the best organized sectors in the Czech lands, with its main centers in Prague, Hradec Králové, Jaroměř, Třebíč, Brno, and, naturally, Zlín.

Shoemaking

The shoe industry expanded to more than seventy towns in Czechoslovakia after the First World War and was mainly focused on export. In time, Czechoslovakia became the number one exporter in Europe, with the United States becoming its best market. The Baťa factory had the majority share of the Czechoslovak export market, but independent Jewish companies in Prague, Brno, Jihlava, and elsewhere could also pride themselves on their quality shoes.

Glove making

The making of gloves was very popular among Jewish craftsmen. One of the oldest sectors, it was concentrated in Prague and Dobříš. In 1928, there were around 200 manufacturing facilities in Prague alone, and about 2,000 cutters and 2,000 sewers of gloves in Dobříš. The best-known firms were Werfel & Böhm and Walter Altschul & Esspi in Prague, and Richard Fleischmann, Frankl & Hermann, and Rudolf Fahn in Dobříš.

Labels:

– The Popper company's shoe catalog

Třebíč

Izak Hermann Subak (1811–1893)

The Subak family of Třebíč had been involved with tanning since the 18th century. During the 19th century, what had originally been a small manufacturer grew into a prosperous business. Izak was largely responsible for the prosperous growth of the family business.

Chrudim

Bedřich Leopold Popper (Brno, Sept. 18, 1869–Nov. 27, 1941)

Along with Moritz Beck, the owner of a Chrudim boot-and-shoe factory, Popper founded a company specializing in

hand-sewn shoes, focusing primarily on technological innovation. He later freed the business from Beck and chose the brand name B. L. P. for his products. His flagship store was on Národní třída in Prague.

Ostrava

Nathan Lichtenstern (May 30, 1851–Vienna, May 10, 1924)

Lichtenstern established a branch of the family business in Moravian Ostrava, where he bought a building on the main street and opened a wholesale outlet for leather products. In 1912, he also built a factory there for the manufacture of leather straps and belts. In addition, Lichtenstern traded in all types of leather for cobblers and saddlers, keeping a permanent warehouse for rubber products. His company gradually established offices throughout the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

6 | The Metallurgy Industry: Iron Ore Plants, Iron and Steel Production

The switch to factory production and the expansion of the railway network increased the demand for iron and steel products. Alongside the traditional regions for metallurgy, new gigantic ironworks and metallurgical enterprises emerged in Vítkovice, with iron and steel concerns springing up in later years in Kladno and Třinec.

Anselm Salomon Rothschild (January 29, 1803–Vienna,

July 27, 1874)

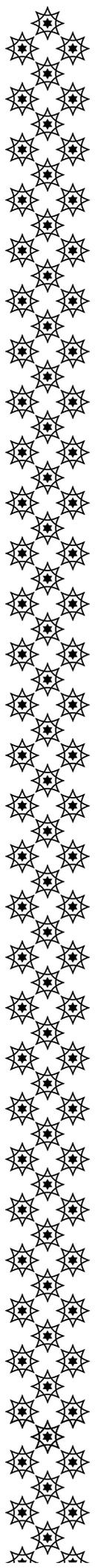
Anselm Salomon was the son of Salomon Mayer Rothschild, founder of the Vienna branch of the Rothschild financial dynasty. During his life, the greatest investments by his Vienna banking house were the purchase and modernization of the Vítkovice Ironworks and the construction of the Emperor Ferdinand Northern Railway, which connected Vienna to the Ostrava District, Krakow, and the Polish salt mines in Bochnia and Wieliczka. He permanently relocated to Vienna in 1855, where he took charge of the family bank and the Ostrava District mines and industrial enterprises after his father's death. His investment in the Vítkovice Ironworks and coalmines fundamentally contributed to the development of the Ostrava industrial zone. Cooperation between the Rothschilds and the Gutmann brothers culminated in 1873 with the creation of the Vítkovice Mining and Metallurgical Plant consortium, in which the Rothschilds retained a majority share.

