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Editorial

Allow me to open with a personal note. I came to SD accidentally, and in a roundabout way. In a roundabout way, because I'm no expert in genealogy (the genealogist in our family is my husband and I am just helping), and accidentally, because, as so often in genealogy, it was purely by accident that he became interested in this particular field. Nevertheless, there was also a path that led me to directly to SD, and that was my love for the Hebrew language.

It is a commonly accepted truth, that there exists a strong relationship between genealogy and history. Any genealogical research must take into account the historical context. But geography is also playing an important part in genealogy, especially the genealogy of the Jewish people. Sometimes the research encompasses a large area and sometimes it involves focusing on a particular location.

Three articles in this issue are concerned with geography: Leon Taranto examines the history of the Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire, in the light of their dispersion in that vast land; Shlomo Schmiedt describes the achievements of the immigrants from one area in Europe - Czechoslovakia; and Bruce Reisch's article is a detailed and moving account of his trip to a rather small area in Bukovina, his grandfathers' and great-grandfathers' homeland.

In this issue we touch - barely - on one of the most fascinating subjects in genealogy: Jewish names. We are grateful to Mathilde Tagger for the short article on Jewish names related to celestial bodies: the sun, the moon and the stars. The Jewish dispersion, in so many places and among so many nations, caused an immense variety in given and family names. Names were changed, adapted to the local language, camouflaged in order to conceal the nationality of their Jewish bearers, new names were adopted, and so on. I hope that Mathilde's article will stimulate interest in this subject, and that in the future we will have more.

We intend to open a new column, *Genealogical Tips*. We invite everyone to share with us his or her expertise and good advice and write a few lines. I am sure our readers will be appreciative.

I would like to conclude with best wishes for a good year and a rainy winter. When the High Priest (HaKohen HaGadol) spoke on Yom HaKipurim on behalf of his people, he asked (in free translation) for a year "with rain, and please do not listen to the prayers of the travelers concerning rain, when the whole world needs it". In this context, we will try to do our part: we will travel to attend the lectures even when it's wet. Just let us have the rain that we all so badly need.

Yocheved Klausner



IGS Report of Activities for 1998-1999 תשנ"ט

Jean-Pierre Stroweis

1. In June 1998, Ester Ramon and Tzemach Jacobson asked to be released from their functions as President and Treasurer respectively. The IGS general assembly then elected its new board: Jean-Pierre Stroweis, President; Mathilde Tagger, Secretary (continuing); Bengt Sjalín, Treasurer. The assembly chose Aviva Neeman as the new editor of *Sharsheret HaDorot*, and Reuven Naftali was reappointed librarian.

2. The establishment of IGS Branches in Beer Sheva and Tel Aviv has been the major accomplishment of this year. In both cities, former IGS members and others have organized to establish a branch, find a convenient place to hold their meetings, invite speakers, advertise their activities and develop the basis for a branch library. Each branch elected its own board.

The board of the IGS Negev branch includes Martha Lev Zion, president; Shirley Rosen, secretary; and Chana Furman, treasurer. The board of the IGS Tel Aviv branch includes Aviva Neeman, president; Dov Biran, treasurer; and Hava Agmon, secretary.

This also impacted the activities held in Jerusalem. There was a slight drop in attendance, but also newcomers too. A board was also elected for the Jerusalem branch, including Shalom Bronstein, president; Rose Lerer Cohen, secretary and Bengt Sjalín, treasurer.

As expected, the creation of IGS branches in Tel Aviv and Beer Sheva have brought the IGS a new audience, which could not be reached earlier. The numbers speak for themselves. Our membership has grown from 120 to 143 members, a raise of 20%. The list of our members, as of August 1999, is distributed to all the members in a separate document. About 20 members are affiliated to

the Negev branch, 35 members to the Tel Aviv branch and a few members asked not to be affiliated to any branch. Lectures have attracted not only 'local' branch members but also members who lived further away but who continued to commute to attend to those meetings in which they were interested.

The board, elected in June 1998, understood its new role and responsibility as a national one. The board has encouraged and supported the newly-created branches in many ways: giving a financial start-up support, providing list of IGS members and potential members in their geographic areas, bringing in and coordinating some guest speakers, contributing basic resources (such as the JGFF family finder, the Cemetery CD-ROM, booklet on how to establish a JGS, and videocassettes), reporting past lectures in *Sharsheret HaDorot*, publishing in a newsletter and on the internet the future activities of the branches, and giving administrative guidance.

But the major effort has come from the local members themselves, who raised the challenge to establish a genealogical framework in their city. This is a great accomplishment that we'd like to see it replicated in other Israeli cities.

3. This year, the IGS also established the SIGs: Eretz Israel (led by Shmuel Even Or) and Sephardim of Ottoman Empire/ Bulgaria / Greece (led by Mathilde Tagger) in addition to the four existing SIGs: Hungary (led by Menashe Davidovitz), Lithuania (led by Rose Lerer Cohen), Germany/Austria (led by Esther Ramon) and Poland (led by Jean-Pierre Stroweis). A few SIGs established good contacts with their respective Associations of former residents (Lithuania and Hungary). The SIGs are open to all members, 'nationwide'. Altogether, we proposed to our members an

average of 4 or 5 meetings per month, between the SIG's and the regularly meetings, a goal unique for a JGS.

4. This new period of extensive activity has generated its own organizational and logistics problems: how to adapt the regulations of our association to represent its new structure and operations, how to distribute the resources, how to partition the decision making, how to distribute the treasurer responsibility, etc. To this purpose, many discussions were held, and a few proposals have been made.

We have not solved all the questions, but we have defined, with the help of a lawyer, a set of proposed internal regulations that will rule our association, beyond the general lines of the registered by-laws. This set of internal regulations is presented in a separate document and will be discussed by the general assembly for approval. It will be an annex to our by-laws.

5. We established our internet presence with a redesigned web site (with the help and courtesy of Lexicom and its manager, Tsemach Jacobson), where we include the program of our coming activities, the table of content of Sharsheret HaDorot, information about the association, its branches and the SIGs, and some genealogical facts.

The use of e-mail on a daily basis has been instrumental in exchanging information and opinions quickly and efficiently among a large number of participants, who are dispersed throughout the country. We are able to coordinate with our branches without incurring significant costs. Around 40% of our members have now an E-mail address. We initiated regular e-mail reminders to our members and to our base of surrounding persons.

6. We continued our effort trying to make Sharsheret HaDorot look better and more attractive, to add new regular columns, and to reflect the association activities. We kept its

bilingual format. The page count has increased to an average of 60 pages per issue. Simultaneously, we have decreased the cost and the time of production of an issue. How? By extensive use of word processors, electronic mail and scanners, by an extra effort of the editorial board volunteers (no more fax, no more need to pay someone to type, translate or correct the articles), and by reducing the printing costs. We now control the whole process of producing the journal: writing articles, editing, typing, translating, reviewing and correcting, adding illustrations, graphic composition, page numbering, producing the tables of contents, labeling and shipping, that are now done by a few dedicated volunteers. This cost reduction will allow us to fund the production of an fourth issue per year at no additional cost for our members, and make of Shasheret HaDorot a fully quarterly Journal, a major leap forward. Finally, let me repeat with pride that Sharsheret HaDorot was granted two months ago the 'Outstanding Publication Award' at the New York Jewish genealogy conference. This alone proves the value of our Journal. We removed from Sharsheret HaDorot the program of future activities of the branches and SIGs, which is now mailed as a separate bilingual Newsletter (typically 1 or 2 pages), that can be posted in many public places.

7. On the national level,

- We brought to the attention of the international Jewish genealogy community the theft of Yizkor Books from Yad VaShem and Beit Ariela libraries, hoping to find replacement books,
- The IGS renewed the cooperation with the Galilee Genealogical Society,
- The IGS participated in the 4th International Conference on Jewish Onomastics, at Bar Ilan University. Our society also displayed a stronger international presence:

- Our secretary responded to an increasing flow of E-mail questions coming from overseas,
- Each branch of the IGS is a member of the IAJGS, which gives a larger weight to Israel in this international organization,
- Six IGS members attended the New York international conference, two of them as lecturers,
- We hosted meetings with preeminent international Jewish Genealogists such as Sallyann Sack, Karen Franklin, Susan King and Stanley Diamond and made useful contacts,
- Some of our members were very active on the internet forums and the JewishGen-related projects,
- We agreed to collaborate with the emerging European Federation of Jewish Genealogical Societies,
- We announced our intention to host the IAJGS international conference in Israel in the summer 2004, and asked the Galilee Genealogical Society to join in.

