

The Editor's Column

We join in mourning the loss of Ada Shilo, may her memory be for a blessing, who suddenly departed from us, before her time, on the 6th day of Av, 5761. We became accustomed to seeing Ada who attended every lecture and meeting and who was always willing to help in any way she could – in organization, taking minutes, and concerning herself with our members and guests. It will be difficult to attend the Tel Aviv meetings and not expect to see Ada enter the door or already be there, prepared, before anyone else had arrived.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to our colleague Eitan and to the entire family. We will all remember Ada – may her memory be for a blessing.

To a great extent, this issue of *Sharsheret Hadorot* is really a continuation. Perhaps that is appropriate as it is being prepared in the summer, during the warm days of vacation, when it is not easy to begin new projects. This is not meant in any way to diminish from 'continuations.' After all, what is genealogy if it is not an emphasis on continuity, its research and study and if possible even learning a lesson from it?

In this issue, Giora Fuzailoff continues his comprehensive and interesting presentation on the Jews of Bukhara. This time he focuses on a specific topic that is vital to the functioning of the community – the transmission of leadership from one generation to the next. We are introduced to the rabbis who led the communities in Central Asia in both the religious and secular realms, their families, their connections with other communities and their unique activities.

Yehuda Klausner continues his analysis of the European rabbinate through the generations. This time, he focuses on the Hasidic rabbinate. A third installment will concentrate on the Hasidic rabbinic dynasties.

Rabbi Jacob Kleiman presents another article dealing with the connection between genealogy and modern biological research. In his first essay, he dealt with the common DNA marker of Kohanim, while in this issue he shows us how DNA research provides us with common markers found among Jews scattered throughout the Diaspora, located far from each other.

In the previous issue, 15:3, in an article based on Benjamin Meirtchak's lecture dealing with the Jewish military casualties in the Polish army during World War II, the monument erected in their memory on Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem was mentioned. Mr. David Shahar in this issue details the story behind the monument, those who worked on it and those who financed its creation.

Naturally, we have not overlooked regular genealogical research in this issue. Esther Ramon discusses the first stages of tracing her family that eventually leads back to the family's ancestor settling in the city of Karlsruhe, Germany in 1721.

Other topics covered in this issue are: Batya Unterchatz's many years at the Search Bureau for Missing Relatives; Mathilde Tagger's reports on the Genealogical Conference London 2001 and on the Fifth International Conference on Jewish Names that was held in Jerusalem; and the regular review of genealogical journals from France and Switzerland. A review of the journals appearing in English is found in the English section of this issue.

In the name of the journal's editorial staff, I extend best wishes for the New Year of 5762 to each of our readers with the sincere hope that it be a blessed year for all. To all those, both young and old, who will begin the year studying in various institutions, we hope you have a productive, pleasant and enjoyable year of learning.

Correction – In the previous issue, 15:3 an error appears in Esther Ramon's article *Mishpachology – In the Full Meaning of the Word*. On page XXXV, column 1, instead of Bernad, the name should be Behrens.

Yocheved Klausner

From the Desk of Hannah Furman
President of the Israel Genealogical Society

This summer, on the 6th of Av, 5761, with a heavy heart, we bade a final farewell to Ada Yashek-Shilo, may her memory be for a blessing, and we extend our condolences to Eitan and the entire family.

This issue is being published 'after the holidays.' As these lines are written, we have no idea what the day will bring and what news we will hear as we close our eyes at night. In spite of it all, life goes on and our routines continue.

A large delegation of our members attended the London Conference of the IAJGS. Old contacts were renewed while new ones were initiated. Those attending felt that the Conference was a great success and we can learn from the London experience as we plan the Jerusalem 2004 Conference. Harriet Kassow has been very successful in her contacts with our foreign subscribers of Sharsheret Hadorot to renew their subscriptions and new members have joined who came to us via our Internet website.

Expanding our membership is a challenge for all of us and we must continuously involve ourselves in the recruitment of new people. Several new ideas for our Society have been received and I address each and every one of our members to share any new thoughts they have with the goal of swelling our ranks.

I again call on our members to increase their involvement in the IGS and share their opinions. Anyone who has something to say, just sit down and write – either electronically or by mail, all of our addresses are appropriate for your comments.

I close with the hope that our new year of activity, 5762, will be one of further development of the IGS in every area.

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Ada Shilo – In Memory
Miriam Lava

On Thursday, 6 Av, 5761, Ada Shilo, the Ada of Eitan, left us forever.

I met Ada about three and a half years ago, at our Society's regular monthly meetings that took place in Jerusalem. Once the Tel Aviv branch was set up, the connection between us grew stronger. One year later, a crisis developed and some of the Tel Aviv branch members resigned. We thought that we would have to return to bygone days and again journey to Jerusalem for the monthly meetings.

Ada remained optimistic. She encouraged Eitan, who agreed to assume the chairmanship of the Tel Aviv branch, instilled the breath of life into all of us and because of her, the difficulties were surmounted and the Tel Aviv branch continued its activities.

Ada, with her sparkle, smile and perceptive remarks, drew near to every guest who attended the monthly lectures at Beit HaTanakh. Through her influence and powers of persuasion, that guest had no other choice than to join our branch.

Ada - the wise and noble. She related with complete honesty and gave her full attention to every problem that arose. She always had sage advice, drawing an idea that invariably solved the predicament from her wellspring of thoughts.

I had the privilege to talk to Ada on the telephone only a few hours before she lost consciousness forever. She asked, with a voice as clear as ever, how I was and wanted to know about everyone in my family. Ada found the strength to discuss with me future activities of the branch. She told me that the doctors finally knew which treatments would bring relief from her malignant illness. Procedures she was willing to undergo for the sake of Eitan, for her children, for her grandchildren, for her extended family and, in reality, for all of us.

The Tel Aviv branch of the Israel Genealogical Society has lost one of its central pillars. Eitan, we will never forget your Ada – our Ada.

Rabbinic Succession in Bukhara 1790-1930 *

Giora Fuzailoff

Translated from the Hebrew Original

Introduction

The hundred years between the end of the 18th century and the end of the 19th century saw a radical change in every aspect of Jewish life in Bukhara, Central Asia.

At the beginning of this period, the community was small, numbering between 3,000 and 5,000 souls, was poor, was concentrated in the city of Bukhara and lived under the rule of a fanatic and harsh Moslem regime that enforced many religious edicts against it. Its spiritual well being was in jeopardy both because of government pressure to convert to Islam and its physical isolation from any nearby center of Jewish life. This almost resulted in its total assimilation into the surrounding Moslem milieu. By the end of the 19th century, we see a flourishing prosperous community, numbering nearly twenty thousand, living in some thirty cities and towns throughout Central Asia with a small group living in Jerusalem. The emissary of the Sephardic Kolel to the cities of Bukhara in 5652/1892, Rabbi Benjamin ben Yohanan Ha-Cohen, points out in his report that he visited twenty-five cities throughout Central Asia. The community's members were involved in a multiplicity of industrial and commercial endeavors whose annual productivity was valued in the tens of millions of rubles. Their civil and legal standing among the general population had also improved.

The religious revival began with the arrival of the emissary from Safed, Rabbi Yosef Maman Maravi (b. in Tetuan or Meknes 5501/1741, d. Bukhara 23 Kislev 5583/December 7, 1822) and with a number of factors that joined together to influence the spiritual leadership of the community. They courageously led all the communities in Central Asia, while maintaining a close relationship with the heads of the Jewish communities in the diaspora and in Jerusalem.

This paper will deal primarily with the spiritual leadership of the community and the transmission of authority from generation to generation. It will explore the main factors that influenced rabbinic succession and what effect the community's economic development had on the transfer of authority.

The beginnings of spiritual leadership in Bukhara

When Rabbi Yosef Maman arrived in Bukhara, a Nasi, Mullah Yosef Hasid, who was the Parnas and head of the community, and Mullah Kamliadin led the community. This leadership, composed of a twosome, one spiritual and the other secular, was the norm for Bukhara throughout the period under study. Hacham Yosef agreed to settle in Bukhara on the condition that a Yeshiva be established, for the study of Torah and for training a group of students who would be teachers and slaughterers of meat (Shohatim) and serve as future leaders of the various communities. The prominent families as well as those newly arrived in Bukhara from the diaspora sent their sons there to study. Among the students were Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Cohen ben Isaac of Baghdad, Rabbi Yosef Chak-Chak and his son Mullah Fuzail who came from Baghdad or Aleppo, Rabbi Jacob ben Moses Samendar and others. Over the years, these students became the leaders of the Central Asia Jewish communities.

The traveler R. David D'Beit Hillel, the emissary of the Ashkenazi Perushim community of Safed, while in Baghdad in 5587/1827 met two Bukhara Jews who were on their way to Eretz Yisrael. They related to him the activities of Hacham Yosef Maman, and he adds: "The entire conversation was conducted in Hebrew." He testifies that they were scholars and well versed in Jewish customs and Hebrew religious texts. Hacham Yosef Maman had a remarkable impact on the Jews of Bukhara. He was very highly thought of and they called him "Or Yisrael /

the Light of Israel.” Not only did he save them from spiritual assimilation, but because of his influence and that of the students who came after him and led the communities in Central Asia he developed a deeply rooted and faithful Jewish community that was loyal to the Torah of Israel and longed for its redemption. He inspired the Jews of Bukhara to begin publishing religious texts for the community’s use and to start settling in Jerusalem, and he provided generous financial aid to the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael, as well as many other praiseworthy deeds.

When Hacham Yosef arrived in Bukhara, he met a Jew named Zechariah ben Matzliah, who according to the apostate Joseph Wolf was originally from Yemen. Wolf relates that over a long period of time there was conflict and tension between them, both over the leadership of the community and on fundamental principles. For example, R. Yosef Maman considered the Zohar as very important while R. Zechariah did not. R. Yosef persuaded the community to use the Sephardic prayer liturgy, while Hacham Zechariah was of the opinion that they should continue using their inherited liturgy, which was that of the Persians based on the prayerbook of R. Sa’adia Gaon. In his book, Tagger describes in detail the dispute that almost led to a split in the community. R. Yosef Maman was victorious and became the leader, but he was not satisfied with that and attempted to strengthen his influence and approach.

Hacham Yosef had two daughters, Miriam and Sarah, and two sons, Isaac-Menachem and Abraham, who were born in Bukhara. His sons and daughters married the leaders, the most affluent and highly respected scholars of the community. His oldest daughter, Miriam, married the son of the wealthiest leader of the community, R. Pinhas the son of R. Simha and grandson of Yosef Hasid, who was the community’s leader when R. Yosef Maman arrived in Bukhara. R. Pinhas, (5565/1805-5635/1875) was known as R. Pinhas Ha-Katan. His outstanding student who continued in his path is known as R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol

(5548/1788-29 Iyar 5618/May 13, 1858), and was chosen as the successor of R. Yosef, evidently even during his rabbi’s lifetime. R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol received this designation after sanctifying the Name of Heaven when he was thrown, on the Emir’s order, from the Kilan minaret, the highest tower in the city of Bukhara, and survived. From then on, the Emir and the Moslem scholars considered him a holy man. His son, R. Isaac Hayim relates, “My master, the Great Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Cohen, of blessed memory, occupied his post for forty years with a clean heart and pure hands and I, his son, have succeeded him in his position . . .” It appears that in these dealings - having his daughter marry the wealthiest member of the community of the time, appointing his outstanding student as his right-hand man, and training an entire generation of scholars who studied in his Yeshiva - R. Yosef Maman sought to ensure the continuation of his approach in the leadership of the community. We will later see how marital ties with the ruling families only intensified.