Labels:

- Contract for the sale of the Rudolf Foundry to S. M. Rothschild from April 8, 1843
- Blast furnace of the Vítkovice Mining and Metallurgical Plant, 1930s
- Cast for a boat shaft, 1930s

The Vítkovice Ironworks

The Vítkovice Ironworks was established in 1828 by order of the enlightened Archbishop of Olomouc, Rudolph Johannes. In 1843, the Vítkovice Ironworks became the property of the Rothschild bank. This time saw the gradual formation of a unique and self-sufficient complex and one of the largest monopolistic consortia in Europe. With its excellent technologies, high volume of production, and low operating costs, by the early 20th century the Vítkovice Ironworks established itself as one of the leading metallurgical plants in Europe – a position it retained after the First World War, when its machine production became vitally important for the overall development of the national economy.



Bohumil Bondy (Prague, Nov. 15, 1832–Prague, March 15, 1907)

After the death of his father, Bondy took over the Lazar G. Bondy & Sons iron business in the village of Bubny, then still outside Prague. At the end of the 1860s, he founded a factory for machine production and iron processing known as “Bondovka”, and later established a factory for wires and steel wool, which was one of the largest in Austria-Hungary. Bondy was the first in the country to begin the production of telegraph and telephone wires, and was renowned as a patron of the arts. His most important cultural contribution is his role in the founding of Prague’s Museum of Decorative Arts in 1886.

7 | The Lumber and Furniture Industries

The Czech lands were one of the largest producers of lumber in Europe. Among the main products of the woodworking industry, which was concentrated primarily in the border regions of the Czech lands, were wooden constructions, planks, crossties, mine struts, poles, and pulpwood.

Josef Kohn (Vsetín, 1814–Vienna, Sept. 17, 1884)

The Jacob & Josef Kohn Company was founded in 1850, and manufactured construction lumber and matches. Later, the Kohns established a factory in Vsetín to produce bentwood furniture from beech following the example of M. Thonet. Because these products were simple, light, water-resistant, and easy to assemble, they not only sold well, but also earned numerous awards at furniture exhibitions across Europe. The Kohn factory also made the throne for the King of Spain and a divan with a canopy for the apartment of the King of Portugal. Crucial for the growth of the company was the technological innovation that allowed them to shorten the days-long process of steaming the wood by using machines that could complete the procedure in five or ten minutes.

Labels:

- An advertisement for the Kohn firm from 1877
- A mere nine years after starting operation, the Kohn firm exhibited at the 1878 Paris World’s Fair
- Wood-bending machine

Max Berl (1840–Sept. 20, 1901)

Berl expanded the family business’s activities to include the sale and processing of wood. The company’s sawmills were located in and near Bruntál. The family business quickly became the largest wood-processing firm in the region.

The Match Industry

Today, matches are a common item; some people may even consider them outdated and old-fashioned. But two centuries ago, very few people in the Czech lands had ever heard of them. Until the late 18th century, people used tinderboxes. New types of starters included various igniters and matches with dipped tips, followed by the friction match. The most famous Czech center of match production was the town of Sušice.

Bernard Fürth (Sušice, Oct. 22, 1796– Sušice, Sept. 26, 1849)

After the first match factory was opened in Sušice in 1839, Fürth entered into a partnership with its owner, Vojtěch Scheinost. Over the subsequent years the factory became the largest match producer in the Habsburg Empire, with extensive foreign trade as well. Bernard Fürth became a respected citizen and industrialist not only because of

his wealth but also for his business creativity and the employment opportunities his company provided in the Bohemian Forest region.

