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## **Adam Franciszek Epler (1902–1940): A Forgotten Musician of Interwar Lviv**

### **Abstract**

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This article is an introduction to the artistic profile of a Polish conductor, composer and guitarist Adam Franciszek Epler. This forgotten creative persona left the artistic legacy of compositions and arrangements for mandolin orchestra ensemble. Moreover, he was the first Polish guitarist playing Polish lute music, a founder of the first Polish guitar trio named Lwowskie Trio Gitarowe and a musician in the most popular interwar radio broadcast *Wesoła Lwowska Fala*. As a composer and conductor of the Orchestra of Mandolin Society “Hejnał” from Lviv, he also took part in numerous radio broadcasts of Polish Radio Lviv. His musical activities, similarly to the entire mandolin heritage in Poland and guitar history in interwar Poland, requires further research, and this article is one of the first contributions to these research topics.

## Keywords

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Adam Epler, Lviv, guitar, mandolin orchestra, Polish Radio, Katyn massacre victim

Adam Epler was a composer, conductor and instrumentalist from Lviv. He was murdered by the NKVD in 1940. In the 1930s his name appeared dozens of times in the press announcements of radio programmes, and as part of *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* [Merry Lviv Wave], the most popular interwar programme, his guitar playing or arrangements and compositions for mandolin orchestra were perhaps heard by several million people.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Epler is not mentioned in practically any post-war publication, his songs are not recorded on albums, and only a single photograph of him with the title of one of his songs can be found on the Internet.<sup>2</sup>

This text will present the profile of this forgotten musician, based on press releases and articles from the 1930s and on materials preserved by Barbara Epler-Matuchniak, the composer's daughter, currently living in London. However, it will not be a full biography nor an analysis of his work, but merely a contribution to further work on his artistic legacy.

## Biographical information

Adam Franciszek Epler was born on 4 October 1902 in Złotniki (the Tarnopol Voivodship in the Second Polish Republic, today a village in the Tarnopol Oblast in Ukraine).<sup>3</sup> His parents were Rudolf Epler (son of Jan Epler and Karolina née Kaufman) and Stanisława Sanetra (daughter of Tomasz Sanetra and Apolonia née Szubert).<sup>4</sup> Since he was

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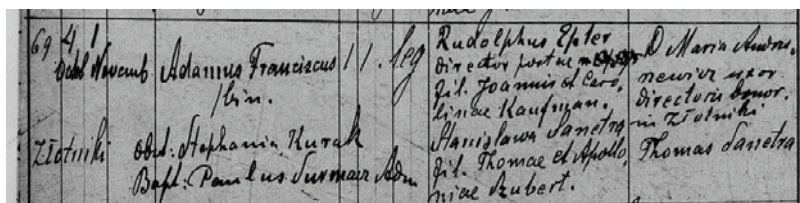
<sup>1</sup> W. Szolginia, *Na Wesołej Lwowskiej Fali* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Polonia, 1991), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Compare 'Adam Epler', [https://staremelodie.pl/kompozytorzy/236/Adam\\_Epler](https://staremelodie.pl/kompozytorzy/236/Adam_Epler), accessed 6 July 2020.

<sup>3</sup> AGAD, folder 301, no. 1901, *Par. Złotniki, dek. Podhajce; Księga metrykalna urodzeń, ślubów i zgonów dla wsi: Złotniki, Burkanów, Charki, Pantalicha, Rakowiec, Sokołów, Sosnów*, 365.

<sup>4</sup> AGAD, *Par. Złotniki, dek. Podhajce*, 365.

seven, Adam Epler lived in Śnietnica near Grybów, where his mother was a postmaster.<sup>5</sup> He took private lessons with Eugeniusz Pazdryj, who prepared him for secondary education. Then, he studied at the Male Gymnasium in Rzeszów.<sup>6</sup>



Illus. 1: A fragment of *Liber natorum* of the parish of Złotniki. Source: AGAD, Par. Złotniki, dek. Podhajce, 365.

From 1921 to 1925 he studied law at the Faculty of Law of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv.<sup>7</sup> After graduation, he worked in the municipal court in Lviv. In June 1931, he passed the exam completing the judicial training and became a court assessor.<sup>8</sup> Then, on 4 February 1932, he was appointed a municipal judge in Busko in the district of Złoczów.<sup>9</sup>

He was a reserve soldier of the Polish Army in the rank of lieutenant,<sup>10</sup> serving in the fifth Podhale Rifle Regiment in Przemyśl.<sup>11</sup> He married Janina Zofia née Wałęga from Lviv.<sup>12</sup> He had two daughters: the younger one, Marta Jadwiga, born in 1938, and the older one, Barbara Maria Epler-Matuchniak born in 1932,<sup>13</sup> who kept in her private

<sup>5</sup> B. Epler-Matuchniak, 'Koło Mandolinistów „Hejnał” we Lwowie pod batutą Adama F. Eplera i Wesoła Lwowska Fala', *Semper Fidelis*, 4 (2005), 38.

<sup>6</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, 'Koło Mandolinistów', 38.

<sup>7</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, 'Koło Mandolinistów', 38.

<sup>8</sup> 'Ruch służbowy w Ministerstwie Sprawiedliwości', *Monitor Polski* (21 July 1931), 2.

<sup>9</sup> 'Ruch służbowy na obszarze Wojew. Tarnopolskiego', *Tarnopolski Dziennik Wojewódzki* (1 Nov. 1932), 168.

<sup>10</sup> P. Rogaliński, '9 maja – Polacy europejscy?', *Polonia*, 5 (2009), 50.

<sup>11</sup> B. Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Franciszek Epler*, unpublished biographical note from the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

<sup>12</sup> B. Epler-Matuchniak, AHM\_PnW\_2611, relation from the collection of the Archive of Spoken History of KARTA and the House for Meetings with History (28 Oct. 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Franciszek Epler*.

collection all the materials left after her father, saved from the war wandering.<sup>14</sup>

### **Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' in Lviv**

Epler had no formal musical education and was self-taught. He mastered playing the guitar (he owned a harp guitar with additional bass strings), mandolin, violin and squeezebox (he owned a Hohner instrument).<sup>15</sup> He had excellent, most likely perfect pitch. However, recognizing his deficiencies in musical education, he took private composition lessons from Wiktor Hausman,<sup>16</sup> a professor at the Conservatory of the Polish Music Society in Lviv.<sup>17</sup> He undertook various activities in the field of music, e.g. he conducted an amateur choir in Busko or even led occasional orchestras in the Przemyśl area during reserve exercises.<sup>18</sup>

However, the axis of all Epler's artistic activities was the Orchestra of 'Hejnał' in Lviv. He became involved with the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' as early as during his law studies. The orchestra itself existed since around 1920.<sup>19</sup> Before Epler became a conductor, the band was conducted by Mieczysław Kurtycz,<sup>20</sup> a father of singer and guitarist Zbigniew Kurtycz.<sup>21</sup>

Supposedly, Epler had been the conductor since 1928, as indicated by a photograph from the archive of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak, taken on 27 October 1928 after the concert at the Hall of the Society 'Gwiazda'. In the photo Epler can be seen in the centre of the ensemble. The first manuscripts with his arrangements for mandolin orchestra date from

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<sup>14</sup> The story of the war wandering of the family of Epler was described in detail by his daughter, Barbara Epler-Matuchniak. Epler-Matuchniak, AHM\_PnW\_2611.

<sup>15</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Franciszek Epler*.

<sup>16</sup> [B. Epler-Matuchniak], 'Adam Epler i „Hejnał”', *Dziennik Polski* (26 Oct. 2005), 9.

<sup>17</sup> K. Fink, 'Szkolnictwo muzyczne we Lwowie w okresie międzywojennym (1918–1939)', *Молодь і Ринок*, 4 (2017), 50.

<sup>18</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Franciszek Epler*.

<sup>19</sup> 'Koncert mandolinistów i tria gitarowego', *Biuletyn Radijofoniczny dla użytku pracy*, 3 (1935), 9a.

<sup>20</sup> The correspondence between the author and Barbara Epler-Matuchniak from 17 May 2020.