8. The library team has established a new catalog of books and magazines, available on

our web site. Library hours have been extended, thanks to Harriet Kasow. We have bought some major books and subscribed to important SIG magazines. The growth of our library requires additional bookshelf space, not available at Mevakshei Derech; therefore, we are considering moving the library and the Jerusalem activities to another location.

9. A weakness of our society remains that we have not yet started to generate together any new genealogical database, to index important files from the archives, to document the genealogical resources available in Israel, to contribute to the international cemetery project, etc. There are many small and medium-size such projects that we can raise, should we volunteer. These projects would be of great help to our members and to the Jewish genealogy community worldwide.

No doubt the IGS has reached significant achievements this year; no doubt too, there are many more improvements to be made in the future, hopefully with the active participation of all the members.

Wishing us all a successful New Year of Jewish genealogy.



Presentation of Awards at the 1999 IAJGS Conference, NY *A message from Howard Margol, President, IAJGS.*

The 1999 IAJGS Awards were announced and presented by Anne Feder Lee, Honolulu, Chair of the Award Committee, at the Banquet on the last evening of the 19th Conference on Jewish Genealogy in NYC. Below are the 6 awardees and the wording from each plaque.

IAJGS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, presented to Arthur Kurzweil.

In deep appreciation of your trailblazing work which teaches us that learning about Jewish family history is possible, despite ages of community destruction, Diaspora and the Holocaust. We will always be grateful that you showed us the way, and for your past and continued inspiration to all Jewish genealogists and new Jewish genealogical societies that continue to be created worldwide because of your vision.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO JEWISH GENEALOGY VIA THE INTERNET AWARD, presented to Jewish Records Indexing-Poland (Stanley Diamond accepting on behalf of all who have worked on this project).

In recognition of an extraordinary database, available via the Internet, which recently reached a half-million entries and continues to grow. This database not only helps countless researchers but also demonstrates what can be accomplished through the cooperative energy of many volunteers and is an inspiration and model for databases covering other geographical areas.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO JEWISH GENEALOGY VIA PRINT AWARD, presented to Miriam Weiner for her book "Jewish Roots in Poland".

In recognition of your book Jewish Roots in Poland. Your success in presenting the first officially sanctioned lists of Jewish documents in Polish archives makes it an extraordinarily

valuable resource tool. The accompanying pictures and illustrations bring the vanished world of Jewish Poland to life once again.

OUTSTANDING PROGRAMMING THAT ADVANCES THE OBJECTIVES OF JEWISH GENEALOGY AWARD, presented to The Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan (Stephen Rosman, President, accepting).

In recognition of programming which demonstrates a high level of creativity, organizational talent and cooperative spirit.

We commend your ability to offer your members such a diverse range of stimulating activities which cannot help but energize novice and experienced family researchers alike.

OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION BY A MEMBER OF THE IAJGS AWARD, presented to Israel Genealogical Society (Jean-Pierre Stroweis, President, accepting).

In recognition of Sharsheret HaDorot, Family Roots Research Periodical for excellent coverage of topics ranging from scholarly articles based on original research to news items about genealogy activities and resources in Israel, and for generously sharing that information with genealogists around the world by presenting those articles in both Hebrew and English.

OUTSTANDING PROJECT THAT ADVANCES THE OBJECTIVES OF JEWISH GENEALOGY AWARD, presented to Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. of New York for initiating the Jewish Genealogical Family Finder (Estelle Guzik, President, accepting).

Since its inception, the Family Finder has been an invaluable resource for countless genealogists. By making it possible to link up with others via surname or ancestral town connections, scattered family members have

found each other and much knowledge has been shared. Through this award, we wish to show our deep appreciation to those who conceptualized and implemented the original Jewish Family Finder project.

At the time of this presentation, the following comments were added and the individuals asked to stand:

This is the 20th anniversary of the Family Finder. It was conceived in early 1979 under the leadership of Dr. Neil Rosenstein, the JGS's first president, and it was compiled by David Fiedler, a JGS founding member. The first edition, manually produced, was issued in July 1979. In 1982, Gary Mokotoff, then a

new member of the JGS, volunteered to computerize the information. He and his wife Ruth continued to nurture the Jewish Genealogical Family Finder as it grew into what it is today. In 1996, ownership of the JGFF was transferred from the JGS, Inc. (New York) to JewishGen headed by Susan King, where it has become a cornerstone of the JewishGen website.

1999 IAJGS Awards Committee: Anne Feder Lee, Honolulu, Chair; Carol Baird, San Diego, member; Henry Wellisch, Toronto, member.

Acknowledgments due for the Success of Sharsheret HaDorot *Reuven Naftali*

The first issue appeared in September 1986, without a title and as a mimeographed bulletin. Zvia Rabinovitch z"l thought of the name for the second issue, **Sharsheret HaDorot**. Esther Ramon and Ruth Rigby edited the next four volumes and from that point they were bound. With Vol. 5, the format was changed from stencils to offset printing. Starting with Vol.8, 1994, Joachin Eylon z"l was the editor.

With Vol.10, Suzie Jacobson's expertise and hard work helped change completely the format of the Journal to that of today. This is

reflected in the typesetting and appearance, using the new Windows technology. Ruth and Esther, Eitan and Ada Shilo, Lucien Harris, Shalom Bronstein, Harold Lewin, Mathilde Tagger, Yocheved Klausner and Levana Dinerman added their editing, proofing and translating skills. With the last volume (13) we have had Aviva Neeman, Harold Lewin, Harriet Kasow, Yocheved Klausner and Mathilde Tagger consisting of the editorial board.



Ottoman Empire Sephardim: Historical Migrations and Genealogical Resources*

Leon B. Taranto

Levantine Sephardi genealogy is a journey through history, from the culturally diverse Sephardim of 19th century Ottoman Turkey, Greece and the Balkans, back to their origins in the vibrant Jewish communities that took root in the western Mediterranean even before the dawn of Christianity. Today, the Sephardim constitute a Diaspora scattered across six continents. Identifying the many branches of Ottoman Sephardi families warrants an awareness of the global spread of this Diaspora and the communities where their descendants reside today. Examining Jewish migration patterns in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean world is central to vertically reconstructing genealogies of Ottoman Sephardi families. An expanding body of genealogical resources awaits the determined researcher.

Origins, History and Migrations

In 1453, Constantinople (Istanbul) fell to the Ottoman Turks, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire that had persecuted the Jews of the eastern Mediterranean for over 1000 years. The cultural, intellectual and mercantile center of the Jewish world was, at that time, in the western Mediterranean, in Spain, Portugal, Sicily, Italy and Provence (southeastern France). The Turkish conquest of Istanbul and expansion into the Balkans soon proved to be a watershed event in their survival. The Jewish communities of southwestern Europe had largely escaped the ravages of the Crusades only to be threatened with extinction by rising Christian fanaticism in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.

In the 1300's, the French kings expelled all Jews from their domains, creating the geographical divide between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jewry. Many French Jews sought refuge in Christian Spain, where a spirit of *Convivencia* prevailed in Toledo, the Castilian capital. By mid-century, however,

rioting afflicted Toledo's Jews and decimated ancient communities in Majorca. In 1391, Christian mobs slaughtered the Jews of Seville. The massacres soon engulfed Sephardim living throughout Spain as tens of thousands were murdered. Many survived only by forced conversion to Catholicism. Spanish Jewry began to turn east for refuge, to Sicily, southern Italy, and the growing Ottoman Empire.

For Spanish Jews who escaped massacres and conversion pressure, the end came in 1492 when King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castille conquered Granada, the last Moorish outpost in Spain. All Jews who refused baptism were commanded to leave Spanish soil or face death. Since Sardinia and Sicily were also under Spanish rule, this marked the end of Jewish communities that had flourished there since antiquity. Sicily's community of 40,000 Jews had been Italy's largest. Before the century closed, the Jews would suffer expulsions from the Spanish kingdom of Navarre, Malta, Provençal France (though not Avignon), Slovenia, and Lithuania. In 1497, the Jews of Portugal, as well as tens of thousands of Spanish Jews who had fled Spain, were forcibly converted to Catholicism.

Many Jews from Spain, Sicily, and Sardinia sought refuge in Italy, especially in the Kingdom of Naples where Jewish communities had thrived for hundreds of years. Their stay was short-lived. Arriving in the early 1500's, the Spanish soon expelled the Jews. The final expulsion decree of 1541 marked the end of Jewish life in southern Italy. Some moved to northern Italy, while others joined a growing exodus of Jews to the Ottoman Empire. Portuguese Conversos, practicing Judaism in secrecy, soon followed Spanish, Sicilian and Neapolitan Jews northward and, in larger numbers, to the Turkish Balkans and Asia Minor. As the

Inquisition continued to operate in the Papal States and much of northern Italy, many conversos finally fled northern Italy for the Ottoman east.

