JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAP COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2025 No.183 ISSN 0956-5728

ARTICLES

REGULAR ITEMS

Front cover Detail from Inō Tadataka 'Scaled Map of Coastal Japan, The Eastern Provinces'. Library of Congress https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.wdl/wdl.11825

THE FIRST HEBREW WORLD ATLAS AND JEWISH FARMING SETTLEMENTS IN WESTERN CANADA

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In 1925 the publishing house HaSefer ('the book') issued the first modern world atlas in the Hebrew language, now often known as the Jabotinsky atlas.[1] The atlas was jointly edited by Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky and Samuel (Shmuel) Perlman (Fig. 1). Perlman (1887–1958) was an editor, translator and educator. He was an early editor of the Hebrew language newspaper *Ha'aretz* and later served as the Dean of Hebrew College in Boston. Jabotinsky (1880–1940) was a journalist, best known as the founding father of revisionist Zionism, a right-wing alternative to the socialist-oriented Labor Zionism championed by the likes of David Ben-Gurion. Jabotinsky was also deeply involved in the movement to revitalize Hebrew as a modern vernacular language. In addition to writing, he translated numerous works into Hebrew, including Dante's *Inferno* and the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe. The first Hebrew atlas was a key contribution to this linguistic project (Fig. 2).

Although the company that published the atlas was registered in London, most of the cartographic work was done in Germany and the atlas was printed in Leipzig. The introduction explains that it was primarily intended for use in schools, but as the first 'Hebrew Geography' it was necessary to introduce new terminology and was expected to be used more broadly. The atlas also contained a great deal of geographical, demographic, and historical information pertaining to the worldwide Jewish community. As discussed below special attention

Fig. 1 The editors of *The Hebrew Geographical Atlas*, Vladimir Jabotinsky (left) and Samuel Perlman (right). Jabotinsky's photo was taken by Britt in Paris, 1926 (courtesy of Israel government press office). Perlman photo is courtesy of Hebrew College, Boston.


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Fig. 2 Title page of the Atlas, which gives the number of geographical and historical maps and diagrams and states there are 48 pages of explanatory text. The decoration is a line drawing of the old city of Jerusalem. Courtesy of the author.

was paid to Jewish involvement in agriculture, and arguably the atlas may be thought of as an example of 'persuasive cartography' as defined by P. J. Mode (see, https://persuasivemaps.library.cornell.edu).

The atlas was sold worldwide and publicity leaflets were printed in several languages of which examples can be found in English, French, and German.[2] An advertisement directed to prospective American buyers of the atlas shows prices for different bindings: leather ($6.50), cloth ($4.00) or paper ($3.00). The text of the advertisement, reproduced below, gives details of the publication and its contents:

The Hebrew Geographical Atlas
(for school and home)
Editors V. Jabotinsky & Dr. S. Perlman
Geography: 39 maps and 25 diagrams
History: 2 maps and 21 diagrams
48 pages of explanatory text
Size: 11 × 9 ½ ins
Printed in 8 colours by Messrs.
Wagner and Debes, Leipzig

The maps contain everything essential concerning the physical, political and economic geography: astronomical information: hemispheres, isothermes, races, religions and languages; geographical discoveries, colonies, ways of communications, Diasporah: Centres of Jewish population in Europe, Jewish colonies in the Argentine and Brazil, Palestine (Geology, economic situation); maps of every quarter of the globe (physical and political); race, peoples, colonization, the ancient East; historical Palestine, ancient Rome and Greece: the Empire of Islam, the Crusades: the principal epochs of European history. Special indications to show the Jewish population in towns and countries.

The initial production run of the atlas was scheduled for 5,000 copies but later expanded to possibly as many as 10,000.[3] A second edition was discussed in the 1930s and 1940s, but it seems that only the first edition was published. Today many institutional libraries hold copies of the atlas, and of interest to the collector, examples show up periodically for sale or at auction.

The single map that has received the most attention and has been widely discussed elsewhere is the two-page map of *Eretz Israel* (the land of Israel) on plates 14 and 15.[4] The map points out significant Jewish urban and rural settlements as well as rural tracts of land purchased by Jewish individuals or organizations in Palestine under the British mandate prior to 1924. Note that the interested reader can find this map and others not depicted here online.

The atlas contains several maps of Europe with geological, political and other information. Of special interest is a two-page map of the centre of the Jewish population in Europe, plates 24 and 25. Issued between the two world wars, this map is a particularly poignant record of a community that would largely vanish only twenty years later. Cities and towns with major Jewish populations are indicated. The map also depicts the borders separating different Jewish cultural groups: Litvak (i.e., Lithuanian), other Ashkenazim, and Sephardim.