Consolidation of the community's leadership

The Period of Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Gadol and Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Katan. As the successors of Hacham Yosef Maman, R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol and R. Pinhas Ha-Katan complimented each other. Mullah Pinhas Ha-Gadol served as the spiritual leader, as the Chief Rabbi (Mollai Klon). He headed the Yeshiva, the rabbinic court and the infrastructure for slaughtering animals, and was supported by a number of scholars from among the senior members of the community who constituted the “Seven Town Elders.” (See the list of the Scholars, Shklov, 5593/1833) R. Pinhas Ha-Katan, the Klontar of the community, one of R. Yosef Maman’s most devoted students and a scholar in his own right, managed the community’s material needs. His principal task was to collect taxes and to turn them over to the government. At about this time, (5585/1825), R. Elijah Hacham Shohet came to Bukhara for commercial purposes. R. Elijah, who in Baghdad wrote Torah scrolls, in a short

period of time was admired by the community's leadership. He agreed to settle down there and married the granddaughter of R. Yosef Maman, Zipora, the daughter of Rabbi Abraham Yazdi Ha-Cohen. R. Elijah was in charge of the slaughtering of animals and of writing Torah scrolls for the community. He wrote dozens of scrolls. His son, R. David, wrote to the Hebrew newspaper *Hamagid* about his father (Rosh Hodesh Shevat 5629/January 13, 1869); "I, the son of the Hacham Elijah the son of the Hacham Rahamim Shohet who was among the distinguished Jews of Babylonia [Iraq] and my mother, my teacher, the daughter of Hacham Yosef Maman who was the son of Grimo from Tetuan. . . After the death of the Tzadik, my father, may he be granted a long life, came from Babylonia and married the granddaughter of the above mentioned Tzadik. My father also took on the responsibilities of slaughtering and checking the meat and wrote over forty Torah scrolls and countless sets of tefillin and Mezuzah parchments. . ." R. Elijah Hacham died in Bukhara in the month of Kislev 5640/November-December 1879.

During this time, the migration of Jews from Bukhara to the nearby cities of Samarkand, Tashkent and others began. They established themselves in the business and economic life of their new locations and scholars who were graduates of the Central Yeshiva of Bukhara were sent to serve them. They maintained an uninterrupted association in matters of Jewish law with the spiritual leadership of Bukhara. The Jewish book publishers of Eastern Europe produced religious texts for the Jews of Bukhara; the Yeshiva continued to expand and grow; schools were established for the young, teachers were trained and a Yeshiva was set up for older boys.

In the early 1840's, many refugees from Meshad, Persia, who fled in the wake of the riots that took place there on the 12th of Sivan 5599/May 25, 1839, when they were forced to convert to Islam, were absorbed into the Bukhara and Samarkand communities. Thanks to the efforts of R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol, the Emir opened the gates of Bukhara to the

refugees. Many of them who had an extensive knowledge of Torah influenced the spiritual life of Bukhara's Jews, while those who sought a different atmosphere that was more liberal, immigrated to Samarkand as time went on. Simultaneously, the Samarkand community developed into one of merchants, while the Meshad natives were totally assimilated and also occupied important positions in the community's leadership.

This period saw the strengthening of the relationship between four of the leading families of Bukhara, the Maman and those of R. Elijah Hacham, Pinhas Ha-Katan and R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol. The familial and ideological bond as well as their being disciples of the esteemed Hacham Yosef Maman influenced the nature of the leadership of the community.

R. Pinhas had four daughters with his first wife: Sarah, Leah, Rebecca and Tova; two sons with his second wife: Abraham and Abba and one son with his third wife Rebecca, R. Isaac Hayim. Leah, the daughter of Sarah and granddaughter of R. Yosef Maman, married R. Pinhas Ha-Katan. Leah was the sister of Ziporah the wife of R. Elijah Hacham. Yocheved, the daughter of R. Abraham and granddaughter of R. Yosef Maman married David the son of R. Pinhas Ha-Katan. Rabbi Isaac Hayim the son of Pinhas Ha-Gadol married in about 5626/1866 Yocheved Bano, the daughter of Rachel and the granddaughter of Sarah and R. Yazdi Ha-Cohen. Yocheved Bano was the great-granddaughter of R. Yosef Maman. At this point in time, the latest age at which girls married was 15 and a generation was considered as spanning 15 to 17 years.

In addition to his role as Nasi of the community, R. Pinhas Ha-Katan was involved in the Yeshiva and it is probable that he was its head for a period of time. R. Pinhas was the father-in-law, teacher and rabbi of Rabbi Abraham Hayim Gaon who was known as "The Kabbalist from Bukhara." He was one of the scholars of the Yeshiva of the Kabbalists, Beit El, in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Isaac Hayim Ha-Cohen, the successor to Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Gadol 5608/1848- 3 Sivan 5656/May 15, 1896.

At the age of only 20, Rabbi Isaac Hayim was chosen as the rabbi of Bukhara. His appointment raises a few questions: When his father, R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol died, R. Isaac Hayim was only ten years old. Why did the community wait a full ten years to select a successor to his father and not nominate someone else as rabbi? Let us assume that Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Gadol designated this son as his successor before his death. How could this have been acceptable, since we are talking about a large community numbering some ten thousand people that included scholars and an established spiritual leadership?

It appears that Rabbi Isaac Hayim had two things in his favor: (1) his pedigree, for he was the son of Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Gadol, who was highly thought of by Bukhara's Jews and (2) he had the support of the community's leadership and in particular the backing of the Klontar, R. Pinhas Ha-Katan. From this, it looks like the powerful position – the close relationship between R. Pinhas Ha-Gadol and R. Pinhas Ha-Katan, the esteem for their Rabbi Yosef Maman, the marriage ties among the community's leadership – tipped the scales in favor of his appointment despite his young age, and we hear of no controversy or opposition to his appointment.

The traveler, Ephraim Neimark (*A Journey to the Land of the East*, edition of A. Ya'ari, Jerusalem, 5707), visited Bukhara in 5646/1886, and records that there were a number of attempts to oust R. Isaac Hayim some years after the death of R. Pinhas Ha-Katan (d. 5635/1875). Thus, with the weakening of the secular leadership, the position of the Chief Rabbi declined. However, from the other sources, we do not hear of any attempt to depose him.

In the thirty years of R. Isaac Hayim's leadership, the extraordinary changes described in the introduction occurred in Bukhara. After the Russian conquest of Central Asia (5628/1868), emigration from Bukhara to other regions under Russian rule increased dramatically. The Emirate of

Bukhara surrendered to the Russian army but the Emir continued to rule his autonomous principality. The Jews preferred living in areas of Central Asia outside his jurisdiction that were under direct Russian rule, the reasons being the greater civil rights they enjoyed under direct Russian rule and the tremendous economic possibilities that presented themselves.

The 1870's and 1880's saw an increase in Aliyah from Central Asia to Jerusalem. In the 1880's, the first emissaries from Eretz Yisrael arrived in Bukhara. They strengthened the ties between the remote areas of Central Asia and Eretz Yisrael and encouraged Aliyah. Some five hundred Central Asian Jews were concentrated in Jerusalem, and in 1891 they began building their own neighborhood in the city. In the 1890's, emissaries from the various Kolelim of cities of the Holy Land as well as from the diaspora visited the communities of Central Asia. Many of these emissaries remained in these communities serving as educators, shochemim, and teachers, etc., while others taught in the Central Yeshiva in Bukhara where the preeminent Jewish scholars were concentrated.

During these years, R. Isaac Hayim focused on teaching Torah in the Central Yeshiva of Bukhara. The number of students who studied there is not clear. He was also the head of the community's Beit Din that exclusively dealt with matrimonial matters. The Bukhara Yeshiva and its resident Beit Din represented the highest authority for the determination of Jewish law in all of Central Asia as well as in the distant communities that were under Russian rule. R. Isaac Hayim acted in his post with a high hand and spoke severely to the rabbis of the communities when he felt that they did not insist on carrying out the details of Halakha (Jewish law) properly.

Serving along with Rabbi Isaac Hayim and R. David Hacham (whose wife, Yocheved Bano was his cousin) was R. Aaron the son of R. Pinhas Ha-Katan, Klontar of Bukhara. At this time, the family name of Rabbi Isaac Hayim was Pinhasov, as was customary based on the name of the father of the family.

In 5653/1893, R. Isaac Hayim visited Eretz Yisrael and changed the family name to Rabin, Russian for rabbi.

R. Isaac Hayim Ha-Cohen Rabin died in Bukhara on 3 Sivan 5656/May 15, 1896 at the age of only forty-eight. He left five sons and five daughters. His sons were R. Pinhas, R. Mashiah, R. Hizkiyah, R. Rahamim and R. Nisim; his daughters were Rivkah, Yafa, Peninah, Perichah and Adina. He directed that his third son, R. Hizkiyah Ha-Cohen Rabin be appointed as his successor as the rabbi of the community.

Rabbi Hizkiyah Ha-Cohen Rabin (b. Bukhara, Rosh Hodesh Shevat 5632/January 11, 1872 - d. Jerusalem, 9 Tevet 5705/December 13, 1944).

The Bukharan Jewish community in Central Asia at the end of the days of R. Isaac Hayim was different from that during the dozens of years preceding his death. There had been widespread economic and religious activity. The communities throughout Central Asia became well established and were generally wealthier and larger than the mother community in the city of Bukhara. However, Torah, education and decisions in Jewish law for all of Central Asia originated in Bukhara. The great importance given to these communities and especially to Bukhara and its leadership by the emissaries along with its crucial role among the heads of the Sephardic Kolel in Jerusalem as the principal supporter of the Kolel greatly increased the importance of the community and its head. Even more significantly, the role of the Klontar, the president of the secular community, was a key position in the past, when there were few wealthy members and the connections of the president, like those of R. Pinhas Ha-Katan, with the Emir were of the essence. Now there were many positions of Klontar among the numerous communities throughout Central Asia and the despotic power of the various Emirs of Bukhara declined. As the Russian government sought to strengthen the position of the Jewish community, which was loyal to it, the centrality of the president of the community greatly declined. On the other hand, the rabbi of the community, who until

this time had concentrated his efforts in only a relatively few areas such as his involvement with his students and as the decider of matters of Jewish law for his congregation, was now discovered by the entire world as the rabbi of a wealthy and important community.

As has been mentioned above, Rabbi Isaac Hayim designated his third son, Rabbi Hizkiyah Ha-Cohen as his successor and heir. However, in contrast to the appointment of Rabbi Isaac Hayim, there was opposition in the community to this appointment. We learn about cracks in Rabbi Hizkiyah's religious leadership from a letter he sent to Rabbi Medini in which he writes: "...since I am young and they are old, they do not have confidence in my declarations. . ." There were opponents to his decisions in Jewish law and the elders of the community refused to accept him as the rabbi. Meanwhile, a letter from Bukhara was sent to Rabbi Jacob Saul Elyashar, the Rishon Le-Zion (the Sephardic Chief Rabbi) in which Rabbi Hizkiyah's opponents complain that "the desolation is great and we are as sheep without a shepherd." The Rishon Le-Zion called on the Bukharan Jews resident in Jerusalem to meet for the purpose of appointing from among themselves a Chief Rabbi for Bukhara. In response to the letter of complaint and the meeting called in Jerusalem to deal with the matter, Rabbi Hizkiyah's supporters wrote in Iyar 5657/May 1897 to the Rishon Le-Zion, Rabbi Eliyashar, on the spiritual status of the community and on the activities of the emissaries from the holy cities and added: "how did they coat over their eyes preventing them from being able to see the fruit of the goodly tree, the fine young scholar, our teacher and Rabbi Hizkiyahu. . ." The signatories on the letter of support for Rabbi Hizkiyah were the heads of the Bukhara community: the president, R. Aaron the son of R. Pinhas Ha-Katan, his brother Zion, Aaron Maman, Pinhas Ha-Cohen Rabin the brother of R. Hizkiyah, Elisha Yehoudaioff (among the wealthiest members of the community who constructed the 'Palace' in Jerusalem's Bukharan neighborhood in the

beginning of the 20th century) and some twenty other leaders of the community. Though in the past the support of the president assured the appointment of the rabbi, as had happened with Rabbi Isaac Hayim, this support was now important but was not decisive, as the standing of the president had declined to a great extent.