The Ottoman Sultans welcomed the Sephardi and Italian Jews, and the talents they brought. The emigres established printing presses, introduced the latest navigational instruments, and instructed the Turks in gunpowder and weapons manufacturing, and fostered the growth of a dynamic mercantile empire. Following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Turks pursued a policy of uprooting entire Jewish communities from elsewhere within the Empire and resettling them in Constantinople, in an effort to rebuild the city as the new Ottoman capital. The Turks likewise fostered Sephardi settlement in Salonica, which they captured in 1430. Over the next century or two, Salonica became the port of entry and home for many thousands of arriving Jewish emigres from Spain, Portugal and Italy.

As Sephardi and Italian Jews settled in Salonica, Istanbul, Edirne (Adrianople), Bursa, and other Ottoman cities, their sheer numbers and advanced culture overwhelmed the comparatively small and struggling Romaniote Jewish communities of Byzantine times. Within a century, Judezmo/Ladino became the lingua franca of Jewish communities in mainland Turkey and most of the Balkans (Thrace, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia, and Bulgaria), while the smaller Romaniote communities of rural Greece continued to speak Greek. As the Ottoman Empire expanded and prospered, so did its Jews. In 1521, the Turks conquered Rhodes; the island's ancient Jewish community was born anew as the Sultan encouraged Jews from Salonica and elsewhere to settle within Rhodes' medieval walls. In the early 1600's, the Sultan prompted many Sephardim from Salonica, Istanbul and Safed to move to Smyrna (Izmir), to establish a major port there. By the late 1500's and again in the late 1600's, Turkish armies reached the gates of Vienna. As the Empire spread, the Sephardim likely followed the Turks to the boundaries of

the Empire.

The next two centuries marked a period of political and economic decline for both the Empire and its Jews. Economic concessions and other special favors that Ottoman Jewry had earlier received increasingly gave way to subjugation. In 1821, as the Greeks revolted against Turkish rule, the centuries-old Jewish communities of Morea (Peloponesus) were wiped out. With Turkish domains contracting and foreign powers exerting increasing influence in what remained of its once vast Empire, many Ottoman Jews, like other minorities, began to register for the protection of foreign consulates, including those of Italy, France and the United States.

By the late 1800's, many Jews left the Ottoman Empire for better opportunities elsewhere, particularly in British-ruled Egypt. They contributed to Egyptian Jewry's explosive growth, from only 5,000 to 7,000 in the early 1800's to 60,000 by 1917. The emigration process accelerated after the Young Turk Revolt of 1906 led to general military conscription for the Empire's minorities. One favored destination was the United States, especially the cities of New York, Seattle, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Portland, Oregon and Montgomery, Alabama. Largely as a result of the influence of the Alliance Israelite Universelle schools in Ottoman Empire, many Jews migrated to France. In the special case of the Jews of Rhodes, new communities were also established in the Belgian Congo and British Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Despite the large number of emigres, dynamic Jewish communities continued to flourish at the outset of this century in the Ottoman Empire's heartland. Salonica/Selanik, with 90,000 Jews, was the world's largest predominantly Jewish city. Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, had a Jewish population of perhaps 65,000. Smaller communities existed in Monastir/Bitola (6,000), Janina/Ioannina (4,000), Bursa (3,500), Aidin (3,500) and elsewhere. As the Alliance Israelite Universelle schools opened the doors to new opportunities, the Jews of Smyrna/Izmir

(25,500), Edirne/Adrianople (17,000), and Rhodes (5,000) entered the modern era. With the approach of World War I, new upheavals resulted in the demographic decline of these communities.

In 1912, Greece annexed Salonica and Italian troops occupied Rhodes. In 1917, a great fire left most of Salonica Jewry homeless. Following World War I, hostilities erupted between the Greeks and the Turks, leading to a mass transfer of populations. The Greek government settled 100,000 Greek refugees from Smyrna (Izmir) and other Turkish cities in Salonica, and sought to hellenize the city. Suddenly reduced to minority status, the city's Jews soon faced anti-Jewish riots and new laws giving preferential treatment to Greeks. By the outbreak of World War II, the Jewish community had dwindled to 56,000. The invading Germans arrived in 1941 and in time deported virtually all of Salonica's Jews to the death camps. Only 4% survived. Today, no more than about 1,000 Jews remain in this metropolis of one million. In 1944, the Germans also deported the Jews of Rhodes. Most perished in Auschwitz. The few survivors attempted to revive the community after the war, but did not succeed. Today, only two Jewish families of the pre-War era remain on Rhodes.

Bulgaria's Jewish community of 50,000 survived the war. After the State of Israel was established in 1948, about 90% of Bulgaria's Jews immigrated to Israel, as did most of the surviving Jews of Greece and Yugoslavia. Sarajevo's pre-War Sephardi community of 12,000 now numbers less than 1,000. The Jews of modern Turkey have also suffered a demographic decline. After World War I ended, they continued leaving Turkey. By 1925, some 25,000 Levantine Sephardim had already immigrated to the United States. After the American Congress imposed strict immigration quotas in the 1920's, Turkish, Greek and Balkan Jews found new destinations in Latin America, especially Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba. The Turkish census of 1927 included only 82,000 Jews, of whom 47,000 lived in Istanbul and constituted

about 7% of its population. During World War II, Turkish Jews were subjected to confiscatory capital taxes and forced labor. Afterwards, most of the community immigrated to Israel and settled largely in Bat Yam, Yahud, Rehov Levinsky in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. About 25,000 Jews remain in Turkey today, mostly in Istanbul (20,000) and Izmir (about 2,500), far less than the approximately 150,000 who resided within the boundaries of present day Turkey at the close of World War One.

Today, the Ottoman Sephardim are dispersed throughout the world, living in six continents. Larger communities can be found in the United States, Israel, Argentina, France, Turkey, Belgium, and South Africa. Turkish, Greek and Balkan Jews also have established homes in the United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Columbia, Panama, Canada, Australia, Zimbabwe, and Congo.

Genealogical Resources

A diverse body of archival sources and reference materials are available to researchers of Ottoman Sephardi genealogy. For some communities, such as Izmir, there are birth records, death and cemetery lists, marriage and dowry records, Bet-Din (rabbinical court) registers, or European consulate records identifying Turkish Jews registering for consulate protection. For other communities, there are lists of Holocaust victims or asset declarations that the Germans and their World War Two allies forced the Jews to prepare.

A long-awaited source of birth and death data for Ottoman Empire Jewry are photographs, slides and inscriptions that a team led by Professor Minna Rozen obtained for some 60,000 to 80,000 Jewish gravestones in Turkey. This ambitious project was conducted in association with the Center for Judaic Studies (then linked to the Annenberg Institute in Philadelphia, now part of the University of Pennsylvania) and the Diaspora Research Institute at Tel-Aviv University. The recording of this data was reportedly

completed before Professor Rozen's recent move to the University of Haifa. Unfortunately, very little of this data has been published. Pending its publication, genealogists are limited to the birth and death data presently available for a handful of communities.

The archives of the Mormons (the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) recently obtained the civil records for Salonica from 1914 to the early 1940's, when the occupying Germans took the records. These records include birth, marriage and death data for Salonica Jewry, and for the gentile population. The Jewish community of Izmir continues to maintain birth and death records. The birth records, which are located with the Jewish community center, cover the time period from 1908 to the present. The death or gravesite records include almost 6,000 named individuals, dates of death, their ages at time of death, and the parents' first names. Unfortunately, the listing covers only the modern era, from around 1930 to the present, with additional data being added for 1922-1929. Because of privacy or security concerns, public access to the Izmir records might be limited.

A cemetery listing has also been compiled for about 2,220 Jewish gravesites on the Isle of Rhodes, with all but a few of the gravesites covering the 1869-1944 time period. The cemetery data for Rhodes can be downloaded from the web site for the Rhodes Jewish Museum (www.rhodesjewishmuseum.org). Another data source for the Jews of Rhodes is census data that the Italian Fascist government compiled around 1938, for the purpose of identifying and deporting Jews who arrived in Rhodes after 1919. Ironically, many of the Jews whom the Italians deported in violation of the Treaty of Lausanne found new homes in Africa (e.g., Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, Egypt, and Morocco) and thus escaped the fate of those who remained when the Germans arrived. The census data is still maintained on Rhodes but has not been released to the public.