Some of the most interesting aspects of the atlas can be illustrated by the maps of North America. The first of these is a physical map (plate 30), with an inset showing an ethnic distribution map highlighting various first-nation tribes and indicating that the population of North America was 2.5 per cent Jewish. A political map of North America (plate 31) is shown in Figure 3, and a more detailed map

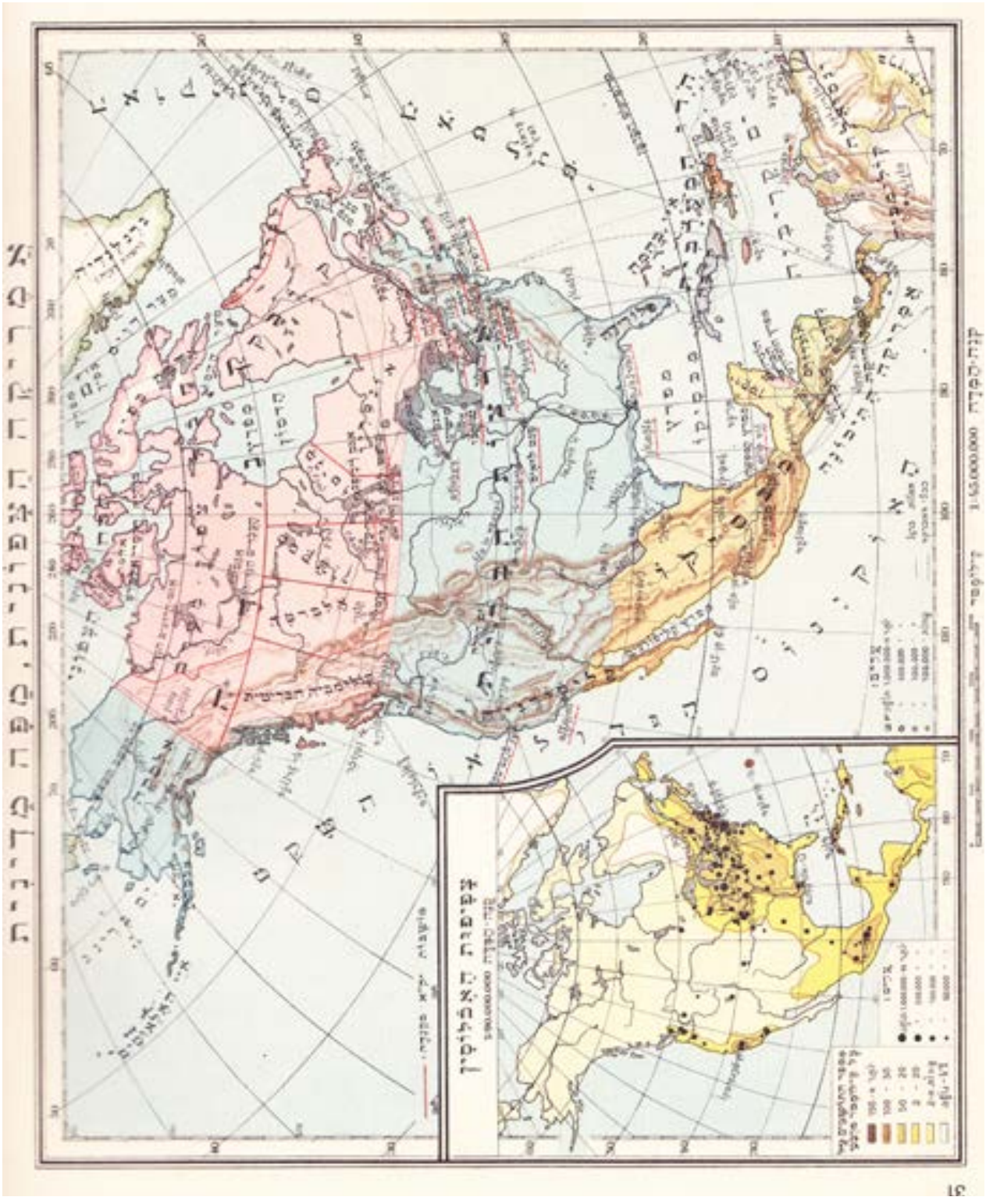

Fig. 3 Plate 31, a political map of North America. The inset shows a map of population density. Courtesy of the author.