<sup>21</sup> R. Klimczak, 'Zbigniew Kurtycz (1919–2015)', *Dziennik Teatralny*, <http://www.dziennikteatralny.pl/artykuly/zbigniew-kurtycz-1919-2015.html>, accessed 6 July 2020.

the first half of 1929. The first found press announcement of an orchestra concert conducted by Epler comes from a radio programme on 4 January 1931.<sup>22</sup> On 29 March 1931, a general meeting of the members of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' was held, at which Epler was officially elected the conductor of the orchestra.<sup>23</sup>

From the report of that general meeting, we also learn about other people who held positions in the Society's board. It consisted of Prof. Józef Rubinger (chairman), Ludwik Hegedues (vice-chairman), Michał Becko (treasurer), Rudolf Anspach (secretary), Mieczysław Kurtycz (deputy secretary), Stanisław Wiczysty (librarian), Mieczysław Peszyński (host), Mieczysław Miciek (deputy conductor); Tadeusz Kirchner and Stanisław Wałęga were admitted as honorary members and Michał Becko became a founding member.<sup>24</sup>

Epler did all his work as a conductor *pro bono*, and all the money earned by the orchestra was spent on instruments, paper and other expenses related to the activities of the ensemble.<sup>25</sup> Rehearsals took place mostly on Saturdays, when Epler was free from his duties as a judge,<sup>26</sup> and the concerts took place mostly at the weekend, usually on Sundays.

The members of the orchestra were people of a diversified professional and social background.<sup>27</sup> Based on surviving photographs, the number of instrumentalists in the orchestra can be estimated at between eighteen and thirty. The preserved arrangements and compositions by Epler indicate that such a number of musicians as well as the abilities of the orchestra allowed for establishing of an ensemble containing additional instruments (mandolin piccolo, mandocello) that could be included in the orchestra (in comparison to the basic quartet composition, i.e. mandolins I & II, tenor mandola and guitar).

Very little information has been preserved about concerts under Epler's direction that were not connected with Polish Radio; most of them, like the four described below, probably took place on the occasion of various city or private events.

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<sup>22</sup> 'Programy europejskich radjofonów', *Chwila* (5 Jan. 1931), 18.

<sup>23</sup> 'Z Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” we Lwowie', *Chwila* (2 Apr. 1931), 13.

<sup>24</sup> 'Z Koła Mandolinistów' (1 Apr. 1931), 13.

<sup>25</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Franciszek Epler*.

<sup>26</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Epler i „Hejnał”*.

<sup>27</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Adam Epler i „Hejnał”*.



Illus. 2: The concert of 'Hejnał' at the Hall of the Society 'Gwiazda' on 27 October 1928. Source: the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme
1.	27 October 1928	Concert of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' at the Hall of the Society 'Gwiazda'	no data available
2.	1 December 1931	Patriotic Morning at the Tadeusz Kościuszko Society of Teenagers <sup>28</sup>	Polish pieces
3.	27 April 1932	Concert in the Literary Casino	no data available
4.	18 March 1932	Garden Party of the Syndicates of Lviv Journalists <sup>29</sup>	no data available

Table 1: Concerts of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' under the direction of Adam Epler that were not associated with Polish Radio<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> 'Poranek patriotyczny w Kole Młodzieży im. Tadeusza Kościuszki', *Gazeta Lwowska* (2 Dec. 1931), 5.

<sup>29</sup> 'Impreza dziennikarzy lwowskich', *Gazeta Lwowska* (22 June 1932), 5.

<sup>30</sup> The information concerning the concerts without the footnotes comes from the collection of photographs with the caption, preserved by Epler-Matuchniak.

## Collaboration with Polish Radio Lviv

The collaboration between 'Hejnał' and the Polish Radio Lviv took place practically from the beginning of the radio's activity. Polish Radio Lviv was officially launched on 15 January 1930<sup>31</sup> and already on 17 May 1931 the *Radio* magazine published a photo of the orchestra with the caption: "The Lviv Mandolin Society "Hejnał" whose performances in front of the microphone of the Radio Lviv enjoy the well-deserved recognition of radio listeners."<sup>32</sup>



Illus. 3: The radio photo of 'Hejnał' from 1931. Source: 'Polska Radjowa', *Radio* (17 May 1931), 9.

The beginning of this cooperation is connected with Epler's friendship with Wiktor Budzyński. Their acquaintance began in 1929 and lasted until the outbreak of the war.<sup>33</sup> Budzyński was a radio man from Lviv, the creator of the famous all-Poland programme *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* and the author of a great number of texts used in this

<sup>31</sup> S. Miszczak, *Historia radiofonii i telewizji w Polsce* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Komunikacji i Łączności, 1972), 118.

<sup>32</sup> 'Lwowskie Koło Mandolinistów "Hejnał" którego występy przed mikrofonem Rozgłośni lwowskiej cieszą się zasłużonym uznaniem radiosłuchaczy'. 'Polska Radjowa', *Radio* (17 May 1931), 9.

<sup>33</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Koło Mandolinistów „Hejnał”*, 39.

and other programmes of the Lviv radio station.<sup>34</sup> He greatly appreciated Epler's musical abilities, especially his willingness to explore Polish folk music.<sup>35</sup>

'Hejnał' regularly participated in various radio programmes, including *Wesoła Niedziela* [Merry Sunday], *Radio Chorych* [Radio for the Ill], *Wieczorna serenada* [Evening serenade] and the famous *Wesoła Lwowska Fala*. On 23 October 1937, a concert was held to celebrate the 100th radio broadcast and the 15th anniversary of the activity of the Society—this shows the scale of the orchestra's participation in the life of the Polish radio. Radio announcements found in the following two years (until September 1939) bring information about at least twenty-eight further performances. A large number of these concerts were broadcast by all Polish Radio stations throughout the decade.

Due to such a large number of the orchestra's appearances, I will only list here information about several ones, about which most information concerning the performed programme has been preserved.

No.	Date	Type of concert <sup>36</sup>	Programme <sup>37</sup>
1.	4 January 1931	Concert of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>38</sup>	1. Michał Kleofas Ogiński: <i>Polonez</i> , 2. Tadeusz Joteyko: <i>Frottola Italiana</i> , 3. <i>Fantazja z op. „Halka”</i> , 4. Wojciech Osmański: <i>Wiązanka melodji swojskich</i> , 5. Maksymilian Chmielewicz: <i>Równy krok – marsz wojskowy</i> .

<sup>34</sup> 'Hallo! Hallo! Tu Polskie Radjo Lwów...', in S. Zachariasiewicz, ed., *Targi Wschodnie 1935* (Lwów: Wschód—Prasowa Agencja Informacyjna, 1935).

<sup>35</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Koło Mandolinistów „Hejnał”*, 39.

<sup>36</sup> In tables 2–4, in the column 'Type of concert', the original Polish announcement in the press is provided in the footnotes.

<sup>37</sup> In tables 2–4, in the column 'Programme', the full titles of the works are reconstructed by the author based on the press announcements.

<sup>38</sup> 'Koncert lwowskiego Koła mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. p. Adama Eplera.' 'Programy europejskich radjofonów', *Chwila* (5 Jan. 1931), 18.