Within the Ottoman Sephardi Diaspora,

gravesite listings already exist or are in preparation for at least two of the five Sephardi communities in Buenos Aires, and for several communities in the United States, including Atlanta and Montgomery (Alabama), and, to a lesser extent, Los Angeles and Seattle. Data for the Sephardi section of Atlanta's Greenwood Cemetery is contained on Cemetery Project CD of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies. Some of the Diaspora communities have also produced or preserved other lists or data sources to the Ottoman Sephardi genealogist. The Or VeShalom Congregation (OVS) in Atlanta, for example, retains synagogue census records from the 1930's, including the names of family members and the communities in Turkey, Greece and the Balkans from which they originated. A more recent census, from 1980, also includes maiden names. The synagogue likewise maintains records of the names of Hebrew and religious school students from the 1930's, sometimes accompanied by the names of their fathers. The OVS has also produced an elaborate published history, with historical photographs. Other American Sephardi communities, such as Etz Ahayem in Montgomery have also published histories. Additionally, various individuals have contributed published histories concerning the Ottoman Sephardi Diaspora communities in Atlanta, Montgomery, the West Coast communities of Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, Africa and Buenos Aires.

The Alliance Israelite Universelle in Paris is a rich source of information concerning the teachers and students in the AIU schools. The AIU archives also include a considerable body of correspondence, such as letters written on behalf of a student applying for enrollment. Since the AIU's ability to respond to inquiries is limited, interested researchers might want to examine the listing of AIU files that was published as an appendix to Aron Rodriguez's "French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israelite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860-1925", Indiana Univ. Press (1990), one of several published

works concerning the AIU.

The few researchers who can decipher Turkish written in pre-20th century Arabic script will find an important source in the census records of the Ottoman Empire. The 19th century Ottoman population registers included titles and names of individuals, the number of persons in each household, personal description (height, complexion, eye color, serious defects or missing limbs), birth year, and the year the individual arrived in present location. The census also collected considerable information concerning military status information (e.g., the years that the individual reached military service age, was selected by the lottery for conscription, and reached reserve age). However, that information is largely inapplicable to Jews until 1908, when the Young Turks Revolt led to universal military conscription. Access to the census records might be obtained through the Directorate of the Ottoman State Archives at:

Basbakanlik Devlet Arsivleri Genel
Mederlege Osmanli Arsivi
Daire Baskanligi Ticarethane Sokak, Nu: 12.
34410 Sultanahmet-ISTANBUL
Tel.: +90-212-513 88 70 through 72
Fax: +90-212-511 75 86

The Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) in Jerusalem holds vital genealogical source material concerning the Jews of the Ottoman Empire. A wide variety of files, such as marriage dowries or synagogue donation records, are maintained concerning different communities. The CAHJP web site

(<http://sites.huji.ac.il/archives/>) has recently posted a limited listing of files that the Archives maintains concerning Izmir (community archives for 1760-1970), Istanbul ('Pinkassim' of the rabbinical court for 1839-1841), and Salonica (community archives for 1913-1946), and other locations. In addition to the Turkish Cemetery Project data, the Diaspora Research Institute has reportedly obtained and is computerizing

records of the Jewish communities of Salonica and Athens (mostly post-1917) that the Russians captured from the Nazis and house at Moscow's Osobyi Archives, the Jewish Museum of Belgrade's collection of birth, death and marriage records (from the 1870's to about 1941). The Institute has also reportedly obtained records for the Jews of Bulgaria, some dating from the late 1600's.

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum recently acquired copies of over 40,000 asset declarations that the Germans forced the Jews in Salonica to fill out sometime before the Germans deported Salonica's Jewish community of 56,000 to the death camps. Since there is no comprehensive listing of the Jews deported from Salonica, the asset declarations provide the closest approximation of a listing of the victims. Other documentation being compiled includes wartime records concerning Bulgarian Jews and the Jews whom the Bulgarians deported from Thrace and the portions of eastern Yugoslavia that they occupied during the war. A listing of the 1700 Jews whom the Germans deported from the isle of Rhodes and nearby Cos are available at the web site for the Rhodes Jewish Museum, listed above. Additional lists concerning the Jews of wartime Rhodes and Cos are contained within Hizkia Franco's book "The Jewish Martyrs of Rhodes and Cos". The various lists identify the 151 Jews who survived the deportation and death camps, the individuals or families of the approximately several dozen Rhodesis who were not deported, the Jews who resided on Cos prior to the deportations, and the Jews who died during the British wartime bombings of Rhodes.

Other historical records of interest are maintained by the Ben Zvi Institute, the Central Zionist Archives, the State Archives in Israel, Yad Vashem, and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York. Other sources include Jewish newspapers published in Turkey and the Diaspora in the early years of this century. Contemporary Sephardi periodicals, such as "Etsi" (Revue de Genealogie et d'Histoire Sefarades),

“Erensia Sefardi”, “Los Muestrros”, “Lettre Sepharade”, and “Lashon”, also provide important genealogical and historical information, as do “Avotaynu”, “Sharsheret HaDorot”, and other Jewish genealogical journals. As the only journal devoted exclusively to the genealogy of Sephardim,

“Etsi” provides researchers a vital jump-start into the world of Sephardic genealogy.

Finally, researchers should take advantage of the wealth of information available on Internet sites and through email newsletters. A sampling of listings follows:

Etsi :

<http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/1321>

American Association of Jewish Friends of Turkey:

<http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/Cabana/5947/news.html>

Ben Nahman

<http://home.earthlink.net/~bnahman>

Erensia Sefardi

<http://members.aol.com/erensia/erensiasefardi.index.html>

European Sephardic Institute

<http://www.sefarad.org/english.html>

Institut Sepharade Europeen - Instituto Sefardi...

<http://www.sefarad.org/>

Home of the Ottoman Sephardim: Sephardic Jews

<http://www.geocities.com/~turkino/>

<http://sephardim.com/>

Marben's Pages: La Pagina Rodas

<http://www.marben.com.ar/rodas/default.htm>

Lista de Judios de Rodas Deportados por los Naz.

<http://www.marben.com.ar/rodas/martires.htm>

Rabbi Plaut's site re Greek Jewry

<http://www.steelnet.net/plaut/book.html>

Rhodesli Sephardic Family Trees

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Valley/2177/standard.htm>

Sefard Forum

<http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/sefard2.txt>

Sepharade Page

<http://www.sepharade.com/gstbk.html>

Sephardi Page by Harry Stein

<http://www.Sephardim.com>

Sephardi publication

<http://www.sefarad.org/publication/echos/O29/>

Jeff Malka's Sephardic Genealogy site

<http://www.orthohelp.com/geneal/sefardim.htm>

Sephardic Connection

<http://users.skynet.be/sky40880/connection/>

Sephardic House

<http://www.sephardim.org/sephardichouse/index.html>

Turkey's Sephardim

http://www.libertynet.org/flower/html_anyos/anyos_turkey_home.html

Victor Alkana's personal page

<http://pweb.netcom.com/~valkana/home.html>

Note: An extended bibliography consisting of approximately 100 items will be published in the next issue of "Sharsharet Hadorot".

* This paper is based on a lecture given at the New York IAJGS Conference , August 1999

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Czechoslovak Jewry

Shlomo Schmiedt

The book "Czechoslovak Jews in Israel - Their Contribution to the Building of the Country" (Hebrew), publ.1998 by the Israel Ministry of Defence and Hitachdut Yotzey Czechoslovakia (Association of Israelis from Czechoslovakia).

Some years ago, on the initiative of Dr. Zvi Weigl, president of the Association of Israelis from , the executive board of the Association decided to publish a book commemorating the many-sided contribution of Jews from Czechoslovakia to the building of Eretz Israel. It was felt that this must be done while there were still people available to shoulder the task and carry it through. Dr. Weigl who took the responsibility upon himself, approached a number of ex-Czechoslovak Israelis and set up an editorial board. The editorial board, all of them volunteers, worked for about five years and held about 40 meetings. Much discussion was needed to decide the best form for the compilation, what to include and what to omit, and who should be invited to write the articles. In the end, some of the articles were written by members of the editorial board, and some by invited authors.

The book, which appeared at the end of 1998 and contains some 50 articles, opens with five introductory chapters on the history of the territories that formed the Republic of

Czechoslovakia between the two world wars, and the history of their Jewish populations. Six more chapters describe these Jewish populations from different points of view and the path that led them to Eretz Israel: their cultural background, the Zionist movement, the aliyot to Eretz Israel, work in the National Funds. There is also a chapter on the work of the Association of Israelis from Czechoslovakia.

The book continues with seven articles on the Zionist youth movements in Czechoslovakia, followed by eleven articles on contributions to science and the humanities, including chapters on education, health services, natural sciences, rabbis, writers, musicians, and people in the theater and visual arts.

The next chapter is devoted to the contribution of olim from Czechoslovakia to the economy and public service. It contains nine articles on various branches of the economy, politics and administration, the foreign service and special services within it, defence and security services (with a special chapter on the parachutists from Eretz Israel in Slovakia), welfare services, lawyers and journalists.