The dispute lasted for a number of years and during this time, the community in Bukhara did not have an official rabbi. Even the Rishon Le-Zion, Rabbi Elyashar, refrained from deciding whether or not to support Mullah Hizkiyah. Most probably, the rabbi hesitated to get himself involved in an internal dispute of Central Asia, since during this time the Jews of Bukhara sent large sums of money to support the institutions of Jerusalem's Sephardic community. Taking a position and backing a particular side in the controversy would alienate the Sephardic leadership in Jerusalem from a specific group of Bukharan Jews and lead to a loss of income. It appears that other communities in Central Asia also experienced a spiritual decline after the death of Rabbi Isaac Hayim. Moving from these towns increased, especially since several of the scholars of these communities settled in Jerusalem. Only after Mullah Hizkiyah served the community and occupied the position as rabbi, and reports from emissaries arrived in Eretz Yisrael about the wise leader who was expert in deciding questions of Jewish law and who courageously led the community, did the Rishon Le-Zion send him rabbinic authorization (s'mikha) to teach and to judge. In spite of the authorization from the Rishon Le-Zion, the members of the community did not accept Mullah Hizkiyah as rabbi at once. Only on 22 Kislev 5661/December 3, 1901 was the document issued, signed by 38 members of the community representing the Jews of Bukhara in Central Asia, stating that they retroactively, that is from the time of his father's death, accept Rabbi Hizkiyah as their Chief Rabbi. On 11 Iyar 5662/May 18, 1902, in a letter signed by forty-two people, the Ashkenazi community of Bukhara located in the city of Kagan, that is New Bukhara, accepted the authority of the rabbi.

Subsequently, the Emir as head of the government of Bukhara, sent an endorsement granting Hacham Hizkiyah the right to conduct marriages and issue divorces. Attached to this document was the consent of the Russian Consul in Bukhara. The agreement of the Russian government to his appointment was necessary to grant Rabbi Hizkiyah official status as he also conducted marriages of Russian citizens. In spite of his young age, the religious leaders and the many emissaries who arrived in Bukhara and its towns, recognized him as a person of great stature. People came to his court from all of the surrounding cities, especially to arrange divorces, Levirate marriages and halitzah. People from the small towns even came to have him officiate at their marriages.

The time of Rabbi Hizkiyah Rabin was one of growth and accomplishment for the Bukharan communities both in Central Asia and in Jerusalem. The Central Yeshiva of the community continued operating in his house, as was the practice of both his father and grandfather. The scholars of the community as well as the emissaries that came from Eretz Yisrael and the diaspora bringing the Torah of the Land of Israel to Central Asia studied in the Beit Midrash. These emissaries also served on the rabbinical court set up by Rabbi Hizkiyah and their decisions reached the far ends of the earth. His rabbinical court had wide authority and he was even allowed to hand down sentences of physical punishment such as flogging. This institution was the highest legal authority for Central Asia's Jews in matters of religion. The upgrading of religious life was due to the emissaries, some of whom like Rabbi Solomon Judah Leib Eliazaroff of Hebron served communities in Central Asia.

The first segment of Rabbi Hizkiyah's rabbinate continued until the outbreak of World War I in 5674/1914. The Bolshevik revolution took place in Russia in 1917 and in 1920 the Bolsheviks captured the Emirate of Bukhara. Between 1920-1930, many Jews died or were murdered in Central Asia and the lives of the survivors were severely disrupted. Anxiety over his possible execution [by the Bolsheviks] forced Rabbi

Hizkiyah to flee from Bukhara in 1930. He arrived in Eretz Yisrael in 5695/1935 and served for a time as a judge on the Sephardic rabbinic court in Jerusalem.

Summary

Becoming heir to the position of Chief Rabbi depended on many factors. We would expect that the personality and the status of the potential replacement would take center stage in considering his appointment as his father's successor. There were times, when the ambitions of the leaders of the community or other factors determined the successor. The selection of the successor to the Chief Rabbi in Bukhara in the 19th century was due to a number of issues.

Pinhas Ha-Gadol Ha-Cohen – he was noted for continuing in the path of his rabbi and teacher and was appointed during his teacher's lifetime.

Rabbi Isaac Hayim Ha-Cohen – the decision of the secular leadership; the son of Rabbi Pinhas Ha-Gadol.

Rabbi Hizkiyah Ha-Cohen – all of the above, but most important was his personality, his legal stature and his excellence.

These differences teach us about the development of the Jewish community of Bukhara in the 19th century. They reflect the growing power of the religious leadership and the declining influence of the secular heads caused by the strengthening of various groups in the community, especially from an economic standpoint. In the beginning of the period, the status of the rabbi in Bukhara was strong and powerful. This was mostly a result of his compelling personality but the opinion of the secular leadership was also important. Yet, we are still dealing with the rabbi of an isolated community. By the end of this era, the rabbi was the leader of the Bukharan Jews throughout Central Asia. Even with the spreading out of the population, their great economic advancement, their Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael and their exposure to other Jewish

communities in the Diaspora, the status of the rabbi did not weaken. On the contrary, even though they were found in many cities throughout Central Asia with each developing strong secular leadership, the exclusive source of Torah, education and decisions in Jewish law was the Central Yeshiva in Bukhara. At first, leadership was in the hands of an oligarchy. With time, resulting from changed residential patterns, the process of choosing the Chief Rabbi and the influence of his birthright changed. The rabbi's stature came from his knowledge of traditional Jewish texts rather than from the status of being his father's successor.

Bibliography

See at the end of the Hebrew version of this article.

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The First Study of my Family

Esther Ramon

Translated from the Hebrew original

In 1983, I gave a course on the topic of family research in the 7th grade (pupils aged 12-13), something of a novelty at the time. The students' enthusiasm was so great, I also caught it and decided that during my sabbatical year I would begin to study my 4 families.

My family name before I married was Weil. However, since that name is so widespread in southwest Germany and northeastern France, I decided to research my mother's Homburger family, which lived in Karlsruhe, the capital city of Baden Province in southwest Germany.

In the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People at the Givat Ram campus of the Hebrew University, I found lists of the Jews of Karlsruhe, including births, marriages and deaths covering the years 1810-1869. They were in tiny books, which were greatly reduced in size when photocopied from the originals. Using a magnifying glass, I carefully went over each of the 14 booklets and copied all the information on each member of the Homburger family as well as those who married into the family. In those days, I was still unaware of computers and genealogical software, so I spent a great deal of time in gathering and organizing the material. In addition to my research, I also approached members of the family requesting any further information that they might have. With their help, I received addresses of additional relatives in Europe and in the United States. To my great delight, Ellen Katz (nee Homburger) of Haifa sent me 40 forms with genealogical information. On each the following details are recorded: male head of household, his wife's name, names of their parents and grandparents and their children along with the dates of birth, marriage and death. A relative residing in Zurich, Switzerland, Eric Homburger, sent me 70 such pages. A researcher in Washington with whom I had corresponded, informed me that

at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, where I had already spent a good deal of time doing research, there was also material on the Homburger family. This fact did not appear in the Archive's catalogue and only after an exhaustive search, a large book containing 44 genealogical forms was located. I immediately recognized the handwriting as that of my late mother, Alice Weil nee Homburger. On the page, detailing my immediate family I found that the name of my brother, Erich Nathan Weil appeared but my name was missing. I then concluded that she recorded these details between the years 1920 and 1924. No one in our family knew of the existence of this book. From a comment on one of the forms, I learned that my mother gathered the information from the city archives and I assume that she did this in preparation for the celebration of the 60th birthday of my grandfather, Ferdinand Homburger, in 1920.

On October 22, 1940, the entire Jewish population of Baden was deported from their homes and sent to the Gurs Camp in the Pyrenees. Conditions in Gurs were atrocious. The inmates lived in extremely crowded conditions in old bunks with the men and women separated from each other. My grandfather, Ferdinand Homburger, did not survive the harsh conditions and he died after about six months at the age of eighty.

At the time of the deportation, the Gestapo confiscated and preserved genealogical information found in the homes of those expelled. Thus, thanks to the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Organization after the war this book, which was so dear to me, arrived in Jerusalem included in a large collection of documents. Daniel Cohen, the representative of the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, brought this collection to Israel.

Through the assistance of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, I was made aware of the address of an additional family member,

Fred Homburger of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. While still in Karlsruhe, he began a card file on each member of the Homburger family, which he constantly updated. With this encouraging start, I made a trip to Lancaster as well as to the Karlsruhe archives. In both of these places, I gained a great deal of information and acquired some important documents. Naturally, I also studied many books on the history of Karlsruhe.

Karlsruhe is, relatively speaking, a young city. It was founded in 1715 by Margrave Karl Friedrich, who had decided to build a new capital for Baden. He issued a declaration inviting new settlers, and promised them a plot of land and timber to build their houses, on the condition that they possess a sum of 200 Gulden and build their houses according to a pre-determined model. They were also promised religious freedom, which was quite uncommon in those days. In illustration 1 (in the Hebrew section) we can see the model of the house built by my ancestor.

The family's ancestor, Loeb, arrived in Karlsruhe in 1721 from Homberg am Main. In the Privilege (residence permit) he received in 1722 he is called Loeb Homburger (see illustration 2 in the Hebrew section) and his descendants continued using this name in the following generations. Most of the family remained in Karlsruhe and only with the rise of the Nazis to power did the sixth generation leave Germany. Most went to the United States and only four families came on Aliyah. Those remaining in Germany were deported to Gurs in 1940.

Let us return to the beginning of the 18th century. Loeb was a butcher. His only son, Nathan, was also a butcher and his two sons, Moses and Koppel chose the same profession. Even in the sixth generation, there were still three butchers in the family, and one of them, Heinrich continued with the same occupation even in the United States in 1874.

In researching the Homburger family, many details that appear in history books, concerning both the Jews and general history, are corroborated in the family's own history.

Source of income – The occupation of butcher was handed down from father to first-born son. In the middle of the 19th century, under the influence of the Emancipation, two brothers, my great-grandfather Nathan Jacob and his brother Max, members of the 5th generation, left the profession and opened animal feed supply houses. One of their sons, my grandfather Ferdinand, was already a member of the Grain Exchange in Mannheim. However, even in the earlier generations, some of the younger sons chose different professions. The youngest son of the third generation, Loeb II, became the first merchant in the family after receiving training in the field. All of his sons were merchants, except for the tenth and youngest, Siegmund, who became the Homburger family's first physician. One of the sons of the fourth generation, Feist, was a baker. Members of the fourth generation transformed the supply house into a bank that existed until 1939, when they were forced to sell it to Aryan owners.

The family name – The source of the name is the town from which Loeb Homburger came and it was not changed when the order to adopt family names was promulgated in 1809.

Personal names – The name Nathan was used as a first name until the sixth generation and only subsequently was it used as an additional name for liturgical purposes (being called to the Torah). Among the merchants of the family, mentioned above, as early as the fourth generation the name Theodor makes an appearance. It represents a form of a translation of the name Ha-El Natan – God has given, instead of Nathan.

Education – Boys in the early generations studied at home with private tutors. A Jewish school opened in 1770, but when in the footsteps of the Emancipation, Jews were accepted into Christian schools, the merchant family members were the first to transfer their children to them.

Ideology – Most of the family members saw themselves as loyal German citizens. Some were members in the CV – Central Verein

deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens – the Central Union of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith. Two of them were leaders of that organization in Baden. Most opposed Zionism and only three young women in the family joined the Zionist youth movement after 1933.

Religious outlook – For generations the family members in Karlsruhe were strictly Orthodox. In 1869 when an organ was introduced into the synagogue, a small group broke away from the liberal community and established a separate Orthodox community. Two Homburger family members were part of this group while the others worshiped in either the liberal synagogue or in a small synagogue connected to the larger community but more traditional in observance.

In all the generations in Karlsruhe there is no evidence of conversion. Only Karl Homburger took on Protestantism in 1843 because he married a Protestant woman who was pregnant and since then he called himself Homburg.

In summary, it is accurate to say that in my research I learned a great deal about the Homburger family. One outstanding characteristic was their great interest in genealogy both in former generations, and to my delight in the present. In addition to the genealogical forms, among eight family members, I found a copy of the 1722 Privilege described above and this was before the invention of the now widespread photocopy machines. The original hangs in the study of Fred Homburger in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Other interesting documents in the possession of family members are:

* The will of my father's mother, Babette Homburger nee Baer from 1904.

* A document dated 1790 that describes

Loeb Homburger II and the education of his son to qualify him to be a merchant.