No.	Date	Type of concert <sup>36</sup>	Programme <sup>37</sup>
2.	12 February 1935	<i>Przy dźwiękach marsza – idziemy spać</i> [When the march sounds—we go to bed], concert of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>39</sup>	1. Zygmunt Noskowski: <i>Ulubiony marsz Księcia Józefa Poniatowskiego</i> , instrumentation by M. Becki, 2. <i>Marsz 6. Pułku Strzelców Podhalańskich</i> arr. by A. Epler, 3. Cayetano Alberto Silva: <i>San Lorenzo – marsz włoski</i> , 4. Mario Maciocchi: <i>Gamine charmante – marsz francuski</i> , 5. John Philip Sousa: <i>Pod gwiazdzistym sztandarem – marsz amerykański</i> , 6. Meves: <i>Song of America – marsz amerykański</i> , 7. Mario Maciocchi: <i>Na arenie – marsz hiszpański</i> , 8. Castaldo – <i>marsz austriacki</i> arr. by A. Epler, 9. Julius Fučík: <i>Dzieci pułku – marsz austriacki</i> arr. by M. Becki, 10. <i>Czasy się zmieniają – marsz rosyjski</i> arr. by A. Epler, 11. <i>Dni naszego życia – marsz rosyjski</i> arr. by A. Epler, 12. Adam Epler: <i>Hejnał – marsz</i> , 13. Adam Epler: <i>Na Wesolej Lwowskiej Fali – marsz</i> , 14. Adam Epler: <i>Gródek – marsz</i> .
3.	12 February 1935	<i>To było takie znane</i> [It was so well-known], concert of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>40</sup>	1. Fabian Tymolski: <i>Cieniom Adama Mickiewicza – polonez</i> arr. by A. Epler, 2. Kazimierz Bończa-Tomaszewski: <i>Tańce górnośląskie (Ulan, Obracany, Drybek, Trojak)</i> , 3. Alphons Czibulka: <i>Stefania – gawot</i> , 4. Mario Maciocchi: <i>Milena – czardasz</i> , 5. Eduardo Di Capua: <i>'E Bersagliere – marsz włoski</i> .
4.	14 December 1935	<i>W Madrycie</i> [In Madrid], concert of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>41</sup>	1. Mario Maciocchi: <i>Na arenie – marsz</i> , 2. Eugene Boucheron: <i>Impresje hiszpańskie (Pochód, Serenada, Pod drzewami pomarańczy, Bolero)</i> , 3. Mario Maciocchi: <i>Wieczór w Madrycie – walc hiszpański</i> .

<sup>39</sup> 'Przy dźwiękach marsza – idziemy spać, koncert zesp. Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. A. Eplera.' *Fala*, 7 (1934), [8].

<sup>40</sup> 'To było takie znane, koncert ork. lwowsk. Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. A. Eplera.' *Fala*, 6 (1935), [4].

<sup>41</sup> 'W Madrycie, koncert orkiestry Lwowskiego Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera.' *Antena*, 49 (1935), XXIX.

No.	Date	Type of concert <sup>36</sup>	Programme <sup>37</sup>
5.	27 April 1936	<i>Z piosenką przez Lwów</i> [With the song through Lviv], concert of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>42</sup>	1. Adam Epler: <i>Gródek – marsz</i> , 2. Adam Epler: <i>Z piosenką przez Lwów – potpourri lwowskich piosenek</i> , 3. Wiktor Budzyński, Adam Epler: <i>Lwowska noc – boston-serenada</i> , 4. Adam Epler: <i>Za drągiem – zbiór sztajerków lwowskich</i> , 5. Adam Epler: <i>Na Kleparowie – polka</i> , 6. Adam Epler: <i>Na Wesołej Lwowskiej Fali – marsz</i> .
6.	18 September 1936	<i>Wspomnienia z Budapesztu</i> [Memories from Budapest] – half an hour of mandolins. Light Hungarian music performed by the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>43</sup>	1. Berté Henrik: <i>Casino – czardasz</i> , 2. Adam Epler: <i>Wspomnienia z Budapesztu – potpourri ludowych melodii węgierskich</i> , 3. Adam Epler: <i>Taniec węgierski D-dur</i> , 4. Ákos László: <i>Melodie węgierskie</i> , 5. Adam Epler: <i>Węgierka – czardasz na motywach ludowych</i> .
7.	23 May 1937	<i>Na swojską nutę</i> [Our sounds], the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>44</sup>	1. Adam Epler: <i>Skalmierzanki – uwertura na tematy opery I. Kamińskiego</i> , 2. Adam Epler: <i>Cudze chwalicie, swego nie znacie – zbiór kujawiaków</i> , 3. Kazimierz Bończa-Tomaszewski: <i>Tańce górnośląskie (Ulan, Obracany, Drybek, Trojak)</i> , 4. Adam Epler: <i>Na polską nutę – zbiór melodii ludowych wg Glogera</i> , 5. Adam Epler: <i>Miłe wspomnienie – polonez</i> .
8.	19 March 1938	Entertainment concert. Performers: the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler <sup>45</sup>	Pieces by Fabian Tymolski, arr. by Adam Epler: 1. <i>Polonez</i> (dedicated to Joachim Lelewel), 2. <i>Z Grodu Lwa – mazur salonowy</i> , 3. <i>Wstęga Wisły – krakowiak</i> , 4. <i>Piękna pleć stawia sieć – polka mazurka</i> , 5. <i>Straż ochotnicza – galop</i> , 6. <i>Łza – polonez</i> , 7. <i>Ręka w rękę – krakowiaki</i> , 8. <i>Do ataku broń – marsz</i> (devoted to Wybranowski, national guard colonel 1848).

<sup>42</sup> 'Z piosenką przez Lwów, koncert Orkiestry Lwowskiego Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera.' *Fala*, 37 (1936), [4].

<sup>43</sup> 'Wspomnienia z Budapesztu – pół godziny mandolin. Lekka muzyka węgierska w wykonaniu Orkiestry Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera.' *Fala*, 21 (1937), [12].

<sup>44</sup> 'Na swojską nutę, orkiestra mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera.' *Antena*, 21 (1937), III.

<sup>45</sup> 'Koncert rozrywkowy. Wykonawcy: Orkiestra Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera.' *Antena*, 11 (1938), XXVI.

No.	Date	Type of concert <sup>36</sup>	Programme <sup>37</sup>
9.	11 June 1938	<i>Z utworów Schuberta</i> [From Schubert's work]. Performers: the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler, Maria Bielicka - mezzosoprano <sup>46</sup>	Music by Franz Schubert, arr. by Adam Epler: 1. <i>Muzyka baletowa z „Rozamundy”,</i> 2. <i>Nad morzem,</i> 3. <i>Bądź pozdrowiona,</i> 4. <i>Młynarz i strumyk,</i> 5. Melodies from operetta <i>Domek trzech dziewcząt</i> arr. by Adam Epler, 6. <i>Serenada,</i> 7. <i>Polna różyczka,</i> 8. <i>Barkarole,</i> 9. <i>Moment musical,</i> 10. <i>Marsz wojskowy.</i>
10.	3 September 1938	<i>Muzyka polska</i> [Polish music], concert performed by the Mandolin Orchestra 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler – broadcast from the Pavillion of the Eastern Markets in Lviv <sup>47</sup>	1. Adam Epler: <i>Miłe wspomnienia – polonez,</i> 2. Ludomir Różycki: <i>Menuet</i> from the opera <i>Casanova,</i> 3. Fabian Tymolski: <i>Łza – polonez,</i> 4. Tadeusz Joteyko: <i>Frottola Italiana,</i> 5. Fabian Tymolski: <i>Królowa balu – walc,</i> 6. Adam Epler: <i>Na Wesołej Lwowskiej Fali – marsz,</i> 7. Wojciech Osmański: <i>Dziadunio – polka.</i>
11.	10 December 1938	Marches, waltzes and polkas performed by the Orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by A. Epler <sup>48</sup>	1. <i>Marsz 6. Pułku Strzelców Podhalańskich</i> arr. by A. Epler, 2. Fabian Tymolski: <i>Czy mogę prosić – walc,</i> 3. Rudolf Szpala: <i>Z góry piórkiem – polka,</i> 4. Rudolf Szpala: <i>Jeździec – marsz,</i> 5. Rudolf Szpala: <i>Na balu – walc.</i>

Table 2: A selection of the concerts of the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' directed by Adam Epler, broadcast by Polish Radio.

The orchestra also took part in a number of other radio concerts, including *Venezia e Napoli*,<sup>49</sup> *Z krainy dolarów* [From the land of dollars],<sup>50</sup> *Gdy zadźwięczą przy piosence mandoliny* [When music

<sup>46</sup> 'Z utworów Schuberta. Wykonawcy: Orkiestra Lwowskiego Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera, Maria Bielicka – mezzosoprano.', *Antena*, 23 (1938), XXV.

<sup>47</sup> 'Muzyka polska, koncert w wyk. Orkiestry Mandolinowej „Hejnał” pod dyr. Adama Eplera – transmisja z Pawilonu Targów Wschodnich we Lwowie.', *Antena*, 35 (1938), XXVI.