In the last chapter, nine articles portray some of the outstanding figures who came to Eretz Israel from Czechoslovakia: Professor Shmuel Hugo Bergmann, philosopher, writer and

teacher, a founder and later Rector of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and, shortly before his death, recipient of the Israel Prize; the author Max Brod, Franz Kafka's friend; the author and journalist Felix Weltsch, who founded and edited in Prague the German-language Zionist weekly *Selbstwehr*; the author and literary critic Prof. Baruch Kurzweil, and others. At the end of the book there is a list of welfare and documentation institutions established in Israel by Jews from Czechoslovakia; a list of Jews from Czechoslovakia who fell in Israel's wars; information on the authors of the articles, and an index of more than 1,600 names.

The editorial board was aware that many difficulties were likely to arise in the writing and editing of the articles. They knew that there would be problems with the actual collection and preparation of the material; it would be hard to decide what to include and what to omit; there would be arguments and claims (justified and unjustified); there would be contradictions between different versions, and so on. Two examples will suffice. Most of the names of fallen soldiers were received from the Israel Ministry of Defence, and the Ministry's list did not always give the soldier's land of origin, so that here and there mistakes were made in this most sensitive and painful sphere. Secondly, in my article on rabbis from Czechoslovakia and their influence on religious life in Israel, I found it necessary to include the following remark: "I have tried to include in this survey all the rabbis belonging to the category we are discussing, each of whom made his contribution to religious life in Israel, but I fear that I have not managed to locate them all, nor tell the full story of their lives as they deserve. In some cases I was able to take down the stories from the lips of the rabbis themselves. But in the case of deceased rabbis, or where I did not manage to speak to rabbis personally, I had to rely on information given me by family members, or on other sources, written and oral. At all events, what follows should not be taken as a complete list of all the rabbis of Czechoslovakia who immigrated to Eretz Israel from 1918

onwards".

The point made here is relevant to many other articles in the book.

The composition, character and aspirations of the Czechoslovak aliyah are reflected in the fact that the book contains only a few pages on politics and administration, in contrast with, for example, about 30 pages on medicine and doctors, and 32 pages on writers and artists. It is interesting to quote here a marginal note by the editor Ephraim Freud to Prof. David Flusser's article on the contribution of Jews from Czechoslovakia to the Humanities in Israel. The note reads as follows: "The author feels that the list of persons presented here is only a partial list, perhaps no more than a sample, for there is a great reservoir of names, and we need to ask forgiveness of those who look for a person's name and do not find it. Somebody once said that the most conspicuous feature of the ex-Czechoslovak "community" is the fact that it is not conspicuous as a community; or, in other words, a community that was slow to regard itself as "a community" in our popularly accepted sense. Perhaps its important contribution to the building of the country and the absorption of immigrants from all over the world was that the contribution was given and existed but remained anonymous." His note ends here. We may add that this "community", whose contribution to the strengthening of the State of Israel in so many fields is unquestionably great, tried never to stand out or make headlines, despite the distinction of its members past and present: scientists and researchers, rabbis and educators, philosophers and physicians, legal experts, theater artists, musicians, painters and sculptors, authors and journalists, as well as leading figures in trade and industry, in the army and in the kibbutz movement. As for the absorption of olim from Czechoslovakia, we need only quote the remark of the first President of Israel Dr. Chaim Weizmann: They brought their "absorbability" with them in their knapsacks".

The ledger (pinkas) of Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia (Pinkas Kehillot Bohemia uMoravia), which is about to appear in the series of community ledgers (pinkassei kehillot) published by Yad vaShem. There are points of resemblance between our country and the "historic lands" of Bohemia and Moravia. Historians and students of geopolitics emphasize the importance of Palestine-Eretz Israel, past and present, as a territory located at a crucial point between east and west, north and south - a temptation, a prize but also a barrier to invaders and potential conquerors. Similarly Bohemia and Moravia, two lands regarded as one territorial unit in the heart of Europe and possessing a common historical, cultural, ethnic, political and economic background, were surrounded by peoples and countries (among them great powers past and present) whose designs were not always friendly. Bohemia and Moravia were the scene of wars and battles from which their Jewish populations suffered grievously. Whole communities were destroyed, especially in the Crusades of the 12th century, the Hussite wars of the 15th century and the Thirty Years War of the 17th century, as well as after the invasion of eastern Moravia by the Magyar Kurucz. Finally, in our own century, we have witnessed the total destruction of Bohemian and Moravian Jewry, a fate similar to that of Jewish communities in other Nazi-conquered lands.

Pinkas Kehillot Czechoslovakia is to be published in two volumes - one on the communities of Bohemia and Moravia, on which I am working, and the other on Slovakia, which is in the hands of my colleague Yehoshua Buechler, who will add a description of the communities in Carpatho-Russia, the eastern region of the Czechoslovak Republic between the two world wars.

Pinkas Kehillot Czechoslovakia will join the series begun by Yad vaShem about thirty years ago - one of the world's and Yad vaShem's outstanding works of documentation

of the Shoah. In order to compile the more than 30 volumes of the series, it was necessary to gather and study tens of thousands of documents scattered in Israeli and foreign archives, thousands of testimonies of survivors and others (written, oral and recorded on audio and video), and innumerable books and articles published in many lands and languages on the subject, in documentary or literary form. From the detailed pinkassei kehillot published in Hebrew, Yad vaShem is now preparing a shortened English digest in the form of a three-volume encyclopedia of all the Jewish communities destroyed in the Shoah.

From the beginning, Pinkas Kehillot Bohemia uMoravia included all the settlements recorded in the 1930 census as having a Jewish community of at least 50 souls. There were about 150 such communities. We added ones that had communal institutions in previous centuries, bringing the number of communities to about 200. They were remarkably different in nature, from the rural communities of southern Bohemia to the urban communities of large cities and medium-sized towns; from Orthodox communities, chiefly in Moravia, to those with a growing tendency to assimilate; from actively Zionist communities to others under the sway of the Czecho-Jewish assimilationist movement.

The geographical location of Bohemia and Moravia as a kind of bridge between East and West had a great influence on the economic and social development of the Jewish communities and on their cultural and socio-economic composition. It also influenced their spiritual leadership. Many communal rabbis, especially the more prominent figures, moved from place to place, even from country to country, while others served their communities for twenty, thirty, even fifty years. Well known in the Jewish diaspora are the rabbis of Prague in the 16th and 17th centuries, a period when Jewish life flourished in the city. Best known of all is R.

Yehuda ben Bezalel Loew, the Maharal of Prague, followed by R. Shlomo Ephraim of Lentshitz and R. Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller, and in the 18th century by R. David Oppenheim and the Noda' be-Yehuda, R. Yeheskel Landau. There were famous rabbis in other communities too, elsewhere in the country, like R. Shabbetai Cohen, the Schach, who was rabbi of Holesov in Moravia, and like the Chief Rabbis of Nikolsburg in Moravia.

In the 17th and 18th centuries there were well-known yeshivot in several Moravian towns, including Nikolsburg, Kremsier, Prossnitz and Ungarish Brod (today: Mikulov, Kromencz, Prostejov, Uhersky Brod).

The story of this great and multi-faceted Jewry came to an end in the thirties of the 20th century, with the annexation of the Sudetenland by Germany in the autumn of 1938 and the conquest and partition of Czechoslovakia in March 1939.

Some statistics: At the end of the 17th century the Prague Jewish community of about 11,500 souls was almost certainly the largest Jewish community in the world. In 1724 the first population census conducted in Bohemia and Moravia showed that Prague had about 10,500 Jewish residents, the rest of Bohemia about 30,000, and the whole of Moravia about 20,000, in all more than 60,000 souls.

On the basis of that census, the "Law of Families" ("Familiantengesetz") published in 1727 decreed the maximum number of Jewish families permitted to live in the state as a whole, and the principle that only the eldest son in each Jewish family was permitted to marry and have children.

This law, which prevented the number of Jews

from increasing and forced many to immigrate to other countries, was only abolished after the 1848 revolution. Then too a great movement of Jews from small towns and villages to big cities began, and the number of Jewish communities declined, from 374 in 1872 to 247 in 1890, of which 197 were in Bohemia (about 94,600 Jews) and 50 in Moravia (about 45,300 Jews). This number, almost 140,000 souls in all, continued to decline. In the census of 1930, the last before the Holocaust, the Jewish population of Bohemia and Moravia together totaled about 117,500. With the refugees who came from Germany after 1933 and later from Austria, the number in 1938 reached about 122,000, and in March 1939, on the eve of the Nazi conquest, about 118,000. Two-thirds of these, about 78,000, perished in the Holocaust. Few of the survivors renewed Jewish life in their communities after the war. In most places only the remains of synagogues and cemeteries were left.