* A list of the students with their grades of the Jewish school, and a book of addresses from the city in the 19th century sent to me by the Karlsruhe Archive.

Nearly everyone in the family that I approached, in all parts of the world, gladly supplied me with information on the branches of the family in the last generations and was willing to be interviewed. In this way, I was able in 1991, with the assistance of the mayor of Karlsruhe, to publish a 183-page book in English (as most of the family lives in the United States) titled *The Homburger Family from Karlsruhe*.

I submitted copies of the Homburger family tree with all of its branches to the genealogical database at Beit Hatefutzot (the Diaspora Museum) in Tel Aviv and to the Jewishgen Organization. As a result, connections were forged with many genealogists who researched connected families and the Homburger family tree has expanded even further.

Esther Ramon was one of the founders of the Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) in 1985, and was its president until 1998. In 1991 she published a book on her genealogical research of her mother's family, Homburger, and since then she is continuing the research of her families. She is the founder and first editor of the IGS journal Sharsheret Hadorot, which developed, under her guidance, from a few page newsletter to what it is today. Until her retirement, Mrs. Ramon was for many years a History and Geography teacher at the Hebrew University Secondary School. She has an MA degree in History and Geography from the Hebrew University.

“Jewish Genes”
DNA Evidence for Common Jewish Origin
and Maintenance of Ancestral Genetic Profile
Yaakov Kleiman

Introduction

Knowledge of the physical creation is a means of acquiring knowledge of the Creator, as Maimonides (Rambam) explained. Through better understanding of the natural world – its laws, components and procedures – we are meant to perceive awe and wonder, and love of G-d. Torah is eternal, whereas science describes the temporal and is therefore always in process.

The field of genetics is experiencing a knowledge explosion. The Human Genome Project is analyzing and mapping the DNA of mankind, striving toward improvement in health, longer life, gene-engineered food, genetic screening, etc. Using these newly developed research tools, the researchers hope to learn more about world history and population origins and migrations.

The Jewish people provides an unique opportunity to study a population with ancient roots and many modern branches. Genetic research into the history and lineage of the Jews has thus far confirmed tradition.

The first study focused on the Kohanim (see Confirmation of Torah Tradition via a Common DNA Signature of Kohanim, by Yaakov Kleiman, *Sharsheret Hadorot* Vol.15 No.3). This study showed a very high genetic affinity among present-day Kohanim – indicating that they do have a common paternal ancestor, estimated to have lived some 3,000 years ago. The second study, presented here, indicates that the Jewish communities in the Diaspora originated in the Middle East and retained their genetic identity throughout the exile, thus confirming the common ancestry and common geographical origin of world Jewry. Despite large geographic distances between the communities and the passage of thousands of years, Jews from Iran, Iraq, Yemen, North

Africa and Europe share a similar genetic profile.

“Despite their long-term residence in different countries and isolation from one another, most Jewish populations were not significantly different from each other at the genetic level. The results support the hypothesis that the paternal gene pools of Jewish communities from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East descended from a common Middle Eastern ancestral population, and suggest that most Jewish communities have remained relatively isolated from neighboring non-Jewish communities during and after the Diaspora.” (M.F. Hammer, *Proc. National Academy of Science*, June 10, 2000).

The basis of this new field of population research is the study of the Y-chromosome, which is passed virtually unchanged from father to son. The rare mutations – which are changes in the non-coding portion of its DNA – can serve as markers that can distinguish peoples. By studying the genetic signatures of various groups, comparisons can be made to determine the genetic relationships between the groups.

The researchers proposed to answer the question whether the scattered groups of modern Jews are really the modified descendants of the ancient Hebrews of the Bible, or are some groups of modern Jews, converted non-Jews, and other groups so diluted by intermarriage that little remains of their “Jewish genes.”

The complex recorded history of dispersal from the Land of Israel and subsequent residence in and movements between various countries in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East is expected to produce a complex pattern of genetic relationships among Jewish populations, as well as between them and the non-Jewish peoples

among whom they lived. The research was based on samples from 29 populations, 7 of them Jewish, categorized into five major divisions: Jews, Middle-Eastern non-Jews, Europeans, North Africans, and sub-Saharan Africans.

The findings were that most Jewish communities, long separated from one another in Europe, North Africa, the Near East and the Arabian Peninsula do indeed seem to be genetically similar and closely related to one another, sharing a common geographical origin. These Jewish communities are more closely related to each other and to other Middle Eastern Semitic populations than to their neighboring non-Jewish populations in the Diaspora. The results also indicate a low level of admixture (intermarriage, conversion, rape, etc.) into the gene pool of these various Jewish communities.

Among the Jewish communities sampled, North Africans (Moroccans, etc.) were most closely related to Babylonian (Iraqi) Jews. These populations may best represent the paternal gene pool of the ancient Jewish/Hebrew population dating back to the First Temple period, before the Babylonian exile (approx. 2,500 years ago).

The Y-chromosome signatures of the Yemenite Jews are also similar to those of other Jewish and Semitic populations. In contrast, the paternal gene pool of Ethiopian Jews more closely resembles that of non-Jewish Ethiopian men.

Although the Ashkenazi (European) community separated from their Mediterranean ancestors some 1,200 years ago and lived among Central and Eastern European gentiles, their paternal gene pool still resembles that of other Jewish and Semitic groups, originating in the Middle East.

A low rate of intermarriage between Diaspora Jews and local gentiles was the key reason for this continuity. From the time the Jews first settled in Europe more than 50

generations ago, the intermarriage rate was estimated to be only about 0.5% in each generation.

On the other hand, the Ashkenazi paternal gene pool does not appear to be similar to that of present-day Turkish speakers. This finding opposes the suggestion that Ashkenazim are descended from the Khazars, a Turkish-Asian people that converted to Judaism en masse in or about the 8th century C.E.

The researchers are continuing and expanding their studies, particularly of the Ashkenazi community. They are hoping that by examining the DNA markers in Jewish populations from different parts of Europe, they will be able to infer the major historical and demographic patterns in Ashkenazi populations. In addition to questions of medical interest, there are many interesting possibilities concerning the origin of Ashkenazi populations and how they migrated in Europe. It seems likely that Jews began to arrive in Eastern Europe perhaps 1,000-1,200 years ago, when settlement was already sufficiently developed to provide them with opportunities to make a living.

One theory claims that the Jews of Eastern Europe derive predominantly from Jewish migrants from the Rhineland or from Italy, being fairly direct descendants of the original ancient Jewish / Hebrew populations. A second theory suggests a northerly migration from the Balkans or from Central Asia, with the possibility of large-scale conversions of Slavs and/or Khazars to Judaism.

This argument parallels the controversy over the origin and development of Yiddish – the language of Eastern European Jews. One theory proposes that Jews migrating from the Rhineland and neighboring regions spoke an old form of German, which was to provide the basis of Yiddish. Other scholars reject the German origin of Yiddish. These linguists see Yiddish grammar as fundamentally Slavonic, and maintain that modern Yiddish developed by incorporating large numbers of German and Hebrew words into the context of a basically Slavic grammar and syntax.

There has not been enough historical evidence to decide between such theories. Now, with the newly developed genetic methods, it is possible to test these ideas, for example to see if there was a significant Slavic contribution to modern Ashkenazic Jewry. Early indications from this study seem to support the "Mediterranean – to Europe – to Eastern Europe" pattern. The researchers plan to continue their research by investigating genetic variation in populations that can trace their Jewish ancestry to localized communities of Europe, in order to understand better the history and development of Ashkenazic Jewry.

These genetic findings support Jewish tradition, both written and oral. Some Jewish exile communities were relatively stable for two millennia – such as in Babylonia (Iraq) and Persia (Iran). Others developed centuries

later, following successive migrations to North Africa and Europe. All of these communities maintained their Jewish customs and religious observance despite prolonged periods of persecution, and remained generally culturally isolated from their host communities. The genetic studies are a testimony to Jewish family faithfulness. Only the Jewish people in the history of mankind has retained its genetic identity for over 100 generations while being spread throughout the world – truly unique and inspiring.

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The Center for Research on Dutch Jewry, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

Home Page: <http://shum.cc.huji.ac.il/~dutchjew/>

The **Dutch Jewish Genealogical Database** of the Center announces the upload of the 50th genealogy to its section of individual genealogies (Section 1). The database started operations in the fall of 1999. The database is situated at: <http://shum.huji.ac.il/~dutchjew/genealog/djgdb.html> Attention is also drawn to other parts of the database, such as the Northern Data Base with 57,000 names (a project in progress reconstructing the Jewish population of the northern provinces of the Netherlands), links to individual genealogical homepages, etc.

The new website of the Center, including the DJGDB, is entering its final stages of completion. It will be a tremendous improvement in outlay and conception, worth waiting for.

The Center is part of the Jewish History Ring and is registered in the Academic Jewish Studies Internet directory.

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The Hasidic Rabbinate

Part I

Yehuda Klausner

Translated from the Hebrew original

Introduction

The Church's incitement against the Jews in the Middle Ages, led to anti-Jewish treachery that was accompanied by expulsions and murder throughout Western and Central Europe between the 13th and 17th centuries (see Klausner, *Sharsheret Hadorot* 15/3). Out of this despair of the Jews false messiahs appeared: David Alroi (1160), David HaReuveni (1542), Shlomo Molcho (1500-1532), Shabbtai Zvi (1626-1676), Jacob Frank (1726-1791) and others. During this time, the hub of Jewish life moved from Western and Central Europe eastward. There the Jews lived under relatively better conditions, at least from the standpoint of the rights granted to them. There were ups and downs, with severe poverty and crowded living conditions, especially in the isolated towns and outlying villages, along with periodic pogroms. Into this background Hasidism and its founder Israel ben Eliezer Baal Shem Tov (1700-1760) was born. As with the False Messiahs, Hasidism spread rapidly, and not only among the simple people, as everyone anticipated some type of tidings. The flames of Hasidism engulfed rabbis and scholars and it soon became a viable worldwide movement.

In this article's first part, we will give a short overview of Hasidism and of the movement that opposed it. In the second part, which will appear separately, we will study the Hasidic dynasties and sub-dynasties that have developed to our own day.

Background to the Growth of Hasidism

Conditions that pervaded after the Chmielnicki pogroms of 1648-1649, along with the disturbances that occurred in southwest Poland caused the Jews of the region to fear for the continued existence of their communities, their very lives and their future. As in the past, one result of the mortal

danger they faced was a turning to religion and the quest for a remedy specifically in those areas shrouded in mysticism – Kabbalah and Messianism. The longing for the anticipated redemption overwhelmed the people and the atmosphere that it created provided fertile ground for the development of Messianism. Even before these events, the city of Safed had a community numbering more than fifteen thousand Jews firmly grounded in religion and economically secure. Active were R. Jacob Berab, head of the Safed scholars, R. Joseph Karo (1488-1575), the author of the *Shulhan Arukh*, R. Moses Cordovero (1522-1570) known by the acronym HaRamak, and his disciple, R. Isaac Luria Ashkenazi (1534-1574) known as the Holy Ari. They authored the systematic commentaries of the Kabbalah. Their teachings spread rapidly in Italy, Turkey and Poland, where they fell on fertile ground. Along with the failure of the messianic movements, the diffusion of their teachings contributed to the rapid spread of Hasidism from the area of its birth, Podolia, to the Ukraine, Moldavia, Romania, Galicia, the Habsburg territories, Poland, Lithuania and White Russia. Over time and through immigration it spread to other Jewish centers like Eretz Yisrael and the United States.

The great success of Hasidism, in contrast to the messianic movements all of which failed, was due to the fact that in Hasidism one could find spiritual salvation, while the movements of the false prophets promised physical salvation, mass aliyah to Eretz Yisrael and safety from attack, none of which they could deliver.

When one speaks of the Hasidic movement, one must immediately mention the movement that rose in opposition to it, the Mitnagdim. Each of the two movements had a leader whose name became synonymous with the movement itself. Both leaders were strong willed and forceful, charismatic, with

keenly forged mental powers and perseverance – factors that subsequently gave rise to legends and stories told in their names. On one side was the **Baal Shem Tov** (the **Besht**) while on the other side was the **Gaon of Vilna** (the **Gra**).