Labels:

- Advertisement for B. Fürth matches

8 | Department Stores in the Moravian-Silesia Region

The success of Jewish entrepreneurs was as much a function of their natural talent as it was their proverbial thriftiness, persistence, and streamlined business structure. These characteristics in the main distinguished Jewish businessmen from their Christian counterparts. They traded in nearly every commodity that could be brought to market. Some achieved so much success that they were able to open their own wholesale business, and the most successful individuals even opened modern department stores.

Moritz Bachner (Wilamowice, Poland, June 6, 1871–Moravian Ostrava, Feb. 13, 1935)

At the end of the 19th century Bachner founded a small business for mixed and iron goods. Because the business prospered and he was constantly expanding his product range, he decided to build new spaces for the business in the early 1930s.

The Bachner Department Store

The company decided to build a modern five-story department store in 1932 mainly because of the growing demand for its merchandise. The building was designed by Erich Mendelsohn. Conforming to the most modern standards of the day, this Ostrava department store opened to the public in October 1933. The wide range of merchandise on offer and the store’s layout satisfied even the most demanding customers.

Labels:

- Erich Mendelsohn, view of the Bachner store from 1933
- Advertisement for the Bachner firm

David Weinstein (Hodolany, Olomouc District, Jan. 24, 1874–Prague, Aug. 4, 1939)

Weinstein and the older Max Breda met at the Opava synagogue. They founded Breda & Weinstein in 1898. After Max retired from the business for health reasons in 1910, Weinstein became the sole owner. In the late 1920s, the company’s financial situation was so favorable that Weinstein arranged the construction of the first eight-story department store in Czechoslovakia.

The Breda & Weinstein Department Store

In 1928, a modern functionalist building was erected on the site of the original store; it was designed by the Viennese architect Leopold Bauer. The building was the largest such store in Silesia and northern Moravia. The Breda & Weinstein Department Store is still today one of the most important architectural monuments in Opava.

Labels:

- The Breda & Weinstein department store opened its doors in 1928
- A Breda & Weinstein accounting sheet

Jacques (Jacob) Geiringer (April 6, 1862 (?)-Vienna, Nov. 28, 1930)

Geiringer cofounded Tuchhaus Silesia (Geiringer & Reitler), a company that in its day was the largest business partner of the Krnov textile manufacturers.

9 | The Garment Industry

Textile production was one of the most popular industries among Jewish entrepreneurs. The same could be said for turning the textiles into clothing. Jewish entrepreneurs in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia – both tailors or clothiers (or retailers) – produced goods that were competitive with other European manufacturers. Their garments, clothing accessories, hats and other products soon gained renown around the world.

Jindřich Waldes (Nemyšl, Tábor District, June 29, 1878–Havana, Cuba, July 2, 1941)

In 1902, Waldes and the engineer Hynek Puc founded a metal-goods factory in the Prague neighborhood of Vršovice specializing in the production of metal buttons (in particular a snap fastener) later known under the brand name Koh-i-noor. Within two years Waldes converted a small wooden shed into a modern mechanized factory. Waldes' factories, which had branches throughout Europe and in the United States, also manufactured pins, knitting needles, crochet wires, hair curlers, clasps, metal combs, and other items. The company was also renowned for its zippers. Waldes was also an important collector of paintings, objets d'art, and antiques and curios, becoming patron to many Czech artists. Early during the Second World War he was active in the resistance. After his arrest by the Gestapo in September 1939 he was imprisoned in concentration camps until 1941. His family, which had left for America, paid a ransom for his release, and he was allowed to leave Europe. However, he died in Cuba on the way to the United States.

Labels:

- One of a number of designs for the Waldes Koh-i-noor advertising sticker.

Wolf Fürth (Strakonice, 1782–Strakonice, July 3, 1850)

In 1812, Fürth began trading in textiles and paints in Bězděkov, near Strakonice. Soon however, he expanded his scope of business and started to produce fezzes. At this time another thirty fez makers worked in Strakonice, so achieving a foothold was not a simple matter. The company's prosperity, however, was largely decided by an order from the Turkish Sultan Abdul Mejid in 1839, who wanted the fez to replace the turban for military uniforms. Over the subsequent years, the company saw record revenues as demand for its products took off. Strakonice fezzes were exported to the Levant, Egypt, India, and parts of Africa.