*Shlomo Schmiedt, born in 1921 in Senec, Slovakia, graduate of the Teachers College, was one of the founders of the Bnei-Akiva movement in Prague and was active in the Underground during the Nazi occupation. Immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1947 and joined Kibbutz Kfar Etzyon. Was teacher in Jerusalem, and from 1950 to 1996 was active in Alyiat Hanoar (Youth Alyia). Published a Lexicon of Judaica terminology, papers on various subjects, among them on the Teresienstadt Ghetto, and translated books and articles on Judaica subjects. Is currently engaged in collecting material and writing articles for the **Pinkas Kehilot Bohemia UMoravia of Yad Vashem.***



Genealogy and History

Esther Ramon

For the genealogist researching the annals of his or her family, it is very important to know the historical background. Knowledge of the background helps to explain the reasons for ancestors' decisions: why, for example, did they decide to move away from their place of residence, what influenced their choice of husband or wife, why they chose a particular trade or occupation. It also gives us an idea of their way of life.

Conversely, genealogy can supplement historical knowledge. Often it supplies details that confirm the general historical picture, while at other times it points to exceptions.

I will illustrate the connection between the two disciplines in the genealogy of my father's family, Weil (Weill & Weyl are other spellings of this common name). I will give the historical background at every stage of the family annals.

I was born in Saarbruecken, capital of the Saar, in 1924. The language of the people was German, but the currency was the French franc and the region belonged to the French customs area.

At the end of the First World War, France wanted to weaken the economic power of Germany. It therefore demanded possession of the rich coal mines of the Saar, in order to exploit the iron mines of neighbouring Alsace-Lorraine, which was part of France. France's demand was accepted and confirmed by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The Saar government consisted of five representatives of the League of Nations. The Treaty of Versailles stated that after 15 years, i.e. in January 1935, a referendum was to be held to decide whether the Saar should remain under League of Nations government (status quo), or whether it should be joined to France or Germany. Under the influence of the rise to power of the Nazis in Germany in 1933, there was growing anti-

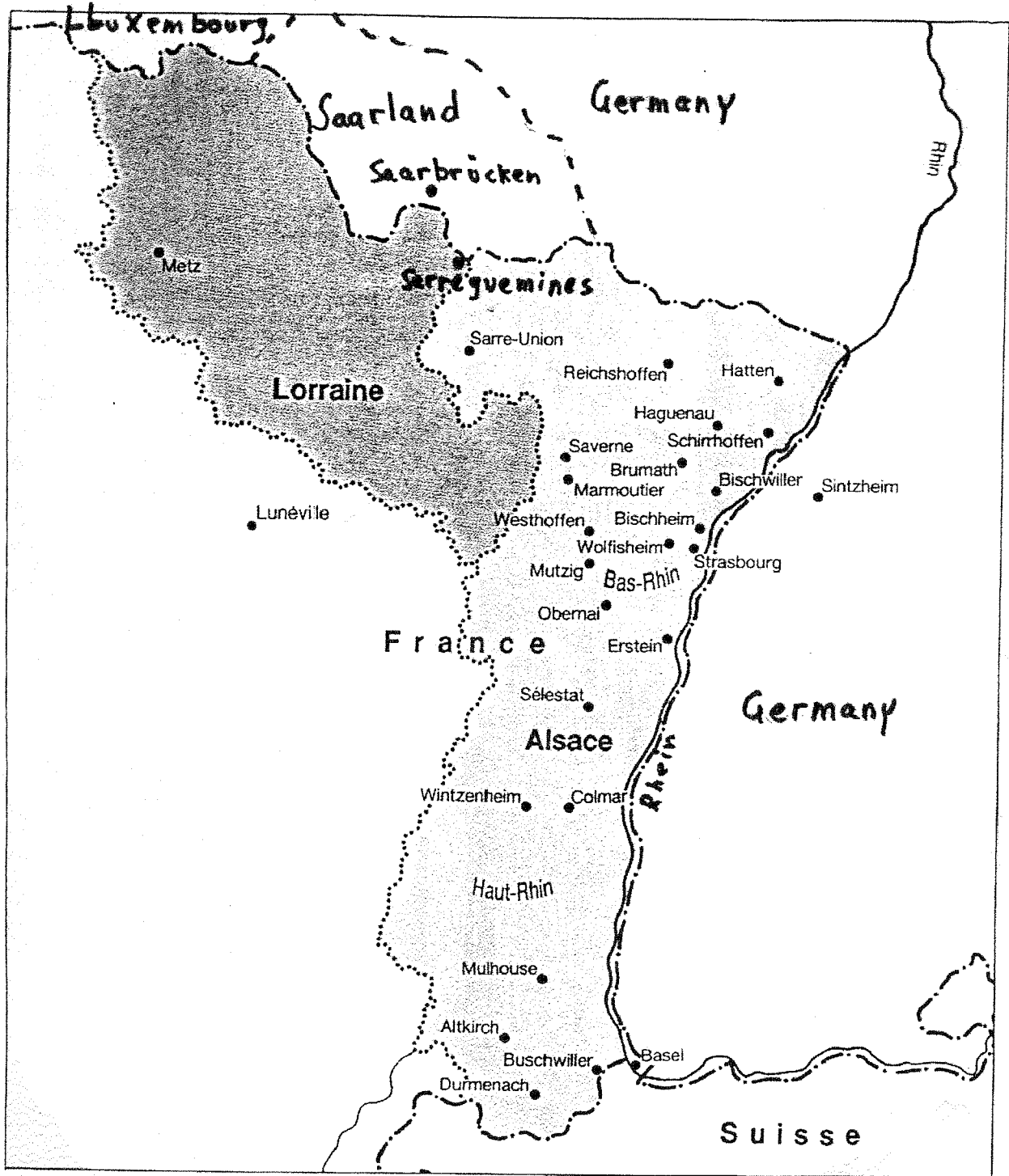
Semitism in the Saar, and it looked as if, as a result of the referendum, the area would rejoin Germany. Indeed 90.75% voted for Germany.

At the end of 1934 my family moved to Sarreguemines in Alsace-Lorraine, France. In Sarreguemines I went to school. The official language was French, but most adults over the age of forty spoke not French but Elsaesser Ditsch, which is German mixed with French words.

Since the beginning of modern times, this area had belonged alternately to French and to German principalities. In the reign of Louis XIV and again after the French Revolution, Alsace-Lorraine was joined to France in what was called Reunion. In 1871, after the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War, the area became part of Germany. In 1918, after the defeat of Germany by the Allies in the First World War, it returned to France. Generally speaking, the French and the Germans on either side of the border hated each other's country.

In March 1935 our family's residence permit in Swas was not extended by the French authorities because we were still German citizens. After much effort, my mother was permitted to stay until September 1935, so that we three children could complete the school year. My parents decided that we should all emigrate to Palestine, and my father awaited us in neighbouring Luxembourg.

Our expulsion was apparently an expression of the tension between France and Germany. An informer - perhaps a business competitor - may also have been responsible. In January, 1936 our whole family was blessed with the good fortune to reach Palestine. This was the period of the British Mandate over Palestine, and there were restrictions on immigration. But in Luxembourg it was easy to obtain an immigration certificate, as there was little demand in this country.



Map 1

Annals of the Weil Family

My father Leo Weil was born in 1890 in the small town of Merzig in the Saar. With his father, he managed their wholesale food business. In 1917 he married my mother Alice Homburger and they set up house together in Saarbruecken, where he established another business.

Jews sought to move to big cities. The dowry evidently helped them to move.

It was known in the family that four generations before my father were born in Merzig:

Leo Weil	Merzig	1890-1974	Haifa
Meier Weil	Merzig	1861-1935	Sarreguemines
Moses Weil	Merzig	1816-1904	Merzig
Leib Weil	Merzig	1790-1869	Merzig
Mayer Weil		-1827	Merzig

Their wives (except Mayer's) were not born in Merzig:

Leo	oo Alice Homburger	*Karlsruhe, Baden
Meier	oo Clara Buchstein	*Kunreuth, Bavaria
Moses	oo Gluecke Lion	*Spiessen, Saar
Leib	oo Daile Kahn	*Niedernai, Lorraine
Mayer	oo Scheilen Hanau	*Merzig

How did they make a living? They were all merchants. Only Moses is recorded as being a clothes dyer as well. *Most of the Jews lived in small towns. Jewish merchants and traders fulfilled an important function as intermediaries between the local population and the surroundings. Our ancestor Mayer Weil in Merzig married a daughter of the wealthy Hanau family, whose ancestor Raphael Hanau was the first Jew to reach Merzig in 1652. In 1843 the population of Merzig numbered 3434 souls, of whom 182 were Jews - i.e. 5.3 percent. At that period brides were usually chosen by the bridegroom's parents. They generally preferred a girl whose father was in the same line of business in another village.*

Sources of information:

Family knowledge, tombstones in the Merzig cemetery, birth and death certificates from the Merzig archives, and books (see bibliography).