<sup>48</sup> 'Marsze, walce i polki w wykonaniu Ork. Lwowskiego Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyrekcją A. Eplera, *Antena*, 49 (1938), XXVI.

<sup>49</sup> *Wiadomości Radjowe*, 20 (1932), 12.

<sup>50</sup> 'Program radjowy', *Gazeta Lwowska* (14 Oct. 1933), 6.

for mandolin sounds],<sup>51</sup> *Na polską nutę* [Polish music],<sup>52</sup> *Zakładamy Koło Mandolinistów – Bum cyk cyk* [We start the Mandolin Society],<sup>53</sup> *Uciekła mi przepióreczka* [My quail ran away],<sup>54</sup> *Wiosna w Italii* [Spring in Italy],<sup>55</sup> *Manewry piosenki żołnierskiej* [Manoeuvres of the soldiers' song],<sup>56</sup> *Z różnych stron* [From different ways],<sup>57</sup> *Przekładaniec świąteczny* [A festive cake],<sup>58</sup> *Podwieczorek z ogródka* [An afternoon tea from the garden].<sup>59</sup> Apart from the musicians listed in the table above, other people who participated in the concerts and broadcasts of 'Hejnał' were: Józef Zubik,<sup>60</sup> Erazma Kopaczyńska-Janowicz,<sup>61</sup> Zbigniew Lipczyński's Choir of Funny Five,<sup>62</sup> Dunka Sieczkowska,<sup>63</sup> Tadeusz Seredyński,<sup>64</sup> Stanisław Rusocki,<sup>65</sup> Izydor Dąb,<sup>66</sup> Waleria Jędrzejewska<sup>67</sup> and Janina Rawicz-Jasińska.<sup>68</sup>

In the second half of the thirties, radio programmes<sup>69</sup> started to be recorded, perhaps including also those performed by the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał'. Then, such programmes were replayed after some time, often on shortwave for foreign listeners. The time of such repeats was therefore adjusted to other time zones, as was presumably the case with the programme *Na manewrach* [Manoeuvres] of 27 August 1938, which was retransmitted at 1:00 a.m. on 31 August 1938.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Biuletyn Radjofoniczny dla Użytku Prasy*, 41 (1934), 18.

<sup>52</sup> *Fala*, 43 (1935), [11].

<sup>53</sup> 'Wesoła audycja dla dzieci', *Dziennik Polski* (12 Aug. 1936), 7.

<sup>54</sup> *Antena*, 43 (1936), III.

<sup>55</sup> 'Wiosna w Italii. Audycja muzyczna ze Lwowa', *Biuletyn Radjofoniczny dla Użytku Prasy*, 11 (1937), 14.

<sup>56</sup> 'Na fali radiowej', *Czas* (15 Aug. 1937), 14.

<sup>57</sup> 'Słuchajmy dziś radia', *Chwila* (29 Sept. 1938), 11.

<sup>58</sup> *Radio dla wszystkich*, 15 (1939), 5.

<sup>59</sup> 'Słuchajmy dziś radia', *Chwila* (12 Aug. 1939), 11.

<sup>60</sup> 'Program radjowy', *Kurier Warszawski* (29 Aug. 1931, morning issue), 6.

<sup>61</sup> *Wiadomości Radjowe*, 20 (1932), 12.

<sup>62</sup> 'Co usłyszymy dziś przez radjo', *Chwila* (26 July 1934), 13.

<sup>63</sup> 'Słuchajmy dziś Radja!', *Chwila* (23 July 1936), 11.

<sup>64</sup> 'Słuchajmy dziś Radja!', *Chwila* (23 July 1936), 11.

<sup>65</sup> *Fala*, 33 (1936), [12].

<sup>66</sup> *Fala*, 33 (1936), [12].

<sup>67</sup> *Antena*, 43 (1936), III.

<sup>68</sup> 'Słuchajmy dziś radia', *Chwila* (5 Feb. 1938), 11.

<sup>69</sup> Miszczak, *Historia radiofonii*, 132–133.

<sup>70</sup> *Antena*, 35 (1938), XXVI.



Illus. 4: Broadcast from the concert *Gdy zawdzięczą mandoliny* [When mandolins sound] performed by the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' from the Pavilion of the Eastern Trade Fair in Lviv on 12 September 1937. Source: collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

Despite the fact that Epler was not formally employed as an orchestra conductor at the Lviv radio station of the Polish Radio, the 1939 *Radio-Informator*, in the section devoted to the Lviv branch, includes his photograph with the caption 'Kapellmeister'.<sup>71</sup> He was offered a job in radio in 1938, but due to his work as a judge he did not take up other forms of employment.<sup>72</sup>

## Polish Schrammel

Epler cooperated with the Polish Radio in Lviv on two main levels: apart from the already mentioned concert activity as the conductor of the Orchestra of the Mandolin Society 'Hejnał', he made numerous

<sup>71</sup> *Radio-Informator*, 2 (1939), 204.

<sup>72</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, *Koło Mandolinistów „Hejnał”*, 40.

guest appearances as a guitarist in various broadcasts or during concerts of bands he co-founded.



Illus. 5: A photograph of Adam Epler from *Radio Informator*, 1939. Source: *Radio-Informator 2* (1939), 204.

The first known instrumental undertaking of Epler was the Polish Schrammel Quartet, which was active at the turn of 1933. The ensemble performed music in the style of *Schrammelmusik*, a kind of folk music from Vienna, created at the end of the 19th century on the basis of the work of Johann and Josef Schrammel.<sup>73</sup> The Polish Schrammel consisted of Maria Bogucka (squeezebox), Wilfrid Gerhardt (first violin), Dr Roman Krzysztalski (second violin) and Adam Epler, who played the guitar and was the ensemble's manager.<sup>74</sup> Epler was also responsible for compiling the scores for the quartet. From the surviving radio announcements we know of only four concerts of those musicians together:

<sup>73</sup> E. Weber, 'Schrammelmusik', in 'Oesterreichisches Musiklexikon online', [https://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik\\_S/Schrammelmusik.xml](https://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik_S/Schrammelmusik.xml), accessed 6 July 2020.

<sup>74</sup> *Radjo*, 49 (1932), IV.

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme	Performers
1.	4 December 1932	[Radio concert as part of the 3rd <i>Wesoła Niedziela Radiowa Lwowa</i> ] <sup>75</sup>	1. Johann Schrammel: <i>Nie ma jak Wiedeń – marsz</i> , 2. Johann Brahms: <i>Walc A-dur</i> , 3. Rudolf Siczynski: <i>Wiedeń, miasto moich marzeń</i> , 4. Ralph Benatzky: <i>Grinzing</i> , 5. Marcelo Tupinambá: <i>Tanghino brasileiro</i> , 6. Werner R. Heymann: <i>Walc z filmu „Kongres tańczy”</i> , 7. Adam Epler: <i>Cudze chwalicie. Zbiór kujawiaków</i> , 8. Adam Epler: <i>Od ucha. Zbiór oberków</i> .	Maria Bogucka (squeezebox), Wilfrid Gerhardt (violin I), Roman Krzysztalski (violin II), Adam Epler (guitar, director)
2.	25 December 1932	<i>Z piosenką przez Lwów (Bummel po Lwowie)</i> arr. by W. Budzyński and A. Epler <sup>76</sup>	no data available	Polish Schrammel and soloists
3.	12 February 1933	<i>To było takie znane</i> , light music audition arr. by W. Budzyński and A. Epler <sup>77</sup>	no data available	Polish Schrammel
4.	16 April 1933	<i>Z piosenką przez Lwów (Bummel po Lwowie)</i> , light music audition arr. by W. Budzyński and A. Epler <sup>78</sup>	no data available	Polish Schrammel and soloists

Table 3: Concerts of the Polish Schrammel Ensemble with the participation of Adam Epler.

This collaboration was probably short, as the dates on the manuscripts of arrangements and compositions for this ensemble cover a period of seven months, from June 1932 to January 1933. After this time, the ensemble most probably ceased its activities. It reappeared in the press announcements of radio shows in July 1934, but with

<sup>75</sup> 'Co usłyszymy dziś przez radio', *Chwila* (5 Dec. 1932), 17.