Gustav Sborowitz (Nov. 14, 1860–Prostějov, Dec. 31, 1925)

Sborowitz established a company in Prostějov in 1898; in the late 1920s, it became the first garment factory in the country to institute modern assembly-line manufacturing. In 1931, the company began to open a network of its own outlets throughout the country under the brand name "Sbor" (Ensemble). In the 1930s, it exported much of its production overseas and soon became the leading exporter of men's clothing in all of Czechoslovakia.

Labels:

- An invoice of the Sborowitz firm

10 | Department Stores in the Moravian-Silesia Region

The textile industry can boast a celebrated and rich history in the Czech lands, which over the centuries became one of the traditional regions for textile manufacture. Bohemian

textile production took shape as an industry at the turn of the 19th century, and from that time until the 1930s it was the engine for Czech industry as a whole. Jewish industrialists and entrepreneurs played a large role in the expansion of textile production, and they were remarkably successful in this sector.

Labels:

- The Gomperzes started out as partners of their grandfather, Lazar Auspitz. Shown here is their joint enterprise in Brno.

Isaac Mautner (Hořice, March 1824–Náchod, July 21, 1901)

Mautner began his business career in Náchod in 1848. Within nine years he owned his own small finishing operation, which he expanded in 1863 to include a dyehouse and yarn bleachery. His firm, Isaac Mautner and Sons, which manufactured cotton and linen goods in Náchod, gradually expanded and by the late 19th century employed 1,800 workers, making it one of the largest manufacturers of cotton fabric in the monarchy. Isaac's son Isidor also played a significant part in the enterprise; in 1901 he took over management of the factories and became one of the most prominent businessmen in Austria-Hungary. Finished textiles were largely shipped to South America and East Asia. After the founding of Czechoslovakia, this business, which now counted 42 factories and employed more than 23,000 people, making it one of the largest in Europe, was renamed the Mautner Textile Works.

Gustav Marburg (Velká Strělná, Olomouc District, Jan. 15, 1844–Bruntál, Nov. 8, 1921)

Marburg founded a small hand-weaving outfit in Bruntál in the spring of 1868, and gradually mechanized the operations, thus laying the groundwork for the town's first mechanical weaving mill for linen. In addition to the processing of flax, Gustav Marburg also became involved in the production of cotton and silk fabric. Marburg continually modernized his enterprise, and in 1892 he was the first in Bruntál to mechanize his production process. The firm produced linen and placemats, and during this period grew to become the largest company of its kind in Czech Silesia. The company opened sales offices in many of the major cities in Europe and Central America.

Max Gomperz (Brno, March 1, 1822–Vienna, Nov. 7, 1913) and Julius Gomperz (Brno, Nov. 21, 1824–Brno, Feb. 21, 1909)

After gaining their first business experience abroad, the Gomperz brothers gradually expanded the family cloth factory and soon became Brno's leading industrialists in the wool sector. Both were involved in the city's public life: Max as an accomplished politician and Julius as president of the Jewish Religious Community, a post he held for 42 years.

Wilhelm Bellak (?) and Jakob Bellak (1846–1918)

In 1876, the brothers Wilhelm and Jakob Bellak founded a company in Krnov for the manufacture of wool textiles. The Bellaks owned several factory buildings; the main one (now the Karnola factory) produced cloth from sheep's wool. When World War II broke out, the company's owners, Emil and Otto Bellak, fled with their families to Brno and then to England, where their descendants live to this day.

11 | The Brewing and Malting Industries

Czech beer is generally recognized as being of high quality. The brewing of beer in the Czech lands has a rich history. The mid-19th century became the golden age for Czech

brewing, and this had a large influence on the worldwide development of this sector. This period saw the beginning of the industrial production of malt and high-quality beer, and Jews played a significant role in its export.