The Baal Shem Tov (Besht) – The Founder of the Hasidic Movement

Rabbi Israel the son of Eliezer (1700-1760), popularly known as the Baal Shem Tov (Besht), was born in Akof, Ukraine. His father, an honest and God fearing man, died when he was very young. The community considered itself obligated to provide him with an education and entrusted him to a teacher. With time, he became the shamash (sexton) of the synagogue where he spent the nighttime hours studying Kabbalah. He married when he was eighteen years old, but his wife died a short time after their marriage. He wandered from place to place and settled in the area of Brody where he became the teacher of young children. With his honesty and wisdom, he also attracted the Jews of the region who utilized him to arbitrate their disputes. His personality impressed one of the local people, Efraim of Kutu. He became close to him and he even promised his daughter Hannah's hand in marriage. R. Efraim died a short time later and his son, R. Abraham Gershon tried to convince Hannah not to marry him but she chose to marry him despite her brother's objection. Israel wanted to spare his brother-in-law R. Abraham Gershon (1761), who was a noted scholar, any embarrassment, so he left Kutu with his wife and settled in the Carpathian Mountains. There, the couple lived in isolation and earned a meager living. Israel spent his time in prayer and meditation. While learning the healing powers of the various wild herbs, he tried his hand in assorted activities. He was a shoet, an innkeeper, wrote prescriptions and amulets and spoke to the masses of people about the fear of God and the love of Torah. The family eventually moved to Medzhibozh. He not only attracted the simple people, but also over time both the educated and scholars drew towards him. However, only when he

won the heart of R. Dov Ber Friedman, the Magid of Miedzyrzec (1704-1773) did his movement, Hasidism, begin to succeed, and Medzhibozh became its center. The Baal Shem Tov brought to the Hasidic movement his experience of many years in the knowledge of nature in the wild and especially human nature.

It should be stated that with the development of a new movement, before it adopts standards of behavior and norms of practice, its fringes invariably attract those who toss aside any restraint, a mixed bag of people hitching a ride on the movement's wagon. We learn of this through a letter sent by R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady to R. Abraham of Kalisk in 1805 (Gross 1984) in which he reviews the poor rapport between them that began in 1772 when they went to meet with the Magid of Miedzyrzec. Among others he states:

"I went with him [R. Abraham, Y.K.] together to the room of our esteemed rabbi, may he rest in peace, and my eyes saw and my ears heard that he [the Magid of Miedzyrzec, Y.K.] spoke harshly about his poor leadership of our followers in Russia. . . where their conversation of the entire day was characterized by foolishness and clowning, mocking and scornful of all those who learn and making fun of them in all kinds of unrestrained ways. They are constantly leaping with their heads down and their feet up in the city markets and streets, and the name of Heaven is profaned in the eyes of the gentiles. They also engage in all other kinds of inanities in the streets of Kalisk. In the winter of 5532/1772, after the debate that took place in Shklov, he found no solution to this. The sages of the holy community of Shklov wrote to inform the late Gaon of Vilna, influencing him to, God forbid, consider them as rebellious [against God] applying the law of heresy for contemptuousness to scholars [B.T. Sanhedrin 99b, Y.K.], and concerning the tumbling with the feet in the air, he said that it was like Pe'or [B.T. Sanhedrin 70b, meaning the ritual of idolatry at Baal Pe'or, Y. K.]. They then wrote from Vilna to Brody and published there a vicious pamphlet that

summer. This caused incredible distress for all the Hasidic leaders in Volhyn who could then no longer return to their homes. They all gathered in the holy community of Rovno at that time to consult with our holy rabbi of blessed memory. . . .”

The Gaon of Vilna (Gra) – Initiator of the Opposition Movement

Twenty years after the birth of the Baal Shem Tov R. Elijah the son of Shlomo Zalman Hasid (1720-1797) later known as the Gaon of Vilna (Gra) was born. This modest man, who came out in public only on rare occasions, was highly regarded by all the scholars of his day without exception, including R. Jonathan Eybeschutz (1690-1764) who requested him to mediate in the conflict he had with other rabbis, R. Jacob Emden (1697-1776), R. Ezekiel Landau (1691-1750) and R. Joshua Falk (1680-1756), who constituted the outstanding group of scholars of the day. R. Elijah was recognized as a genius in every field while still a youth and when he was 35, they all sought his advice, referring matters of Jewish law to him for his determination. He was the only one since the Gaonic period who was granted the title Gaon. He was interested in mathematics, astronomy, anatomy and history and sought to translate books in these sciences, including the books of Josephus Flavius, into Hebrew for the benefit of the public. He also wanted to use music for educational purposes. He never occupied an official public position; he wrote more than seventy books, comments on the Torah, the Tanakh, the Mishnah, both Talmuds, the Shulhan Arukh, Haggadah, Midrashim and others.

The second title connected with his name, Hasid, relates to his spiritual world and his ascetic lifestyle, and has no connection to the Hasidic movement. However, his asceticism gave rise to an inaccurate picture and to the widely accepted yet incorrect belief that it was the people who surrounded him together with the leaders of the Vilna community who were responsible for what happened and for the battle against Hasidism. Findings and written testimonies known today testify to the

fact that it was indeed the Gaon of Vilna himself who initiated and conducted all the steps in opposition to Hasidism.

Principles of Hasidism

In 1736, the Baal Shem Tov was discovered to have supernatural powers after years of healing people through amulets and especially with natural herbs and curative plants whose benefits he learned in his years of solitude in the Carpathian Mountains. He was then 36 years old. He moved to Medzhibozh where he established himself. His good name and his reputation as a healer of the sick, supplier of help to the oppressed, provider of support and tzedakah to the poor, more and more individuals, especially from among the simple people but not only them, began to gather to be in his presence. Stories and legends about his miraculous powers and his righteousness became widespread and the number of his disciples and those who came to hear his teachings increased. Among them were first-rate rabbis and scholars such as R. Menahem Mendel of Vitebsk and Shneur Zalman of Lyady, but all of this was only after he won over R. Dov Ber the Magid of Miedzyrzec.

The basics of his teachings, the fundamentals of Hasidism are:

1. God is the center around Whom revolves all Hasidic concepts. He is found in everything, even within inanimate objects and everything bears His stamp. Thus, a person can serve his creator even in doing something that has no importance or meaning. The fact that one does not need a specific place, tangible object or preliminary preparation to approach God, must impart to man optimism and happiness in this world. The source of beauty is from God and even the inanimate has a God given vitality (Shohat 1903). The Gaon of Vilna saw this approach as pantheistic bordering on heresy and this is one of the reasons that led to his strong unwavering opposition to Hasidism.

2. Man, including his thoughts, is under constant Divine Providence and Supervision. “Man should think that everything that exists in the world comes from the power of the Creator, Praised is His name, and everything

that is accomplished by man's cunning thoughts . . . the Divine Presence penetrates every circumstance and event of man, from the most important to the least significant; even if a man sins, the Divine Presence is with him, since God gives power and vitality to man," (Shohat 1903). Man must refrain from sinning, but if he is not careful, he must know that the Holy One Praised be He in His mercy will forgive him if he repents, because even sins could not be committed without the power of God.

3. The Baal Shem Tov (Besht) considered prayer as an important value, as the most appropriate way to attach oneself to God and to strengthen religious feeling. Prayer required 'kavanah' – concentration, when the individual focused his entire being on every word he uttered. Prayer not only reinforces religious feeling, it also influences the one at prayer as well as his fate, for it breaks the barriers between him and the Holy One Praised be He, and raises him step by step, until all the barriers are broken. The last step, the removal of all barriers, is reserved for the specially privileged or is the birthright of the Tzadik, but even the ordinary person can merit spiritual elevation.

4. The Besht's high estimation of prayer led him to attach great importance to the Tzadik, who is able to reach a higher rung than the ordinary person. The Tzadik is not a new concept in Judaism. The Talmud in the Tractate Shabbat 59b states: "The Tzadik decrees, and God fulfills." Granted, a change in meaning of the term Tzadik took place between the time of the Talmud and that of the Besht. The latter emphasized the devotion in prayer that raised one on the steps leading to God, while the Tzadik of the Talmud was first and foremost a scholar with expertise in every aspect of Jewish law and Aggadah and possessed the highest moral and religious character. After the Besht, the concept and function of the Tzadik underwent another radical change, where his distinction was achieved not necessarily by his powers of attaching himself to God but was passed down from father to son or to another close relative.

5. According to the Besht, one does not have to deny physical pleasures, but has to distill and purify them since everyone should serve God with both their bodies and their souls. The Besht belittled asceticism that led to seclusion and self-denial and urged his disciples to be happy with their lives and to banish all sorrow from their hearts. He enjoyed drinking wine and often commented on its quality and taste. His viewpoints on joy and drinking wine or other intoxicating beverages became well rooted among his followers. Even today, Hasidim, at their celebrations at home or in the synagogue are accustomed to sing and dance together with wine or whisky.

The Disciples of the Baal Shem Tov

The Baal Shem Tov was not considered a great scholar; his knowledge of the Talmud and rabbinic literature never reached great heights. He was an expert in the Kabbalah and the commentaries of R. Isaac Luria on the Zohar were his guiding light. He was more interested in the practical aspects rather than the esoteric or speculative side of Kabbalah. He studied philosophical works, especially those from the Middle Ages, and was influenced by them.

The Magid of Miedzyrzec worked hand and hand with the Besht in educating the second and third generations of Hasidic leaders, who joined them, accepted their teachings and established dynasties. These disciples of the Besht (the second generation) and of the Magid of Miedzyrzec (the third generation) are (Alfasi, 1977 & Klausner 1999):

R. Pinhas ben Abraham Abba of Koretz (1728-1790)

R. Shabbtai of Rashkov (1655-1745)

R. Meir ben Jacob of Przemyslan (1711-1773)

R. Zvi Hirsh ben David of Kaminka (-1780)

R. Yechiel Mechl ben Yitzhak Sprodliwer of Drogovitch (1721-1786)

R. Nahum Menahem ben Zvi Twersky of Chernobyl (1730-1778)

R. Aaron ben Jacob Perlow the Great of Karlin (1736-1772)

- R. Jacob Joseph ben Judah Arye Leib of Ostrog (-1791)
- R. Elimelekh ben Eliezer Lipman Weissblum (-1786)
- R. Meshulam Zusya ben Elazar Lipman Lifshutz of Hanipoli (-1800)
- R. Shneur Zalman ben Barukh Schneurson of Lyady (1745-1813)
- R. Levi Yitzhak ben Meir of Berditchev (1740-1809)
- R. Simon Solomon Wertheim of Sewern (-1790)
- R. Hayim of Indura (-1787)
- R. Arye Leib ben Shalom of Waltshisok (-1817)
- R. Zvi Hirsh ben Shalom Zelig Magid of Nadvorna (-1802)
- R. Solomon ben Abraham Lutzker of Sokal (1740-1812)
- R. Abraham Abba Weingarten of Soroka
- R. Meshulam Feivish ben Aaron Moses Heller Halevi of Medzhibozh (1740-1794)
- R. Gedaliah ben Yitzhak Rabinowitz of Linitz (-1803)
- R. Hayim ben Solomon Tirer of Chernovitz (1817-1760)
- R. Solomon Gottlieb Halevi of Karlin (1738-1792)

The courts established by the above rabbis and the courts that were established in the following generations will be described in Part II of this essay.

The list of the disciples of the Besht and the Magid of Miedzyrzec are given in the tables in Appendix 1 and in Appendix 2.

The Struggle of the Mitnagdim against the Hasidim

The organized struggle against the Hasidim by the Vilna community started during Hol Hamoed Pesah (the intermediate days of Passover) in 5532/1772, 26 years after the Baal Shem Tov came to the public attention and 12 years after his death. The disciples of the Magid of Miedzyrzec from the second and third generations were already the leadership of Hasidism.