<sup>76</sup> 'Z piosenką przez Lwów (*Bummel po Lwowie*) w opracowaniu W. Budzyńskiego i A. Eplera.' 'Co usłyszymy dziś przez radio', *Chwila* (26 Dec. 1932), 10.

<sup>77</sup> 'To było takie znane, lekka audycja muzyczna w opr. W. Budzyńskiego i A. Eplera.' 'Nasz korespondent donosi...', *Radjo*, 7 (1933), 12.

<sup>78</sup> 'Z piosenką przez Lwów (*Bummel po Lwowie*). Lekka audycja muzyczna w opr. Adama Eplera i Wiktora Budzyńskiego.' 'Co usłyszymy dziś przez radio', *Chwila* (17 Apr. 1933), 11.

different players. Only Wilfrid Gerhardt (first violin) remained from the previous group, while new members were Roman Korecki (second violin), Konstanty Maurycy (squeezebox) and Stanisław Ćwikliński (guitar).<sup>79, 80</sup>

## Lviv Guitar Trio

An exceptional musical activity of Epler's was co-founding the Lviv Guitar Trio (press announcements also used the names Adam Epler's Guitar Trio or 'Hejnał' Guitar Trio from Lviv), the first band of this type in Poland. In interwar Poland the classical guitar was not considered a solo instrument. Although in that period in Western Europe it started to gain recognition among both listeners and artists thanks to the activity of Andres Segovia,<sup>81</sup> in Poland it did not enjoy popularity as a concert instrument. It was treated as an accompaniment instrument in mandolin orchestras, or in duos with singing or mandolin. Only Zofia Zdziennicka-Bergerowa, an artist from Warsaw, promoted solo guitar performance by publishing the first twentieth-century school for unaccompanied guitar, and by composing the first guitar miniatures, among others.<sup>82</sup> Against this background, the creation of a guitar trio in Poland was an exception.

The members of the trio changed over the years. Epler was a permanent member of the group and its manager at the same time. Most probably the remaining members were recruited from the guitarists of 'Hejnał'. According to preserved press announcements and the photograph kept by Epler-Matuchniak, apart from Epler, the members of the trio were: in 1935—Edward Bednarczuk and Michał Becko, in 1937—Józef Oszczytko and Edward Bednarczuk, in 1938—Józef Oszczytko and Rudolf Szpala. An unusual concert in terms of its performers was that of 19 September 1935, when Epler (both as the orchestra's conductor and the guitarist in the trio) was replaced by another guitarist,

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<sup>79</sup> *Radjo*, 27 (1934), 12.

<sup>80</sup> 'Radjo', *ABC* (4 July 1934), 7.

<sup>81</sup> A. Wendland, *Gitara w twórczości Aleksandra Tansmana* (Łódź: Ars Longa, 1996), 29–30.

<sup>82</sup> W. Gurgul, *Bibliografia polskich druków muzycznych z udziałem gitary wydanych w latach 1901–1939 wraz ze szczegółowym omówieniem wybranych pozycji* (Tarnów: Instytut Muzyki i Tańca, 2020), 28–30.



Mieczysław Miciek,<sup>83</sup> who held the position of deputy conductor in the orchestra.<sup>84</sup>

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme <sup>85</sup>	Performers
1.	20 December 1934	Orchestral concert of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by A. Epler with the Lviv Guitar Trio <sup>86</sup>	5. Felice Blangini: <i>Vanne al mio bene</i>	Lviv Guitar Trio, Orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler
2.	23 January 1935	<i>Na polską nutę</i> , radio concert of the orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' with the guitar Trio, dir. by A. Epler <sup>87</sup>	4. Piwoński: <i>Gdy powrócisz – polonez</i> (arr. by A. Epler)	Lviv Guitar Trio dir. by Adam Epler
3.	8 February 1935	[radio broadcast] <sup>88</sup>	1. Leonhard von Call: <i>Trio C-dur</i> op. 26, 2. Fernando Sor: <i>Walce</i> .	Trio guitar of Epler

<sup>83</sup> *Fala*, 37 (1935), [9]; the trio performer the polonaise *Gdy powrócisz* by Piwoński.

<sup>84</sup> 'Z Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał”'.

<sup>85</sup> In the Programme section only the pieces performed by the trio during a given concert were noted.

<sup>86</sup> 'Lwowsk. Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. A. Eplera z udz. Lwowsk. Tria Gitarowego.' *Fala*, 11 (1934), [6].

<sup>87</sup> '*Na polską nutę*, koncert radiowy w wyk. ork. Lwowsk. Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” z udz. Tria gitarowego pod dyr. A. Eplera.' *Fala*, 3 (1935), [5].

<sup>88</sup> *Fala*, 5 (1935), [7].

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme <sup>85</sup>	Performers
4.	19 June 1935	<i>W zielonym gaiku</i> [In a green boscage], Russian folk music arr. by A. Epler <sup>89</sup>	1. <i>W zielonym gaiku</i> , 2. <i>Łuczyna Łuczynuszka, dumka</i> , 3. <i>Czy w sadzie, czy w ogrodzie</i> , 4. <i>Jarzębina</i> , 5. <i>Nad rzeczką</i> , 6. <i>Ach Natasza</i> , 7. <i>Korobejnyki</i> 8. <i>Przy dolinie, dumka</i> , 9. <i>Nie smuć się miła, romans</i> , 10. <i>Koło mostu, koło rzeczki</i> , 11. <i>W naszej wiosce</i> , 12. <i>Matka Wołga, dumka</i> , 13. <i>Nasze dziewczęta</i> , 14. <i>Moja mateczka, dumka</i> , 15. <i>Na polanie</i> .	Adam Epler (prim guitar), Michał Becko (prim guitar), Edward Bednarczuk (terz guitar)
5.	15 October 1937	[radio broadcast] <sup>90</sup>	Leonhard von Call: <i>Trio C-dur</i> , Op. 26	Guitar Trio 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler
6.	23 October 1937	Jubilee audition in Polish Radio on the occasion of 15th anniversary of 'Hejnał' and 100th radio audition <sup>91</sup>	Polish dances from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (arr. by A. Epler)	Lviv Guitar Trio (Adam Epler, Józef Oszczytko, Edward Bednarczuk), Orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler

<sup>89</sup> 'W zielonym gaiku, ludowa muzyka rosyjska w opr. A. Eplera.' 'Słuchajmy dziś Radja!', *Chwila* (19 June 1935), 4.

<sup>90</sup> *Antena*, 41 (1937), XXIV.

<sup>91</sup> 'Audycja jubileuszowa w Polskim Radiu z okazji 15-lecia „Hejnału” oraz setnej audycji radiowej.' 'Słuchajmy dziś radia.' The correspondence between the author and Barbara Epler-Matuchniak from 16 May 2020.

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme <sup>85</sup>	Performers
7.	20 February 1938	<i>Kwiaty polskie</i> [Polish flowers], entertainment performed by the Orchestra of the mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by A. Epler, Guitar Trio and T. Brodzki – songs <sup>92</sup>	no data available	Lviv Guitar Trio, Orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler, Tadeusz Brodzki (songs)
8.	12 October 1938	<i>Sylwetki lutnistów staropolskich</i> [Polish lutenists], 1st audition from the cycle of auditions on music history, prepared by Maria Szczepańska and Adam Epler <sup>93</sup>	Polish lute music	Guitar Trio 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler, Dr Maria Szczepańska (commentary), Kazimierz Wajda (recitation)
9.	9 November 1938	<i>Sylwetki lutnistów staropolskich</i> [Early polish lutenists], radio audition prepared by M. Szczepańska and A. Epler <sup>94</sup>	Polish lute music	Guitar Trio 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler
10.	3 December 1938	<i>Melodie węgierskie</i> [Hungarian melodies], music audition arr. by Adam Epler. Based on the collections of H. Molier and Rudolf Kleineck. Song lyrics by A. Rysiecki <sup>95</sup>	Based on folk themes arr. by A. Epler	Orchestra of the Lviv Mandolin Society 'Hejnał' dir. by Adam Epler, Stefan Śnieżek (bass), Guitar Trio (Adam Epler, Józef Oszczytko, Rudolf Szpala)

<sup>92</sup> 'Kwiaty polskie, koncert rozrywkowy. Wyk. Ork. Koła Mandolinistów „Hejnał” pod dyr. A. Eplera, Trio gitarowe i T. Brodzki – piosenki.' *Chwila* (9 Nov. 1938), 10.