Ignaz Briess (Přerov, Aug. 16, 1833–Olomouc, July 3, 1931)
Briess was initially a trader in agricultural products, including grain. In 1873, he and his cousin founded the world-famous Ignaz & Wilhelm Briess company, which chiefly produced malt at a malthouse in Pavlovice (later Pavlovička) in Olomouc. This facility was one of the most modern malt-houses in the monarchy. Under the trademark “Malz-Briess” with a red half-moon logo, they exported raw brewing materials throughout the world. The company thus gained an exclusive position in the European malting industry.

Marcus Strassmann (Tlumačov, May 13, 1831–Moravian Ostrava, Sept. 23, 1903)

In the 1860s, Strassmann leased a handcrafted brewery in Moravian Ostrava. In 1874, the brewing process was mechanized using a steam engine. At the turn of the century, the company had 110 employees engaged in the production of a variety of bottled and draft beer. By this time the brewery had become the second largest producer of beer in Moravia. Markus Strassmann was also active in the political, social, and religious life of Ostrava.

Nathan Hamburger (?–?)

In the mid-19th century, Hamburger became the owner of the municipal brewery and malthouse in Bruntál. The Hamburgers also set up a distillery and a yeast factory in town. Bruntál yeast was famous throughout Austria-Hungary and was exported to Italy, the Balkans, and Egypt. Two years later the company was given the honor of the right to use the imperial eagle on their signage and official stamp.

12 | The Distilling Industry: Production of Alcoholic Beverages and Liqueurs

In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, distilling and the production of spirits prospered and grew into an industry characterized by intense competition. The production of liquors and liqueurs was primarily the domain of Jewish businesses, which were among the most important exporters of alcoholic beverages.

Labels:

- The most famous product of the Gessler company – a bitter herbal liqueur named Altvater.

Rudolf Jelínek (Vizovice, June 20, 1892–Auschwitz, Sept. 29, 1944)

The distilling of liquors was a longstanding tradition within the Jelínek family. Rudolf Jelínek’s father Zikmund ran a distilling operation in Vizovice, and in 1921 transferred ownership of the business to his sons Rudolf and Vladimír. Rudolf retained the main distillery in Razov. In 1934 he launched a new product line that branded with his own name (“Rudolf Jelínek”) and focused on the distilling of kosher slivovitz and kosher gin. Soon, his products gained a foothold not only on the domestic and European markets, but also on the demanding overseas markets. The overwhelming majority of his products were earmarked for export to the United States, where they quickly became highly demanded by the large Jewish community. The quality of his liquors, which were produced using only the best ingredients, was soon celebrated throughout the world.

Siegfried Gessler (Zlaté Hory, March 6, 1854–Krnov, Dec. 31, 1889)

In 1878, Gessler founded his own company in Krnov for the production of liquors. Gessler’s primary product was a celebrated herbal liqueur with the brand name “Altvater,” the recipe of which was a family trade secret. Thanks to this product, the distillery did very well on the domestic market and soon began to export abroad. Gessler’s distillery was awarded a number of prizes, and his products were even recommended to drivers, cyclists, and hunters by spa director Johann Schroth. The greatest success for Gessler was when he was granted the title of “imperial and royal court supplier,” which regularly brought Altvater to the emperor’s table.