According to Dubnow (Dubnow, 1960) the organizational power of the Jewish

communities was greatly weakened by the disbanding of the Council of the Four Lands in 1764. Hasidism, which challenged what had been the scholastic basis of rabbinic Judaism up to that time, replaced it with prayer and fervor. In turn, Hasidism began to spread from the Ukraine to White Russia and Lithuania. Since the rabbis' dread of the Frankist heresy had not yet diminished, the rabbis united against those "who destroy and demolish." Previously, and even afterwards the Hasidim were the objects of denunciation, censure and attack and even excommunication by communities and their rabbis. From reliable written accounts (R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady 1980, Etkes 1998), in the winter preceding Pesah of that year R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady and R. Menahem Mendel of Vitebsk repeatedly attempted to meet with The Gaon of Vilna. He refused their attempts to get together, and in the words of Shneur Zalman:

"We went to the house of the righteous Gaon, may his light continually shine, to make a case before him to remove his grievances against us. When I was there with the righteous Rabbi our late teacher R. Mendel Harisner, may his righteousness bless us with life in the world to come, he [the Gaon of Vilna Y.K.] twice closed the door in our faces. When prominent people of the city said to him, 'Rabbi, their leading rabbi has come to debate with [you the] great honor of the Torah, and when you prevail, certainly this will bring peace to Israel. He dismissed their appeal. When they continued to plead with him, he vanished and absented himself from the city until we in turn, as the elders of the city knew, departed [Vilna].

After this, in our country, we went to the holy city of Shklov, to plead our cause but we were not able to. They did inappropriate things to us, departing from their initial promises that nothing would happen to us. Only when they came to the realization that they could not answer us, did they act in a hostile way, and based their words on the great authority [lit. suspended themselves from a tall tree, Y.K.], the Gaon, the Hasid, may God watch over him and save him."

This short text shows how much esteem R. Shneur Zalman, and apparently, also R. Menahem Mendel, had for the Gaon of Vilna, even though he opposed them and in spite of the contempt he showed towards them. We also see that the leaders of the community assisted them in approaching the Gaon of Vilna and that the hostility came from the Gaon himself. In addition, we observe how the attitude of the community of Shklov changed towards these two esteemed rabbis, after the Gaon of Vilna slammed the door in their faces. R. Shneur Zalman's description of the last point is very restrained. For many years, R. Shneur Zalman acted as the representative of Hasidism in Shklov, Minsk and Vilna, strongholds of the opposition to Hasidism. In the historical writings of R. Joseph Yitzhak ben Shalom Schneurson (1880-1950), the leader of Habad Hasidim (R. Joseph Yitzhak 1964), it is related how R. Shneur Zalman, who was a first rate scholar, maneuvered the Mitnagdim into a public dispute in Minsk at the end of 1781 that the Gaon of Vilna could not oppose and in which he [R. Shneur Zalman] had the upper hand. According to this version, R. Shneur Zalman impressed everyone with the depth and sharpness of his answers, and many of the opponents of Hasidism who were there, switched sides and joined the Hasidim. However, the dispute in Shklov ended in failure for the Hasidim and there is no other evidence of a dispute having taken place in Minsk. Among researchers, there is disagreement over the disputes and their outcome.

The Haskalah Movement

The Haskalah Movement (Enlightenment Movement) was created and developed almost along side of Hasidism. While it is not the subject of this essay and is only tangential to it, we will look at their points of contact.

The rabbis saw in the development of Haskalah the threat that those who were drawn to it would be alienated from religion and from traditional Jewish study. The wide-ranging knowledge of the Gaon of Vilna and his interest in the sciences served as a cover for the Haskalah supporters. His

image as the author of books on grammar, geometry, astronomy and other subjects, served the Maskilim as a banner to wave. In reality, the Gaon of Vilna did not consider this movement to be of any consequence and certainly of less importance than his fight against Hasidism.

When Moses Mendelsohn published his German translation of the bible, the Gaon of Vilna sent a delegation of his students to Germany to investigate the nature of the translation. They returned with a positive report and the Gaon of Vilna endorsed the translation. All this led to undesirable results when Yeshiva students traveled to Berlin and other places to learn German and the sciences and the Haskalah infiltrated the Mitnagdim. The Hasidim, in contrast, with R. Shneur Zalman at the head, were strongly opposed to this. Ironically, it turns out that the Hasidim preserved the honor of the Torah and its study.

After the death of the Gaon of Vilna, the leadership of the Mitnagdim passed to his devoted disciple, R. Hayim ben Yitzhak Berlin of Volozhin (1749-1821). R. Hayim attempted to combat the Haskalah with the founding of the Volozhin Yeshiva, and a call to revitalize the institutions of Torah and redefine the concept of the rabbinate. It was not to be regarded as a means for making a living, but as an intellectual accomplishment, that one would have to strive to achieve. With time, at Volozhin they ceased to concentrate on the Poskim (halakhic literature). The innovation at Volozhin was that it was not a local institution but a regional Yeshiva whose students came from all parts of the country to study Torah for its own sake. The high level of its graduates and their reputation spread far and wide, and offers and invitations to serve as rabbis were even sent to those who had no intention of teaching and therefore did not have rabbinic ordination. The reluctance to serve in the rabbinate in order not to use the Torah as means to make a living was so prevalent in Lithuania that there were occasions where R. Hayim himself had to intervene in order that a candidate would retract his refusal to serve. The salary paid to rabbis was meager and

there were cases where the rabbi's family continued to have to depend on being supported by his wife's family for many years. With all of its drawbacks, rabbinic positions continued to be looked upon as prestigious and occasionally there was competition among the candidates.

We see, to a certain extent, a confluence of the positions of both Hasidim and Mitnagdim on issues dealing with the rabbinate, even if it was only an intellectual mutuality. The Hasidim emphasized the enthusiasm in the service of God as the Tzadik or Admor [head of Hasidic dynasty] was the spiritual leader serving as a 'technician' with Jewish law, while the others brought about a purposeful lessening in the status of the rabbinate.

Developments

As time went on, the leadership on both sides passed from the scene. The Hasidic movement gained in power, increased the number of its adherents and a calm developed between both sides of the struggle. There is a wide scope of opinions among students of the conflict, ranging from those who consider the quarrel as not worth investigating (Landau 1965) to those who validate it (Epstein 1928, Wolfberg-Aviad 1954) and attempt to plead the cause of the Gaon of Vilna by saying that all he wanted to accomplish was to draw the Hasidim closer to the mainstream of Judaism. The general opinion of the latter day researchers of this period is that both sides benefited from the dispute; a quarrel that in the end was for the sake of Heaven. The Hasidim influenced the Mitnagdim to include feeling and enthusiasm in their performance of mitzvot, while on the other hand, the Mitnagdim prevented the Hasidim from upsetting the balance between the revealed and the hidden, a disruption that would have had dire consequences. It is appropriate to quote R. Barukh Epstein's testimony as stated by R. Menahem Mendel ben Shalom Sachna Schneurson (1789-1866), the third Admor of Habad known as the Tzemah Tzedek, who was the son-in-law of Dov Ber ben Shneur Zalman Schneurson (1773-1827)

"I will reveal to you a subject that I have kept hidden in my heart all my days . . . and have not confessed it to anyone . . . except to my father-in-law and his father, may they rest in peace . . . and the secret is that our supporters cannot begin to estimate the great good deed and act of kindness that the Gaon of Vilna did by challenging us . . . for without this controversy, there would certainly have been ample reason to worry and be concerned that the new pattern that we developed . . . would have brought us slowly but surely, step by step, beyond the limits of the Torah and commandments . . . because of the power of enthusiasm, the uplifting of the soul and exultation of the spirit in the progression of the new system that swept with it the hearts of its initiators and creators. In the end, the spirit of the Talmud would have been burned by the intensity of the flame of the Kabbalah, and the hidden Torah would have diminished the image of the revealed Torah, and the performance of the mitzvot would have faded in importance in wake of the burning passion of the secrets of enthusiasm . . ."

Thus, the struggle faded and was forgotten with time. The two movements drew closer in face of the challenges that threatened them both: Haskalah, assimilation and Reform.

Bibliography

See at the end of the Hebrew version of this article.

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Appendix I - Students of the Baal Shem Tov
Who did not establish dynasties

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|---|--|
| R. Aaron of Kutu | R. Jakob Koppel ben Zalman Hasid of Kolomyja (-1787) |
| R. Aaron of Medzhibozh | R. Joel of Niemirow-Eretz Israel (-1788) |
| R. Aaron of Slepkovitz | R. Jonah "the Good one" of Ostrog |
| R. Abraham Abba of Dubossary | R. Jonah of Polock |
| R. Abraham of Podolsk | R. Jonah of Kamionka |
| R. Abraham Abba of Kribosk | R. Joseph of Drogobytz |
| R. Abraham Abba Shapira of Korets | R. Joseph ben Zvi Hirsh of Kamionka |
| R. Abraham Gershon ben Yakar of Kutu-Tiberias (-1810) | R. Joseph Joel ben Jakob Aron of Stefan (-1770) |
| R. Alexander of Biala-Podlaska | R. Joseph Moses of Medzhibozh |
| R. Arye Leib "Saba" of Shpola (1725-1811) | R. Joseph Ashkenazi |
| R. Arye Leib of Vijnita | R. Joseph Melamed of Zarnowiec |
| R. Arye Leib of Miedzyrzec (-1794) | R. Joseph Melamed of Chmielnik |
| R. Arye Leib Sures | R. Joseph Sprodliver |
| R. Arye Leib Fistiner of Kolomyja (-1745) | R. Judah Arye Leib of Polonnoye (-1770) |
| R. Arye Leib Kessler | R. Judah Judl of Chudnov |
| R. Barukh of Kamionka | R. Kehath of Werish |
| R. Barukh ben Shneur Zalman Liwai of Liazni | R. Meir of Hanipoli |
| R. Benjamin of Zaloshitz (-1791) | R. Meir Harif |
| R. David of Nikolayev (-1799) | R. Meir ben Zvi Margalioth-Auerbach of Ostrog (-1790) |
| R. David of Nikolayev | R. Menahem Mendel of Bar (-1765) |
| R. David of Kolomyja (-1731) | R. Menahem Mendel of Dubossary |
| R. David of Sargorod | R. Menahem Mendel of Kolomyja |
| R. David Leikes of Chernobyl (-1799) | R. Menahem Mendel ben Eliezer of Przemyslan-Safed (-1770) |
| R. David Firkus of Krotoshyn | R. Mordehay of Zaslav |
| R. David ben Israel Harif Halperin of Ostrog (-1765) | R. Moses of Kutu (-1737) |
| R. Dov Ber of Zaslav | R. Moses Kedes |
| R. Dov Ber of Lwov | R. Moses of Satanow |
| R. Eliezer Lipa Weissblum of Chmielnik (-1819) | R. Moses Meshel of Bezenkow |
| R. Eliezer of Tsempol | R. Moses ABD of Nowa-Podolsk |
| R. Elija of Sokolowka | R. Moses of Nemierow |
| R. Ezriel Plotzker of Plock | R. Moses Shoham of Dolina |
| R. Falk of Titselnik (-1782) | R. Nahman of Gorodenka-Tiberias (-1765) |
| R. Fridl of Brody-Eretz Israel (-1783) | R. Nahman of Kosov |
| R. Gershon of Lutzk (-1788) | R. Nathan Neta of Avruts (-1785) |
| R. Haim of Linz | R. Nisan ben Isaia Katz of Wahrt |
| R. Haim ben Joseph Moses of Krasna | R. Samson of Hanipoli |
| R. Isachar of Chisineu | R. (Abraham) Samson ben Jakob Joseph of Polonnoye-Eretz Israel (-1799) |
| R. Isachar Dov Ber of Lubieszow (-1786) | R. Samuel ben David of Kamionka (-1831) |
| R. Isaiah of Janow (-1794) | R. Samuel of Wortowka |
| R. Israel Gelehrnter of Satinow | R. Shmarja Shmerl of Worhiwka (-1775) |
| R. Jakob Joseph ben Samson Hakohen of Polonnoye (-1783) | R. Solomon Baiver 9-1811) |
| R. Jakob of Hanipoli | R. Uziel ben Zvi Hirsh Meishish of Siemiatycze (1744-1785) |
| R. Jakob of Medzhibozh-Eretz Israel | |