<sup>93</sup> 'Sylwetki lutnistów staropolskich, 1-sza audycja z cyklu aud. muz. historycznych, w opracowaniu dr Marii Szczepańskiej i Adama Eplera.' 'Radjo', *Nowy Dziennik* (11 Oct. 1938), 8.

<sup>94</sup> 'Sylwetki lutnistów staropolskich, audycja radiowa w opr. M. Szczepańskiej i A. Eplera.' 'Słuchajmy dziś radia', *Chwila* (9 Nov. 1938), 10.

<sup>95</sup> 'Melodie węgierskie, audycja Muzyczna w oprac. Adama Eplera. Na podstawie zbiorów H. Moliera i Rud[olfa] Kleinecka. Teksty piosenek A. Rysieckiego.' *Antena*, 48 (1938), XXV.

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme <sup>85</sup>	Performers
11.	4 March 1939	Concert of light music <sup>96</sup>	no data available	Orchestra od the Lviv Radio dir. by Tadeusz Serebyński, Janina Rawicz-Jasińska (singing), Aleksander Surgonow (singing), Guitar Trio and Adam Epler (guitar)

Table 4. Concerts of the Lviv Guitar Trio with the participation of Adam Epler.

From the press announcements we know the trio's repertoire. It can be divided into two categories, arrangements and original music. The former included: Felice Blangini's *Vanne al mio bene*, polonaise *Kiedy powrócisz* [When you come back] by unknown Piwoński, fifteen Russian folk melodies under the collective title *W zielonym gaiku*, arrangements of Hungarian folk themes about which no further information is available, and Polish lute dances from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The latter are unique in this list; they will be discussed later in this article.

The original repertoire consists of two compositions: Leonhard von Call's *Trio in C major*, Op. 26, and Fernando Sor's *Waltzes. Trio* by von Call was a widely available work at the time, published in the new editions by B. Schott's Söhne, edited by Walter Götz<sup>97</sup> and in Musikverlag Zimmermann, edited by Heinrich Albert.<sup>98</sup> It is unclear, however, which Sor's waltzes are referred to in the announcements—there are no guitar trios in this composer's oeuvre; the waltzes performed by the Lviv Guitar Trio must therefore also have been some kind of arrangement. It is possible that Epler used *Six Waltzes* for guitar duo from Op. 44 bis or *Six Waltzes* for guitar duo, Op. 36. The first press announcement of the concert on 8 February 1935 also noted that the ensemble was preparing to perform works by Filippo Gragnani (most probably

<sup>96</sup> 'Koncert muzyki lekkiej.' 'Radio. Dzisiejszy program radiowy', *Głos Poranny* (4 Mar. 1939), 9.

<sup>97</sup> L. von Call, *Leichtes Trio in C-Dur für 3 Gitarren* (Mainz: B. Schott's Sohne, 1929).

<sup>98</sup> L. de Call, *Leichtes Trio für drei Gitarren*, Op. 26 (Frankfurt am Main: Musikverlag Zimmermann).

*Trio*, Op. 12) and Ferdinand Carulli,<sup>99</sup> but subsequent press announcements only included the two previously mentioned compositions.<sup>100</sup>



Illus. 6: The Lviv Guitar trio, consisting of Adam Epler, Józef Oszczytko and Edward Bednarczuk after the premiere concert with Polish dances for lute on 23 October 1937. Source: the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak, *Radio-Informator* 2 (1939), 204.

## Wesoła Lwowska Fala

None of the above-mentioned activities brought Epler and his orchestra as many listeners as *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* created by Budzyński, the

<sup>99</sup> 'Koncert mandolinistów i tria gitarowego'.

<sup>100</sup> 'Koncert tria gitarowego', *Biuletyn Radjofoniczny dla użytku prasy*, 5 (1935), 16.

most popular radio programme of the Second Polish Republic, gathering people from all over Poland at their radios.

Although not much information about Epler's participation in these broadcasts has survived, we know from press reports of subsequent issues of *Fala* that 'Hejnał' was considered an integral part of the programme.<sup>101</sup> In a booklet *Szczepko i Tońko. Djalogi radjowe z „Wesołej Lwowskiej Fali”*, published in 1934, in the introduction written by Juliusz Petry, the director of the radio at that time, there was a sentence that indirectly referred to the orchestra's performances and to one of Epler's compositions, based on a popular song by the Lviv batyars:<sup>102</sup> 'Szczepko and Tońko [...] were awakened by the sound of mandolins which played the *Gródek-marsz* carelessly.'<sup>103</sup>

According to press announcements and described photographs (preserved at Epler-Matuchniak's home), Epler participated as a guitarist in *III Wesoła Niedziela Radiowa Lwowa* on 4 December 1932, the twenty-fifth *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* on 5 November 1933,<sup>104</sup> and in the radio show *Imieniny Szczepka i Tońka* [The Name Day of Szczepko and Tońko], on unknown day of 1939.<sup>105</sup> There is also the information from 1 April 1934 which refers to Epler's music: '*Wesoła Lwowska Fala* will bring us [...] by general request a repetition of the collection of songs of the Lviv suburb entitled *Z piosenką przez Lwów*, arranged by Mr Budzyński and Mr Epler,'<sup>106</sup> that is, a repetition of the very popular broadcast *Bummel po Lwowie*, for which Epler wrote the music.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> [Lucy], 'Pięćdziesiąta fala...', *Dziennik Wileński. Dodatek kulturalno-literacki* (29 Apr. 1934), V.

<sup>102</sup> J. Habela, Z. Kurzowa, *Lwowskie piosenki uliczne, kabaretowe i okolicznościowe do 1939 roku* (Kraków: PWM, 1989), 109–112.

<sup>103</sup> 'Szczepka i Tońka [...] budziły dźwięki mandolin, rżnących na odlew *Gródek-marsza*,' K. Wajda, H. Vogelfanger, *Szczepko i Tońko. Djalogi radjowe z „Wesołej Lwowskiej Fali”*, ed. J. Petry (Lwów: Drukarnia Urzędnicza, 1934, reprint: Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Zakładu Narodowego imienia Ossolińskich, 1989).

<sup>104</sup> 'Program radjowy', *Kurier Warszawski* (4 Nov. 1933, morning issue), 8.

<sup>105</sup> The correspondence between the author and Barbara Epler-Matuchniak from 16 May 2020.

<sup>106</sup> 'Wesoła fala lwowska przyniesie nam [...] na ogólne żądanie powtórzenie zbioru piosenek przedmieścia lwowskiego p.t. *Z piosenką przez Lwów* w opracowaniu pp. Budzyńskiego i Eplera.' 'Nasz korespondent donosi...', *Radjo*, 14 (1934), 10.

<sup>107</sup> 'Hallo! Hallo!', 46.



Illus. 7: The performers of the twenty-fifth *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* on 5 November 1933. Source: the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

Together with Budzyński, Epler also took part in the composition competition as part of *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* on 30 September 1934. Their piece *Lwowska Noc—boston serenade* (Epler composed the music and Budzyński wrote the lyrics) won the second prize.<sup>108</sup>

The first prize winner was then Kazimierz Abratowski<sup>109</sup> for his piece *Bez miłości* [Without love] (also to the lyrics by Budzyński), the third prize went to Alfred Schütz<sup>110</sup> and the fourth prize to Zy-

<sup>108</sup> ‘Konkurs piosenkarski lwowskich kompozytorów’, *Chwila* (22 Oct. 1934), 8.

<sup>109</sup> Kazimierz Abratowski (1893–1974)—conductor, pianist, pedagogue and composer, born in Lviv; from 1937 until his death he was associated with Mościce, Tarnów. ‘Abratowski, Kazimierz’, in ‘Cyfrowa Biblioteka Polskiej Piosenki’, [https://bibliotekapiosenki.pl/osoby/Abratowski\\_Kazimierz](https://bibliotekapiosenki.pl/osoby/Abratowski_Kazimierz), accessed 6 July 2020.