A turning-point in my research came when I

discovered in the death certificate of the first Mayer Weil in Merzig that his parents lived in Westhoffen. A search of detailed maps of the area revealed that this was a village in Alsace, west of Strasbourg. My research was blocked at this point for a long time. Then, in 1994, at the International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Paris, I heard a lecture on the Jews of the region by the researcher Jean Pierre Kleitz. After my return to Israel, I wrote to him and asked him to undertake the investigation of my Weil family in Westhoffen. The results were impressive indeed. He found in Westhoffen (by comparing local marriage records with notarized documents) five generations before Mayer Weil who went to Merzig:

Mayer Weil	Westhoffen	1753-1827	Merzig
Moyses Weil	Westhoffen	1724-1797	Westhoffen
	oo Rivka Kahn	*Saverne	1750
	oo Reis Weyl	*Westhoffen	1763
	oo Bliemel Nathan	*Niedernai	1771
Schmulen Samuel Weil	Westhoffen	-	
		c.1792	Westhoffen
	oo name of this wife	unknown	c.1723
	oo Matke Levi	*Metz	1743
Moche Moyses Weil	Westhoffen	1648-1719	Westhoffen
	oo Michelette Levi	*Westhoffen	
Samuel Weil	Westhoffen	? - c.1684	Westhoffen
	oo Bessel		
Baruch Weil	? - 1699	Westhoffen.	

Baruch bought a house in Westhoffen in 1667.

In listing the above 11 generations I have given only the names of my direct ancestors., though I possess information on sisters and brothers of many of them.

Westhofen is one of the oldest Jewish communities in Alsace and for a long time was one of the largest. In 1784 there were 251 Jewish residents in a total population of 1565, representing about 14 % of the populace. The ancestors of the French -Jewish statesmen Leon Blum and Michel Debre lived in Westhofen. After the end of the 30 Years War in 1648, Jews from the right bank of the Rhine crossed over to the nearest villages on the other side of the river.

At that time the towns of Alsace, and Strasbourg in particular, zealously guarded their right NOT to let Jews settle within their bounds, and the Jews therefore concentrated in the villages. They paid protection money and poll-tax. They engaged in trade, moneylending and crafts, and some possessed vineyards, wineries and pastures. There was of course a synagogue in Westhofen, and for part of the period it had a rabbi. Some of the Weil family served as cantors.

The most common surnames in 1808 among the Jews were:

Weil 38 (not all of whom belonged to my family)
May 38
Bloch 35
Kahn 15
Blum 15
Levi 15

It is interesting to note that from 1570 until 1681 the German County of Hanau-Lichtenberg ruled several different parts of Alsace, among them Westhoffen (see map 2).

Sources of information:

Marriage records in Alsace, in the Moselle region and in the Upper Rhine region (see bibliography), notarized documents, and records of protection money and poll tax in Westhoffen, census of Alsace Jews in 1784. Register of name changes in Alsace in 1808.

Summary

I managed to trace the history of my forefathers for 300 years in the Saar and Alsace-Lorraine. During that period the rulers were alternately German and French, and the region was

influenced both by German culture and by French culture. It may have been just these conditions that enabled the Jews to get a foothold and establish themselves economically.

In the Second World War Germany took over Alsace-Lorraine again and annexed it officially to the Reich. There was deep-rooted enmity between Germany and France because of the competition between them, for the iron ore was in France and the coal in the Saar. The need to heal the enmity caused by this division of natural resources formed the basis of the Schuman plan for the economic union of the two countries (the European Coal and Steel Commission) after the Second World War. This paved the way to the European Union.

Today Saarbruecken is in Germany and Saarguemines in France, but a special railway connects them, economic ties are strong, and both towns encourage exchange visits.

Questions remaining open

Is there a family connection between my ancestors in Westhoffen and the well-known Baruch Weil family whose members are called Mayer, Lipman, Zadok? They lived at the same period and their personal names are the same, hence my family ancestor was called the older Baruch Weil.

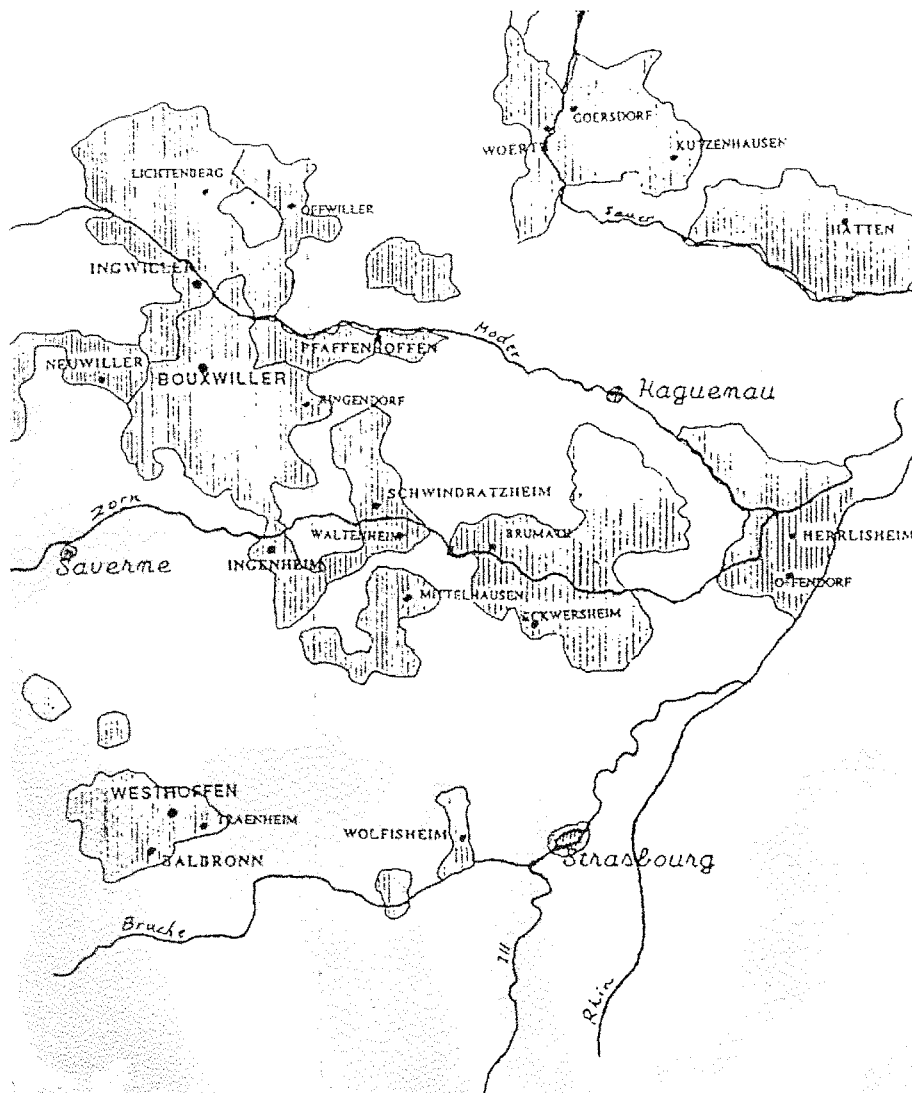
Is there a connection between my ancestors and the family of Jacob Weil of Weil der Stadt, whose known history goes back to 1390?

Why did Mayer Weil leave Westhoffen in 1784? Nothing is known of marriages between his descendants and the descendants of the ramified Weil family who remained in Westhoffen. Perhaps it was due to the second and third marriages of his father?

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Map 2 - The possessions of the Country of Hanah-Lichtenberg



Back to Bukovina - a Trip to my Roots in Radauti and Sadagura.

Bruce I. Reisch

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Introduction

Bukovina beckoned as plans for a business trip to Budapest developed. This was close enough, I felt, to plan a 10 day side trip into Bukovina. This region had been an integral part of Moldavia (1490-1775) and then, from 1775 until 1918, became the easternmost outpost of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Between the two World Wars, Bukovina was governed by Romania, and following World War II it was divided between Romania and the Ukraine. Bukovina was the birthplace of my paternal grandparents. Though they met in New York City, Rose Schachter and Morris Reisch were born 30 miles apart, in the 1890s. Today's Sadagura, birthplace of Grandfather Morris, is now a suburb of the Bukovina capital of Czernowitz (Chernivtsi in Ukrainian, see article in ROM-SIG Spring '98 issue, Volume 6, No. 3 by Ruth Gavis), in the Ukraine. Radauti (Radautz, Radowitz), home of my Grandmother Rose, is a small town in present day Romania.