R. Yechiel Mechl Margalioth of Grodno
(-1751)
R. Yechiel Mechl Sprodliver of Zlocew
(1781-1821)
R. Yitzhak ben Zvi Hirsh of Miedzyrzec
R. Yitzhak Dov ben Zvi Hirsh Margalioth of
Jazlowiec
R. Yitzhak Sprodliver of Drogozobys (-1744)
R. Zalmina Shargorodski of Chisineu (-1782)

R. Zalman of Lutzk
R. Zalman of Miedzyrzec
R. Zev Wolf Kitzes of Medzhibozh
R. Zvi of Kamenets
R. Zvi ben Eliezer Hasid of Zloczew
R. Zvi Hirsh ben Solomon Zalman Taub of
Kuzmir
R. Zvi Sofer
R. Zvi Hirsh Shmulkes of Ostrog (-1788)

Appendix II - Students of R. Dov Ber Friedman, The Magid of Miedzyrzec
Who did not establish dynasties

R. Aaron ben Samuel Hakohen of Rovno
(-1789)
R. Aaron Samuel ben Naftali Hertz Hakohen
of Ostrog (-1814)
R. Aaron ben Samson Gardiah Rofeh of
Miedzyrzec (-1810)
R. Abraham Hayim ben Gedaliah of Zloczew
(1750-1816)
R. Abraham Kalisker of Kalisk (-1809)
R. Asher Anshel of Tchenovitz (-1765)
R. Asher Zvi ben David of Ostrog (-1816)
R. Azriel of Kazin (-1785)
R. Barukh ben Abraham of Kosov (-1781)
R. Barukh the Magid of Rika (1721-1831)
R. Benjamin Zev Wolf ben Samuel of
Balta-Safed (-1825)
R. David of Hanipoli
R. Dov of Gorodenka
R. Eliezer Leizer of Berdichev (-1809)
R. Gedaliah of Zolkiewv (-1776)
R. Haim Olsaker of Rovno
R. Haim London of Mad
R. Isachar Dov Ber ben Arye Leib Geza-Zvi
of Zlocew-Safed (-1795)
R. Israel ben Peretz Polusker of Plock
(-1783)
R. Jacob of Kalisz
R. Jakob Samson ben Yitzhak of
Spitowka-Tiberias (-1801)

R. Joseph of Holshitz
R. Joseph of Rovno
R. Joseph Judah Arye Leib Shapira of Balta
R. Judah Arye Leib of Hanipoli
R. Menahem Mendel ben Shraga Feivish of
Rovno
R. Menahem Menli
R. Moses of Przeworsk (-1805)
R. (Avraham) Moses of Przeworsk (-1793)
R. (Joseph) Moses Shapira of Zaloshitz
(1735-1815)
R. Nahman of Bar
R. Pineas ben Zvi Hirsh Horovitz Halevi of
FFdM (1730-1805)
R. Rephael Bretsher of Bershad (-1824)
R. Samuel Shmelke ben Zvi Horovitz Halevi
of Niklsburg (1726-1778)
R. Solomon of Heisin
R. Todros ben Zvi of Rovno (-1765)
R. Uri Shraga Feivel of Dubienka
R. Yitzhak Isaak Katz Hakohen of Korets
(1753-1787)
R. Yitzhak ben Shraga Feivel Ashkenazi of
Lwow
R. Zelig of Brody
R. Zev Wolf of Grodno
R. Zev Wolf of Taher
R. Zev of Zhitomir (-1800)
R. Zev of Tsharne-Tiberias (-1823)



**The Monument in Memory of Jewish Soldiers
who Fell during World War II
while Serving in the Ranks of the Polish Armies**

David Shachar

Translated from the Hebrew Original

In *Sharsheret Hadorot*, Volume 15, Number 3 (June 2001) in the article *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in World War II*, based on Benjamin Meirtchak's lecture, mention is made of the monument in memory of Jews who fell while serving in the ranks of the regular Polish army, General Anders Army and the Polish People's Army. The following lines describe the creation of the monument.

Beginning in 1990, a group of us thought it would be fitting to construct a memorial to keep alive the memory of the approximately 30,000 Jewish soldiers who fell during World War II while serving in the ranks of the Polish armies. The account of their service represents one of the most glorious chapters in the chronicle of Jewish resistance; a story that has not always received appropriate public recognition among Jews in general and among Israelis in particular.

There were problems in raising the funds needed for the project. The department for memorializing soldiers of the Ministry of Defense granted us a section in the military cemetery on Mt. Herzl, Jerusalem. Financial assistance came from an unanticipated source - Mr. Sami Shamoon, a well-known businessman in England and Israel and the president of the Sephardic Federation of England who promised to help. An agreement was signed after a few conversations with him. Mr. Shamoon donated the lion's share of the needed funding and additionally provided the contractor with a guarantee of payment. These activities resulted in an increased

interest among others: Mr. Yosef Maiman, the owner of the Merhav Company funded the balance of the project in memory of his late father Yisrael who had been an officer in the Polish People's Army during the War. The Organization of Disabled Veterans of World War II made a significant contribution and the Polish Defense Ministry donated a cast iron representation of an eagle, the symbol of the Polish army that is seen together with a Magen David at the top of the monument. Contacts also developed with the Sephardic Federation, the Center of Babylonian Heritage. The participation of the Iraqi Jewish community in the project that commemorated Polish Jewish soldiers was very moving. The well-attended dedication ceremony took place on October 26, 1998, in the presence of the Minister of Defense, representatives of veteran organizations and public figures, along with delegations from many foreign embassies. The Deputy Defense Minister of Poland in company with senior army officers came especially for the dedication. The Polish ambassador and his staff accompanied them. In a demonstration of solidarity, a large delegation from the Iraqi community in Israel attended. The ceremony was very moving and of great historic significance. See illustration of the monument in the Hebrew section.

David Shachar is the secretary of the Organization of Polish Veterans in Israel and headed the project to construct the monument.



The International Genealogical Conference London 2001 *Mathilde Tagger*

Some 1,000 genealogists from all over the world participated in the London Conference. Not since the conference in New York in 1999 has this number been equaled. There were 160 lectures on the widest range of topics: the history of the various Jewish communities in England, Wales and Scotland; sources of information in France, Belgium and Holland; the history of illegal immigration to Eretz Yisrael and the story of a foreign volunteer in Israel's War of Independence; the Holocaust – history of communities in Eastern Europe and the archives that can still be found in them; Sephardic genealogy; genealogical research in various states in the United States; history of several Jewish communities in China. There was also a panel discussion on the topic of genetics and genealogy that included nine lectures and lasted an entire day. There were numerous interesting personal stories that were sometimes very moving. One example was the account of a woman who was among the ten thousand children who left Germany on the eve of World War II for England and whose lives were thus saved. This was the well-known Kindertransport.

As an illustration, following are a few words about two of the captivating lectures that I attended.

Ms. Lydia Collins, from the JGS Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain, spoke on the research she has done on the Sephardic community of Manchester. This group consists of two elements, Jews from the Ottoman Empire and those from Aleppo, Syria. She related how the Jews from the Ottoman Empire were jailed during World War I.

Mr. Moshe Shealtiel delivered a very interesting talk in the spirit of the times on the history of the Shealtiel family. He traced the family line moving back in time from Barcelona and Gerona in Spain to Babylonia back to King David. In a family gathering held not long ago, members from all parts of

the world (including Yemen) underwent DNA testing. The results were astounding – they all shared an identical genetic type. He connected both the Benveniste and Harlap families to the Shealtiel family. A few years ago, Mr. Shealtiel, an Israeli residing in the United States, addressed our society in Jerusalem.

Organized visits to British places of special Jewish interest were arranged. I participated in the tour of the Spanish-Portuguese synagogue known as Bevis Marks, as that is the name of the street on which it is located. This year marks the 300th anniversary of its founding. We were provided with the history of the community both past and present. From my standpoint, this visit was both an exceptional occasion and a unique experience.

It is interesting to note that 35 Israelis participated in the conference, among them were seven lecturers and several of them are members of the IGS.

There was a resource room containing many of the guides from the library of the JGS of Great Britain. There was a computer room with an Internet hookup. Above all, there were dozens of volunteers from our host society offering conference participants the characteristic quality of British concern for every type of question asked.

The organization was first rate and I want to conclude this short report with words of deep gratitude to the two heads of the organizing committee, Dr. George Anticoni and Dr. Saul Issroff, who ceaselessly labored from early in the morning until late at night.

Thank you for making the Conference an unforgettable experience for all its participants. It is my fervent hope that the Conference that the Israel Genealogical Society will host in 2004 will be comparable and that all of our members will join together for the benefit of all who will come to participate in Jerusalem in 2004.

Search Bureau for Missing Relatives

Batya Untershatz

Summary of a Lecture given at the Negev Branch of IGS

The Search Bureau for Missing Relatives was founded in 1945 after the remnants from the Shoah desperately began to search for whatever might have remained of their families. The intensity of requests for relatives went in waves, which coincided with the heavy waves of immigration: 1945, 1957, the 1970's and 1990's. In those years, there were between 200 to 350 requests monthly. Between 50 and 60 percent of those searches met with success.

The vast majority of searches were initiated from abroad, although some came from Israelis. Just as Jews lived all over the globe, the requests came in many different languages such as Russian, Polish, Hebrew, English, German and so forth. Although the original aim of the Search Bureau was the reunification of families shattered by the Shoah, the latest requests concern mostly searches for lost branches of families for genealogy reasons.

The Bureau of Missing Persons has computerized records of all requests since 1945, as well as Israeli censuses up to November 1984. Searches can be done by name, by town, or by marriage - which includes the names of the parents. Those who

married outside Israel prior to aliyah do not have their maiden name included in the database. From 1985 on, one can search for new immigrants through the Ministry of Absorption, or for others through the Ministry of the Interior. The Bureau of Missing Persons also has microfiches containing data from 1900 up to the 1950's.

There are many other helpful sources for finding relatives: Hevra Kadisha records; Landsmanschaften; the Histadrut; the numerous professional organizations; the Central Zionist Archives; Yad Vashem; State Archives; the Archives of the Ministry of the Interior; the Kibbutz Movements; various city archives and more. The secret of a successful search is in giving as much accurate information as possible when making a request of any of the offices mentioned in this summary.

Born in Vilnius, Lithuania, Batya Unterschatz came to Israel in 1972 and worked for the Jewish Agency until June 2000. She is a graduate of Vilnius State University and is a professional genealogist since 1996. She is married, and has 6 children and 12 grandchildren.

SIG Sephardim of the Mediterranean Basin

Report of 5761/2001 Activities

Levana Albala-Dinerman

There were three gatherings of the Sephardim of the Mediterranean Basin SIG (Special Interest Group) during 5761.

Our first meeting took place in Jerusalem in December 2000 and focused on the communities of Bursa and Saloniki. After determining the goals of our activities and the presentation of books and projects dealing with researching Sephardic Jewry in every location after the expulsion from

Spain, Mr. Moshe Becker delivered an interesting lecture on the types of activities of the Jewish organizations of the Bursa and Saloniki communities as documented in their records.

Our second meeting was held at Beit HaTanakh in Tel Aviv. It was dedicated to Rustchuk, one of the Jewish communities of Bulgaria. Mr. Joseph Covo, a long-standing member of this SIG and a native of Bulgaria,

delivered a talk illustrated with slides. An important and eye-opening discussion, it aided in understanding the settlement patterns of the exiles from Spain and Portugal. Levana Albala-Dinerman concluded the gathering by performing three songs in Ladino, the Judeo-Spanish dialect that was the language of Spain's Jews. The songs are part of the repertoire of Sephardic Bulgarian Jews who made Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael in the 1930's and established the moshav of Beit Hanan. The songs, which complemented Mr. Covo's interesting lecture, describe the strong yearning of Bulgaria's Jews to move to Eretz Yisrael and work the land. They accepted the difficulties of absorption with love and understanding and looked forward to their own forms of entertainment after a day of working the soil. The third meeting took place in conjunction with the Jerusalem branch of the Israel Genealogical Society. It was dedicated to the "Dynasty of Princes" (Nesi'im), the descendants of the House of David, who served as Exilarchs of the Babylonian

community. The lecture, given by Ms. Aliza Yehezkel, was based on her research and especially on the branch that began with Makhir-Natronai, the first descendant of the family of Princes, who came to the West between the 7th and 8th centuries at the request of Pepin I, known as Pepin the Short, King of France in those days. Makhir-Natronai was the leader of the communities in Southern France. His descendants were princes who headed many communities. The King of France invited him to the city of Narbonne to establish a Yeshiva there and to serve as a diplomatic, military and political mediator between Islamic Spain and Christian France. During the lecture, the names of families that intermarried with the princely family, such as the Tosafists, were pointed out. The Jews of Southern France lived in peace with the Church until the Church decided to wipe out the memory of Makhir from Europe and to murder his descendants. Ms. Yehezkel will shortly complete this research and publish it.



