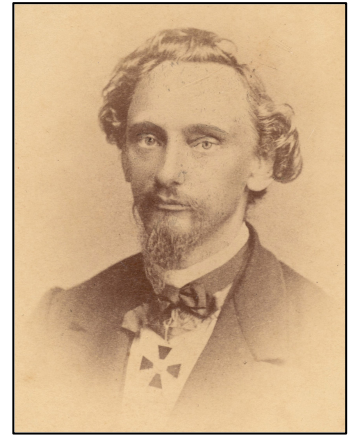


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# Julius von Szymanowski's Legacy: The H-plasty for forehead skin defects

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## Introduction and Background

The forehead is a prominent aesthetic and functional unit of the face, making reconstruction after skin defects particularly challenging. Achieving optimal outcomes requires techniques that balance defect closure, tension minimization and scar camouflage.

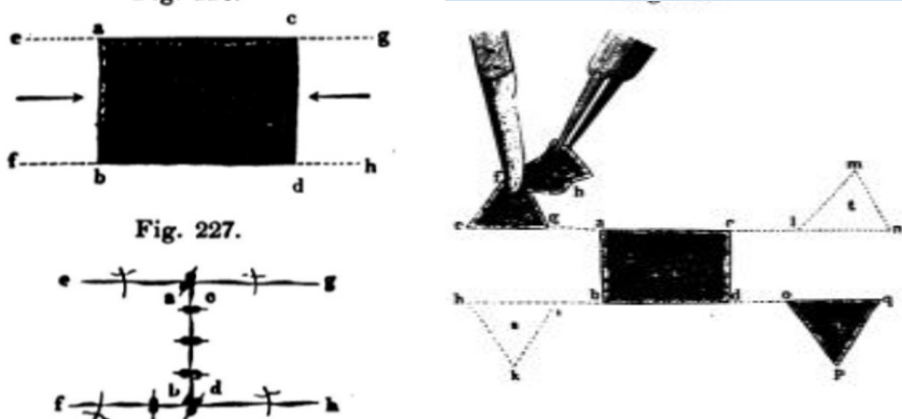
Over 150 years ago, Julius von Szymanowski introduced the H-plasty, a method based on double opposing rectangular advancement flaps. Despite the emergence of numerous modern techniques, the H-plasty remains highly relevant today. This study revisits Szymanowski's original concept and evaluates the continued clinical value of the H-plasty in contemporary forehead reconstruction.

## Methods

A two-part analysis was conducted:

- Historical review of Szymanowski's surgical writings and the original description of the H-plasty.
- Retrospective case series of patients undergoing forehead reconstruction using the H-plasty in our plastic surgery department over a two-year period.

Collected data included: Patient demographics, defect size and location, technical modifications, aesthetic outcomes (surgeon and patient assessment) and complications.



## Conclusion

The H-plasty remains a cornerstone technique for forehead reconstruction, reflecting enduring surgical principles: Tension management, scar camouflage, respect for facial subunits.

*Szymanowski's 19th-century innovation continues to guide 21st-century reconstructive practice.*

## Results

The H-plasty provided strategic advancement of tissue, preserving essential aesthetic landmarks such as: Eyebrows, glabella and hairline.

- All patients achieved satisfactory cosmetic results.
- Low complication rate, with only minor wound dehiscence and transient edema observed.
- Particularly effective for small to medium mid-forehead and paramedian defects.
- As random pattern flaps, the ratio of length to base should not exceed 1.5 to 1.
- Its geometric design allowed for optimal tension redistribution and scar placement along natural facial lines.