<sup>110</sup> Alfred Schütz (1910–1999)—composer, pianist, conductor and radio personality. Before the war he was connected with Lviv and Warsaw, after the war he lived in Brazil and Germany; the author of the song *Czerwone maki na Monte Cassino*. J. Krassowski, ‘Schütz (Szyc), Alfred’, in M. Podhajski, ed., *Kompozytorzy polscy 1918–2000, 2: Biogramy* (Gdańsk–Warszawa: Akademia Muzyczna im. Fryderyka Chopina w Warszawie–Akademia Muzyczna im. Stanisława Moniuszki w Gdańsku, 2005), 885–886.

gmunt Schatz.<sup>111</sup> On the 21 October 1934, the first two compositions were performed before the radio programme *Wesoła Lwowska Fala*.<sup>112</sup>



Illus. 8: The participants of the composition competition of *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* from 30 September 1934. Source: the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

Epler, as a guitarist, occasionally performed in other broadcasts which were not connected with Budzyński and *Wesoła Lwowska Fala*. These included Wiktor Hausman's radio show *Imć Pan Boruta* [Mr Boruta] on 14 January 1934,<sup>113</sup> the programme *Piosenki, ballady i duety przy gitarze* [Songs, ballades and duos at the guitar] on 12 March 1939 during which he accompanied Tadeusz Brodzki<sup>114</sup> or the programmes *Muzyka obiadowa* [Dinner music] on 7 November 1937 and

<sup>111</sup> Zygmunt Schatz (1899–ca. 1942)—violinist and composer, graduate of Lviv and Vienna universities; in the 1920s he gave concerts all over Europe, later connected with Lviv and Katowice. ‘Schatz Zygmunt Sim’, in ‘Wirtualny Sztetl’, <https://sztetl.org.pl/pl/biogramy/3709-schatz-zygmunt>, accessed 6 July 2020.

<sup>112</sup> ‘Konkurs piosenkarski’.

<sup>113</sup> ‘Tydzień Literacki Polskiego Radja’, *Radjo*, 3 (1934), 3–4.

<sup>114</sup> ‘Program radjowy’, *Dziennik Polski* (13 Mar. 1938), 6.



*Echa przeszłości* on 7 July 1938 during which he accompanied the vocal duo of Tadeusz Brodzki and Władysław Gryczyński.<sup>115</sup>



Illus. 9: Adam Epler as an accompanist of Tadeusz Brodzki and Władysław Gryczyński during the show *Muzyka obiadowa* on 7 November 1937. Source: the collection of Barbara Epler-Matuchniak.

## Lute music

At the end of 1938 there was a series of three broadcasts *Sylwetki lutnistów staropolskich*, pioneering for lute music performance in Poland, which were conducted by Dr Maria Szczepańska<sup>116</sup> and Epler, who

<sup>115</sup> *Antena*, 27 (1938), XVII.

<sup>116</sup> Maria Klementyna Szczepańska (1902–1962)—musicologist, graduate of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów under the guidance of Adolf Chybiński, after the war connected with the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, researcher of Polish early music. M. Piekarski, *Muzyka we Lwowie*: (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie SEDNO, 2018), 284–287.

played the guitar. The shows took place on 12 October,<sup>117</sup> 9 November,<sup>118</sup> and 19 December 1938.<sup>119</sup> The first broadcast featured works by Valentin Bakfark and Wojciech Długoraj,<sup>120</sup> while the second broadcast featured works by Kazimierz Stanisław Rudomina-Dusiacki, Bartłomiej Pękiel, and an anonymous composition entitled *Duda*.<sup>121</sup> No information about the programme of the third transmission has survived. The first two broadcasts also featured Kazimierz Wajda (recitation of poetry by Vespasian Kochowski) and the Lviv Guitar Trio.

This was not the first appearance of lute music performed by Epler on the radio. The premiere performance of the arrangements took place a year earlier, on 23 October 1937, during a broadcast celebrating the 15th anniversary of ‘Hejnał’ and its hundredth radio appearance. This is evidenced by a photograph preserved in the Epler-Matuchniak collection, taken after the broadcast, which bears the following description:

Guitar trio consisting of Adam Epler, Józef Oszczympko, Edward Bednarczuk performed Polish dances from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries arranged by Adam Epler for the first time on Polish Radio, 23 October 1937, 8:00–8:45 p.m.<sup>122</sup>

The collection of Epler-Matuchniak also contains the script of the radio play *Przy kominku* [At the fireplace], which was broadcast on 26 March 1938.<sup>123</sup> Among various technical notes there is also information about Epler’s performance during the broadcast of three untitled lute compositions—two by Valentin Bakfark and one by Wojciech Długoraj.

It was not until the early 1950s that lute compositions became widely available in Poland, when Szczepańska compiled works by Bartłomiej Pękiel, Diomedes Cato, Wojciech Długoraj and Jakub Polak and

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<sup>117</sup> ‘Radjo’, *Nowy Dziennik* (11 Oct. 1938), 8.

<sup>118</sup> ‘Słuchajmy dziś radia’, *Chwila* (9 Nov. 1938), 10.

<sup>119</sup> ‘Na fali radiowej’, *Czas* (19 Dec. 1938), 9.

<sup>120</sup> J.P., ‘Muzyka w radio’, *Czas* (20 Oct. 1938), 13.

<sup>121</sup> J.P., ‘Muzyka w radio’, *Czas* (15 Nov. 1938), 13.

<sup>122</sup> ‘Trio gitarowe w składzie Adam Epler, Józef Oszczympko, Edward Bednarczuk wykonało po raz pierwszy w Polskim Radio tańce polskie z XVI i XVII w. w opracowaniu Adama Eplera, dnia 23.10.1937 godz. 20.00–20.45.’

<sup>123</sup> ‘Radio’, *ABC* (26 Mar. 1938), 2.

published them in Wydawnictwo Dawnej Muzyki Polskiej.<sup>124</sup> Epler was thus the first Polish guitarist to draw on the legacy of Polish lute players.

## Compositions and arrangements

Epler's compositional output is primarily associated with 'Hejnał', as most of his works are intended for orchestra or mandolin ensemble. Although it is difficult to place his compositions in a broader context, as Polish compositions for mandolin orchestra, both pre- and post-war, are a completely unexplored subject, it may be concluded from the surviving scores that Epler mastered instrumentation for mandolin orchestra very well. His works were mostly written for large orchestral ensembles, with *divisi* of voices and parts of instruments less frequently encountered in mandolin orchestras: the mandolin piccolo and mandocello. He also composed and arranged for smaller ensembles, including mandolin quartets and duos for mandolin and guitar.

Most of his works were so-called light music. He reached for various styles, e.g. he composed tangos, as well as music based on the folklore of other countries (a cycle of pieces referring to Hungarian folk music). Above all, however, he was a populariser of native folklore, and in particular he reached for motifs characteristic of Lviv, with Lviv songs at the forefront. A quotation from Stanisław Jachowicz's poem *Wieś* [Countryside]<sup>125</sup> became a motto of his work:

You praise others,  
You do not know your own,  
You yourselves do not know  
what you have.<sup>126</sup>

His ability to develop folk musical material was emphasised in the press, for example in the context of the programme *Szlachcic na*

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<sup>124</sup> G. Joachimiak, 'Tabulatura lutniowa Wodzickich jako przedmiot edycji muzycznej – przegląd problematyki', *Muzyka*, 3 (2015), 92.

<sup>125</sup> [Epler-Matuchniak], *Adam Epler I "Hejnał"*.

<sup>126</sup> 'Cudze chwalicie, / Swego nie znacie, / Sami nie wiecie, / Co posiadacie.' S. Jachowicz, *Pisma różne wierszem Stanisława Jachowicza* (Warszawa: S. Jachowicz, 1853), 102.