The Fifth International Conference on Jewish Names

Jerusalem – August 13, 2001

Summary by Mathilde Tagger

Through the initiative of Professor Aaron Demsky, the conferences on Jewish names take place every two years at Bar Ilan University at Ramat Gan. This year, the conference was conducted within the framework of the Thirteenth World Conference of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The topics were far ranging: Hebrew names in Ancient Times; Sephardic Jewish names; European Jewish names; toponyms (place names); Hebrew names both in and outside the Land of Israel. A special session, consisting of two lectures, was held in honor of Professor Edwin Lawson. One given by Professor Lawson himself was on the growth of the study of Hebrew names and the other by Professor

Stanley Lieberman was on Jewish names and names of Jews. The busy day concluded with the screening of the film by Alan Berliner, "The Sweetest Sound," a well-made movie with subtle humor based on the name of the producer, Berliner. Two very interesting and instructive lectures were given by Dr. Esther Eshel on the Collection of Hebrew names discovered at Tel Maresha and by Dr. Tal Ilan on the Names of the seventy-two translators of the Torah into Greek.

The session on Names of the Jews of Spain was abridged because of the absence of two speakers, one from Spain and the other from France, who did not come to Israel. From Dr. Shlomo Alboher we heard an analysis of the 105 family names of the 3,267 Jews of

Monastir (Bitola), Macedonia, who perished in the Holocaust.

Dr. Leah Bornstein-Makovetsky lectured on the personal names of the Jews of Aleppo in the Ottoman Period, when the majority of the members of this large community were long resident native Oriental Jews and the descendants of expelled Spanish Jews and former Livornese Jews were in the minority.

Of the session on the Names of the Jews of Europe, I participated only in the lecture of Dr. Boris Kotlerman on Jewish Names of the Birobidzhan Area, the large section that was set-aside in 1929 by the Soviet Union as a Jewish Autonomous Region, where Yiddish was to be the dominant language. Place names that are still in use bear witness to that time in history.

The topics of the section devoted to toponyms (names of locations) were Israeli: places with names containing components indicating grape growing; the various names and epithets of the Dead Sea in the Bible and Rabbinic literature; settlements with names of books; Biblical names for new communities established in the early days of

the State of Israel and the connection between these names and the placing of the new town and their residents.

In summary, it was a day jammed with the acquisition of new knowledge, of intense concentration and interest and very enjoyable. As onomastics is very close to genealogy, I highly advocate attending and participating in the next Conference. I cannot conclude without expressing my deepest gratitude to Professor Demsky, the guiding spirit of these conferences for developing this especially interesting area of scientific investigation. Professor Demsky, Well Done!

Mathilde Tagger has an MA degree in Library & Information Sciences from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and is involved in genealogical research since 1986. She is specializing in the genealogy of the Sephardic Jews and is currently engaged in building research tools for the genealogy of the Sephardic community. Her work can be seen at:

www.sephardichouse.org/entrance.html



New Book: Discovering your Jewish Ancestors

Krasner-Khait, Barbara. "Discovering Your Jewish Ancestors." North Salt Lake, UT: Heritage Quest, 2001. 290p.

www.heritagequest.com/html/featureb82.html

"Discovering Your Jewish Ancestors" is a comprehensive and concise guide to discovering family history from "the old country" and chronicling immigration to the U.S. Written by historian Barbara Krasner-Khait, this book guides the reader through publications, archives, institutions and Web sites that hold the keys to locating even the most hard-to-find ancestors in towns that have been destroyed - along with all town records.

The book focuses on the Jewish experience - its sources, meaning, and value. Krasner-Khait weaves together success stories from her own personal journey to find her family roots with a host of helpful tips for where to find historic data unique to the Jewish genealogy experience, including records about surname changes, migration patterns, family members who perished in the holocaust and much more.

Specially designated boxes throughout the book help the reader trace their family tree, including: internet addresses for quick database searches and results; explanation of some genealogy jargon, Yiddish, or Hebrew words; Critical reference works for the Jewish genealogist; list of additional resources; research methodology and networking in action.

JGS JOURNAL ABSTRACTS

Compiled by Harold Lewin

In this somewhat eclectic guide to JGS literature, shortage of space has forced us to exclude many interesting accounts of journeys to ancestral villages, local news and individual success stories. The articles selected are mainly those comprising information of direct benefit to family history researchers. And if these researchers find something useful herein, an effort should be made to locate the original article, since abstracts merely point one in the right direction. May we be forgiven for all changes of title and missing credits. **Explanation:** Such a note as 3pp. (4) appearing at the end of an abstract indicates an article length of about three pages, with its location in Ref. No. 4. The note 1p indicates an item length of one page or less (see **Key to Journal References**).

AUSTRIA

Research Resources for Austria and the Czech Republic are reprinted from Roots-Key, the Los Angeles JGS Newsletter. 2pp. (3)

BALTIC STATES

GSU, Belarus SIG & Litvak SIG Arrange Cooperative Indexing Project. David Fox, Brent Griffith and Davida N.Handler describe a unique project aimed at digitizing and indexing the enormous collections of microfilms relating to Belarus & Lithuania held by the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU). 3pp. (1)

FORMER SOVIET UNION EXCEPT THE BALTIC STATES

Moscow Research Advertiser His Services. This researcher claims to have had success in reuniting families in the U.S. and the former U.S.S.R. 3pp. (3)

Ukraine Research Organization Advertiser. Genealogical research and travel services in the Ukraine are offered by the

International Centre of Genealogical Research, Kiev. 1p. (3)

GSU, Belarus SIG & Litvak SIG Arrange Cooperative Indexing Project. David Fox, Brent Griffith and Davida N.Handler describe a unique project aimed at digitizing and indexing the enormous collections of microfilms relating to Belarus & Lithuania held by the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU). 3pp. (1)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Research Resources for Austria and the Czech Republic are reprinted from Roots-Key, the Los Angeles JGS Newsletter. 2pp. (3)

GREAT BRITAIN

Genealogical Resources at London's Guildhall Library. In this article, George Rigal describes the library and a few of its more important sources for genealogical research. 1p. (1)

The Role of Shelters in Jewish Migration Via the United Kingdom, 1850-1914. Nicholas Evans provides a history of UK shelters for poor Jewish immigrants, most of whom were given limited aid prior to their embarkation to other countries. 3pp. (1)

ISRAEL

Yad Vashem Pages of Testimony and a Discovery at the Central Zionist Archives by Sallyann Amdur Sack describes her experiences while using the Pages of Testimony Computerized Database. She also describes a project at the Central Zionist Archives aimed at computerizing about one million immigration applications of the period 1923-1963. The project is being supported by the IDF to aid identification of 150 soldiers who fell in the War of Independence. 2pp. (2)

Unexpected Resources at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People. Hadassah Assouline, in an excerpt from her talk given at the Jewish Genealogical Conference in London, July 2001, describes several important and new sources for genealogical research, including an impressive number of files discovered in the district archives of Cracow. 2pp. (2)

POLAND

The Story of Jewish Records Indexing – Poland Project by Barbara Krasner-Khait is an account of the history of the JRI-Poland Project that describes the complex transcribing and checking procedures and the current state of the Project. 8pp. (1)

UNITED STATES

Western Reserve Historical Society Gearing Up to Gather Funds to Obtain the 1930 Census Reels The 1930 Census will be available to the public in April 2002. WRHS is currently working with committees to purchase these research tools. Each reel costs \$40. 1p. (3)

Lists of Childrens' Graves at Ridge Rd Cemetery, Cleveland have been compiled by Vicki Vigil and Judy Maran. A list of Jewish cemeteries in Cleveland is included. 10pp. (3)

What Did My Ancestor's Ship Look Like? This is a list of sources for pictures of ships used by immigrants to the U.S. reprinted from Illiana JGS Newsletter. 1p. (3)

Genealogy Institute Opens at Center for Jewish History in New York City. The Center for Jewish History embodies a unique partnership of five major institutions of Jewish scholarship, history and art: American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. 2pp. (3)

Naturalization Record Sources in the United States. This list relates to Naturalization Applications in Ohio and

provides details of the various County Courts handling the applications for specific districts and periods. 3pp. (3)

Cleveland Marriage Records On-Line – 1810-1998. Adelle W. Glober provides details of an on-line site for Cleveland, Ohio marriage records. 2pp. (3)

Significance of the Digits in a Social Security Number. Information is given on the meaning of the first three digits (place of application), the middle two digits (fraud detection) and the last four digits (randomly assigned). A list of the code for the first three digits is provided. 1p. (4)

The Ellis Island Database on the Internet Saga. In a series of articles, Gary Mokotoff details the more obvious shortcomings of the database and suggests ways of overcoming some of them. 5pp. (4)

Strategies for Using the Ellis Island Database. Gary Mokotoff continues his erudite and user-friendly articles on searching the Ellis Island Database, and provides many useful suggestions for overcoming its shortcomings and avoiding such pitfalls as name changes. 4pp. (2)

GENEALOGY SOFTWARE & THE INTERNET

A Family History Favorite Website (reported by Carolyn Rosenstein) is the result of five years of research by Ted Margulis. Ancestry.Com has designated the website as a Family History Favorite. The address: <http://jewishwebindex.com> 6pp. (3)

Genealogy Information Portal of the Web. GenealogySpot.com

(<http://www.genealogyspot.com>) is a free resource center that simplifies the search for the best online genealogy resources for beginners and experts alike. The site is published by StartSpot Mediaworks, Inc. and is part of a growing network of award-winning vertical information portals designed to make finding the best topical

information on the Internet a quick and easy experience. 1p. (3)

The Ellis Island Database on the Internet Saga. In a series of articles, Gary Mokotoff details the more obvious short-comings of the database and suggests ways of overcoming some of them. 5pp. (4)

Strategies for Using the Ellis Island Database. Gary Mokotoff continues his erudite and user-friendly articles on using the Ellis Island Database and provides many useful suggestions for overcoming such shortcomings as transcription errors and pitfalls such as changes in given name. 4pp. (2)

JEWISH GENEALOGY – GENERAL DNA Testing and Genealogy. This article lists Family Tree DNA Frequently Asked Questions and provides some answers. 9pp. (3)

Jewish Genealogical Projects in Progress. This article summarizes many important genealogical projects under way by JGS societies and individuals. 6pp. (1)

HOLOCAUST-RELATED GENEALOGICAL SOURCES

Using the Pages of Testimony Computerized Database by Shalom Bronstein, examines the significance of the new database of Pages of Testimony at Yad Vashem. The aim is to make the database available on the Internet by the end of 2001. 3pp (1)

Eastern European Jewish Emigration via Hamburg. Juergen Sielemann, in an excerpt from his talk at the London conference, describes the project for computerization of emigration lists. Internet access to the entire set of data is expected within the next few years. Currently, free access to the data from 1890-1894 is available on the Internet. 3pp. (2)

KEY TO JOURNAL REFERENCES

Ref No.	JOURNAL	GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	ISSUE	YEAR	VOL.	No.
1	AVOTAYNU	International	Spring	2001	XVII	1
2	AVOTAYNU	International	Summer	2001	XVII	2
3	THE CLEVELAND KOL	Cleveland	April	2001	13	3 & 4
4	JGSLI LINEAGE	Long Island	Spring	2001	XIII	2

