

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910524854803321
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Titolo	The Jews in a Polish Private Town : The Case of Opatów in the Eighteenth Century // Gershon David Hundert
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Johns Hopkins University Press
ISBN	1-4214-3626-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (1 online resource (xvi, 242 pages :) : illustrations, maps)
Collana	Johns Hopkins Jewish studies
Soggetti	Jews - Social conditions - History Geschichte (1700-1800) Juden Joden Jews Ethnic relations Jews - Poland - Opatow (Wojewodztwo Swietokrzyskie) - History - 18th century History Poland Juden Opatow Poland Opatow (Wojewodztwo Swietokrzyskie) Poland, Kielce, Opatow (Opatow) Jewish history Opatow (Wojewodztwo Swietokrzyskie, Poland) Ethnic relations
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Open access edition supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities / Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Humanities Open Book Program. The text of this book is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License Originally published as Johns Hopkins Press in 1992
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (pages 209-226) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Numbers -- The Town and the Jewish Community before 1700 -- Jews and Other Poles -- Jews in the Economy -- Jewish Society -- The Jewish

Community -- Authority in the Jewish Community -- Power and the Jewish Community -- Afterword -- Appendix: The Privilege of the Jewish Community of Opatow -- Appendix 2: Measures, Weights, and Money

Sommario/riassunto

In the eighteenth century, more than half of the world's Jewish population lived in Polish private villages and towns owned by magnate-aristocrats. Furthermore, roughly half of Poland's entire urban population was Jewish. Thus, the study of Jews in private Polish towns is central to both Jewish history and to the history of Poland-Lithuania. This study seeks to investigate the social, economic, and political history of Jews in Opatow, a private Polish town, in the context of an increasing power and influence of private towns at the expense of the Polish crown and gentry in the eighteenth century. Hundert recovers an important community from historical obscurity by providing a balanced perspective on the Jewish experience in the Polish Commonwealth and by describing the special dimensions of Jewish life in a private town.