*zagrodzie* [A nobleman in his land] on 17 October 1937, to which Epler wrote the music:

it was a programme [...] completely different, [...] the credit goes first to the author of the text, the poet St. Rogowski, and to the hard-working amateur musician Dr A. Epler, who took care of the musical background. Thanks to the united efforts of these two people, in their painstaking research, they managed to reach truly beautiful details of original and unknown folklore.<sup>127</sup>

Here I will not list all of Epler's compositions and arrangements, both manuscripts and published works—this is a subject for a separate study; it is enough to say that the number of original compositions reaches about twenty items (of which six have been published), and arrangements—nearly a hundred. I will limit myself to mentioning only some of the titles of his compositions:

- *Hejnał – marsz,*
- *Na Wesolej Lwowskiej Fali – marsz,*
- *Gródek – marsz,*
- *Z piosenką przez Lwów – potpourri lwowskich piosenek,*
- *Za drągiem – zbiór sztajerków lwowskich,*
- *Na Kleparowie – polka,*
- *Wspomnienia z Budapesztu – potpourri ludowych melodii węgierskich,*
- *Tanec węgierski in D major,*
- *Węgierka – czardasz na motywach ludowych,*
- *Lwowska noc – boston-serenada,*
- *Gdy panna Mania kocha swego Frania! – tango andrusowskie,*
- *Conchita – tango,*
- *Grenada – tango,*
- *Parana – tango,*
- *Miłe wspomnienie – polonez,*
- *Od ucha – zbiór oberków,*

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<sup>127</sup> 'była to audycja [...] zupełnie inna, [...] zasługa to w pierwszym rzędzie autora tekstu poety St. Rogowskiego i pracowitego muzyka amatora dr. A. Eplera, który zajął się opracowaniem tła muzycznego. Zjednoczonym wysiłkiem tych dwóch ludzi udało im się w żmudnych poszukiwaniach dotrzeć do naprawdę pięknych szczegółów folkloru oryginalnego i nieznanego.' [Mart], 'Na lwowskiej antenie. Szlachta zagrodowa mówi i śpiewa', *Dziennik Polski* (28 Oct. 1937), 7.

- *Cudze chwalicie, swego nie znacie* – zbiór kujawiaków,
- *Na polską nutę* – zbiór melodii ludowych wg Glogera.

Mandolina I A.

Tożkowi i Szczepkowi

Z piosenką przez Lwów

POTPOURRI

Adam Epler

Na Lewandówce w ciemnym ustroniu...

1. *Andantino*  
Signal stacji  
Gitary solo  
pp piórkowat szybko  
a tempo  
Git. Solo M-la i Meccello solo  
pp staccato

staccato staccato piórkowat

Walc  
tempo żywe  
f  
pp  
crescendo  
sf sf jeden zgra wszyscy rallentando

2. Sztajer  
f sf pp sf pp sf pp sf pp

Copyright 1935. G. Seyfarth, Lwów  
Wszelkie prawa zastrzeżone

1

Illus. 10: A fragment of the mandolin IA part from the potpourri *Z piosenką przez Lwów*. Source: A. Epler, *Z piosenką przez Lwów* (Lwów: G. Seyfarth, 1935).

I will also mention some of the names of composers whose works he used as an arranger. He published the arrangements of the compositions by Alfred Schütz, Emil Palm, Fabian Tymolski, Satto Cresta, Pál Ábrahám, among others. There are also manuscripts preserved of the arrangements of the pieces by e.g. Ludwig van Beethoven, Peter Tchaikovsky, Charles Gounod, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Jacques Offenbach, Franz von Suppé and Giuseppe Verdi.

The information has survived about four concerts of other mandolin ensembles performing his compositions:

His compositions and arrangements were published by two companies: chamber music was published by the Instytut Wydawniczy 'Pro-Arte' from Lviv, active in 1928–1939,<sup>128</sup> and orchestral works by

<sup>128</sup> M. Pieczonka, 'Lwowskie firmy wydawnicze w latach 1918–1939', in J. Jarowiecki, ed., *Książki, czasopisma, biblioteki Krakowa i Lwowa XIX i XX wieku* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe WSP, 1993), 53.

the well-known pre-war publishing house of Gustav Seyfarth. Compositions and arrangements published by 'Pro-Arte' were included in two series: *Mandolina-Skrzypce-Gitara solo* [Mandolin-Violin-Guitar solo] and *Najpiękniejsze utwory na kwartety mandolinowe lub skrzypcowe* [The most beautiful mandolin or violin quartets], while works published by Seyfarth were released in the series *Seyfartha Orkiestra Mandolinowa* [Seyfarth's Mandolin Orchestra].<sup>129</sup>

No.	Date	Type of concert	Programme	Performers
1.	25 November 1934	Radio concert in Katowice <sup>130</sup>	<i>Gródek – marsz</i>	Moniuszko Mandolin Orchestra from Wełnowiec, dir. by Kazimierz Bończa-Tomaszewski
2.	18 August 1937	Radio concert in Katowice <sup>131</sup>	<i>Z piosenką przez Lwów – potpourri</i>	Mandolin Orchestra of the Polish Association of Employees in Hajduki Wielkie, dir. by Henryk Król
3.	23 March 1938	Contest of Mandolin Orchestras of the Association of Music Lovers of the Silesian Voivodeship in Katowice <sup>132</sup>	Adam Epler's piece	no data available
4.	7 July 1939	Radio Concert in Katowice <sup>133</sup>	<i>Od ucha – zbiór oberków</i>	Mandolin Orchestra of the 'Baidon' Ironworks, dir. by Emil Kowolik

Table 5: Adam Epler's pieces performed by other ensembles.

## Epilogue

The symbolic culmination of Epler's rich artistic activity was the last broadcast featuring the 'Hejnał', which took place after the outbreak of

<sup>129</sup> See Gurgul, *Bibliografia polskich druków muzycznych*, 53.

<sup>130</sup> *Antena*, 8 (1934), XXIII.

<sup>131</sup> *Antena*, 33 (1937), XV.

<sup>132</sup> F. Sachse, 'Zawody Orkiestr Mandolinowych Stowarzyszenia Miłośników Muzyki Województwa Śląskiego', *Śląskie Wiadomości Muzyczne*, 4 (1938), 11.

<sup>133</sup> *Antena*, 27 (1939), XXI.

World War II, on 2 September 1939.<sup>134</sup> At the end of October 1939, Epler and his family moved from Busko to Lviv, where he started to work as a music teacher in a secondary school.<sup>135</sup>

In connection with his work as a judge and his membership in the Polish Army, he was arrested by the Russians on 10 April 1940; he was imprisoned in the Brygidki Prison.<sup>136</sup> His family was taken to be deported to the East on 13 April 1940.<sup>137</sup> Adam Franciszek Epler was shot by the NKVD in May/June 1940. He is listed on the so-called Ukrainian Katyń List under disposition number 72/1-72.<sup>138</sup> His body was most likely buried in Bykivnia, now a district of Kyiv, where the fourth of the so-called Katyń cemeteries was opened in 2012.<sup>139</sup>

Epler was the first guitarist to perform the works of Polish lutenists, the founder of the first Polish guitar trio, a musician of the *Wesoła Lwowska Fala*, an artist nurturing Polish folklore, creating elaborate compositions for mandolin orchestra, as well as writing music for many popular radio shows of the Polish Radio Lviv, which were later broadcast all over Poland.

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<sup>134</sup> ‘Program radiowy’, *Dziennik Polski* (2 Sept. 1939), 9.

<sup>135</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, AHM\_PnW\_2611.

<sup>136</sup> Z. Gajowniczek, G. Jakubowski, J. Tucholski, *Śladem zbrodni katyńskiej* (Warszawa: CAMSWiA RP, 1998), 427.

<sup>137</sup> Epler-Matuchniak, AHM\_PnW\_2611.

<sup>138</sup> M. Tarczyński, Z. Gajowniczek, eds., *Listy katyńskiej ciąg dalszy. Straceni na Ukrainie* (Warszawa: Niezależny Komitet Historyczny Badania Zbrodni Katyńskiej–Polska Fundacja Katyńska–Centralna Biblioteka Wojskowa, 1994), 21.

<sup>139</sup> ‘Bykownia – miejsce upamiętnienia 3,5 tys. polskich ofiar NKWD na Ukrainie’, *Dzieje.pl* 9 April 2015, <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/bykownia-miejsce-upamietnienia-35-tys-polskich-ofiar-nkwd-naukrainie>, accessed 6 July 2020.

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