Praděd / Altvater

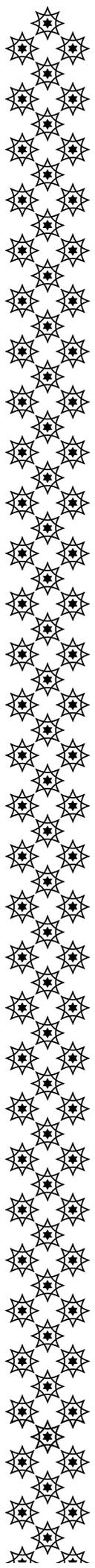
The name of the highest mountain of the Hrubý Jeseník range was borrowed for a number of industrial products. The best-known was the bitter cordial Praděd, which with its salubrious effects on digestion and the nervous system and the formation of blood cells is one of the most recognized Czech liquors. The liqueur is made from sixteen varieties of herbs and fruits, both indigenous and non-indigenous, in an alcohol base, which is then sweetened with sugar. It has hints of cinnamon, orange peel, wormwood, lavender, and nutmeg flower, but the original recipe is kept secret and is only revealed to the authorized producer, which since 2005 has been Rudolf Jelínek. For more than a century Praděd/Altvater has been a favorite of liqueur lovers.

Alfréd Lichtwitz (Dec. 27, 1883–Zamość, 1942) and Arnošt Lichtwitz (Opava, Feb. 8, 1886–Prague, Dec. 4, 1941)

The founder of the internationally recognized company ELCO was Emanuel Lichtwitz, a Jewish entrepreneur originally from Osoblaha, who established a distillery for liqueurs and spirits, liqueur candies, fruit juices, and punches on Opava’s Sadová Street in 1861. His descendants continued the company’s success; Emanuel’s son Jakob and his grandsons Alfréd and Arnošt led ELCO to its greatest prosperity during the First Republic. The company had branches not only in the Czech lands but also in Bordeaux, France. Some members of the extended Lichtwitz family also manufactured liquor in Krnov, home to the “Beck & Lichtwitz” company.

13 | The Jewish Contribution to Economic Development in the Czech Lands

Jews in the Czech lands were gradually pushed out of their “traditional” occupations as merchants and craftsmen, essentially leaving them a single legally sanctioned avenue for making a living – moneylending, which Christians generally considered to be usury. This monopoly position was maintained until the 15th century, when Christians began to become involved in the financial sector as well, forcing Jews to look for other ways of making a living. In response, they again turned to crafts and business. Unlike their Christian counterparts, Jewish tradesmen were not bound by any guild rules and could thus better adapt to new trends and technological developments. At the turn of the 19th century, many Jewish businessmen, bankers, and industrialists were among the founders of modern industry in the Czech lands. Some were elevated to the nobility for their contributions to the expansion of industry. The massive entry of Jews into the economy and industry in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia took place later, in 1848 when they were granted freedom of movement and domicile and in 1867 when



they were granted full equal rights. Jews were largely responsible for making the Czech lands the most industrially developed provinces in all of Austria-Hungary by the turn of the 20th century. After World War I, Jewish entrepreneurs and industrialists played a large role in consolidating the new state by giving new direction to its industries, businesses, and financial system. Until World War II they played an important role in all spheres of Czechoslovak industry and business.

Labels:

- The fez sticker of the Strakonice-based Fezko
- MISS KINN – the world-famous symbol of the Koh-i-noor company
- Jelínek kosher slivovitz

14 | The role of Jews in the development of business and industry in Austrian Silesia and northern Moravia in the 19th and 20th century

The process of gradually industrializing the Austrian part of Silesia began in the latter half of the 19th century. An industrial zone of significance throughout Central Europe formed in the Moravian-Silesia border region. The growing demand for workers resulted in the influx of new inhabitants, which in turn created many opportunities for new businesses and companies. Many Jews took advantage of this situation, seeing their chance in the emerging industrial centers. This was particularly the case with ironworks, textile factories, the food, distilling, and leather industries, and paper mills. Jews were also represented in the banking and insurance sectors. They took up a number of professions as well, including physicians, lawyers, and civil servants.

Labels:

- The "Silesia" exhibition hall of the Geiringer & Reitler company in Krnov
- Price list for liqueurs manufactured by the E. Lichtwitz company
- The most famous product of the Gessler company – the Altwater bitter herbal liqueur