I started planning my trip to Romania and the Ukraine by seeking advice from the JewishGen discussion group, soc.genealogy.jewish. Invariably, I was told to go with a tour group, and not to try to brave this trip alone. So, of course, I decided to go alone.... but with lots of careful planning. I hoped my knowledge of French and a sprinkling of German would help me out, and it sure did. My JewishGen and ROM-SIG friends led me to Dr. Gabriel Rinzler, a native of Czernowitz, who had recently visited his hometown. Dr. Rinzler advised me on travel routes to the Ukraine and provided me an excellent contact in the Jewish Community. He wrote to Mrs. Evgenia Finkel, Secretary of the Chernivtsi Society of Yiddish Culture "E. Shtainbarg" (named after the famous Yiddish writer of Czernowitz by that name), and asked her to help me if she could. The travel advice in the article by Ruth Gavis was also

invaluable to my planning - and as luck would have it, Ruth and her husband Jerry were at the same hotel in Czernowitz this summer for the same exact four nights that I stayed there. There was nothing like having a pair of seasoned Jewish genealogists as on-site resources and friends! With their help, I was better able to navigate the bureaucracy of the Ukrainian archive system.

The Ukraine portion of my trip began auspiciously with the company of a delightful and attractive English-speaking 25 year-old Ukrainian woman who shared my sleeping compartment on the train from Budapest to Ternopil, followed by a guided tour of the Jewish sites of Sadagura with Professor Grigori Cherveniyuk of Chernivtsi State University, a native of Sadagura.

In the months before departure, I planned with intensity the details of my travel arrangements and goals upon arrival. I had been told by reliable sources that there were few if any vital records remaining from Sadagura. So I set my sights low and planned only to see the sights of Sadagura, such as the great synagogue, and the cemetery. I knew these still existed, since I had seen recent photos from fellow traveler Irene Silfin, whose husband was related to the Rinzlers of Sadagura. A photo of the great Temple in better times can be seen in the section on Sadagura in Encyclopedia Judaica. I really just wanted to walk the streets of a town I had heard of by name but knew little else about.

Czernowitz

On my arrival in Czernowitz (where the Cheremosh hotel for tourists is located), I phoned the Yiddish writer, Mr. Joseph Burg, from my hotel room. Mr. Burg was recommended as a contact in the article by Ruth Gavis, and I knew that he spoke a little English. He immediately invited me to his apartment for a visit, where, by chance,

another Jewish man helped me to find the right apartment as I wandered about the desolate street. Mr. Burg was wonderfully hospitable, and phoned Mrs. Finkel right away for me. Mrs. Finkel had been expecting me since receiving the letter from Dr. Rinzler. Though I knew she had agreed to help me, I didn't know what sort of assistance she would be able to provide. She spoke no English, so we had language barriers to overcome. On my arrival, I found that she had already arranged for a translator, the very friendly Inna Zeltser, a Jewish woman who teaches English at a local college. Inna never asked for any type of compensation (though I left her with a generous gift), and she stayed by my side for three days straight, 8 hours per day, in unpleasant heat and humidity. After several hours of discussion and planning, Inna, Evgenia, Alex Traci (a local friend of Dr. Rinzler's) and I headed by taxi to Sadagura.

Sadagura

In the years prior to World War I, Sadagura was a market town with population under 12,000, 80% Jewish, about 3 miles from the center of Czernowicz. It was the home of the Sadagura Rebbe, Rabbi Israel Friedmann of Ruzhin, who settled in Sadagura in the mid 19th century and established a Hassidic dynasty which is still active to this day. Not all residents of Sadagura were followers of the Hassidic Rebbe. My great-grandfather Hersh Reisch emigrated from Sadagura to the United States about 1914, and though he was orthodox, he was not Hassidic to my knowledge.

On our arrival in Sadagura, we stopped at the house of Mayer Yosefovich Kaushansky, one of the five remaining Jews still living in Sadagura. Mayer is a retired doctor and a very cheerful spirit with a warm smile. He hopped in the now very crowded taxi and showed us the way to the cemetery. My entourage and I ambled through a field full of broken tombstones to see the grave of the Sadagura Hassidic Rebbe. The gates surrounding the Hassidic dynasty's burial plot had been recently vandalized and lay on the

ground. It hadn't been like this the last time Mayer had been here. The group was ready to leave when I negotiated a few extra minutes (perhaps 30?) to walk through the areas with intact stones. I couldn't come all this way, and not look for a few Reisch stones, could I? While the group sat in the shade, I took my camera in hand and walked through areas adjacent to a school yard and a military installation looking for readable names. Of all the stones with Hebrew letters, perhaps 10% also had writing in German. Of those in German I found two by the name RINZLER - a nice reward of information and photos for Dr. Rinzler. A few moments later, I struck gold with a REISCH stone, followed quickly by two more.

I returned alone to the cemetery the next morning. I now knew the way, and negotiated my own taxi ride, despite the language difficulties. We found the cemetery, and I had the taxi wait 2 hours while I walked systematically among the stones. This wasn't easy as the weather was warm and humid, the grass wet, and the plant life around the stones terribly over-grown. Each step taken might go down into a hole, or land on a hidden stone. On this visit, on a warm and humid morning, I found additional REISCH monuments, and others with the names KERNER and BENDIT, other family names from this area. Though I haven't as yet connected any of these Reisches with my own family, I at least learned that the family REISCH must have been very large to have so many stones (a total of 10 found!) still standing with the name REISCH.

Later that afternoon, I returned to Sadagura with Professor Chervenyuk of Chernivtsi State University and a native of Sadagura, and with Inna and Alex. He is the process of writing a history of the ethnic groups of his home village and was glad to meet with me when Mrs. phoned him from her office. The Professor showed me the remaining Jewish homes and Jewish sites. The great Temple stands in ruins, just an intact shell which is now abandoned but had been a machine shop under the Soviet era. The Rebbe's house next

door, which had been a municipal office until at least 1995, now stands abandoned as well, and is deteriorating from accelerating water damage. A sign on the rear door says "Synagogue Sadagora Center of Chernovtsy, Str. Marissa Theresa 192" in English, Russian, and Hebrew. But this office is obviously not in use. These and other sights of the small shtetl houses, and the active bazaar type market in the town center, shed some light on how things used to be in the difficult times at the turn of the century. Life even now is very difficult in the Ukraine - I saw abundant signs of poverty and heard stories of unemployment and unpaid back wages everywhere.

Professor Chervenyyuk showed me a large old house which he remembered had been a Reisch family house years ago. Chaskell Reisch the shoemaker had lived here, practicing the same profession as that of my great grandfather. Though I can't be sure, this was a likely ancestral home for my family, and I took lots of photos. Mayer Kaushansky gave me the names and addresses of a Reisch family which had emigrated from Sadagura to Israel about 8 years ago. I've written to them and perhaps they will know more about my family.

At the urging of fellow travelers and genealogists, the Gavises, I also decided to try a visit to the Z.A.G.S. Archives for the City of Chernivtsi. Though I had been lead to believe there would be nothing there for Sadagura, I was handsomely rewarded for my efforts with the finding of the exact 1885 wedding date for the marriage of great grandfather Hersh Reisch and Sussel Feuerstein. There was nothing more in this register than the names and date, but it gave me a warm feeling to see this 100 year-old record with my own eyes. If you go to the archives to research records for Sadagura and surrounding communities (Rohozna, Neu-Zuckza, etc.) the following two ledgers of records are available: Marriages in the Sadagura/Rohozna region for 1877-1890, and death records for 1885-1904. I was told they did not have a ledger for births in this period.

There may also be additional records available for the post 1900 period. Officially, the policy is to charge 20 griven (about \$10) for each record, and they may not be photocopied. Only a Ukrainian transcript of the record may be provided. Before I left, though, they had softened their policy and the polite young woman in the office showed me 50 Reisch birth records, of which I bought 3 which were transcribed from German into very good English for me.

Radauti

With all the detailed planning for my trip to Sadagura, I had done relatively little planning for my trip to Radauti. In the years prior to WW1, Radauti was about 35% Jewish, and the town had large numbers of Germans and Romanians as well. However, my 88 year old cousin who grew up in Radauti, Mendel Halpern (see www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/transnistra.html), gave me the name of a friend of his whom he hoped might still be alive. From other JewishGenners, I had the address and phone number of the Jewish Community Office in Radauti, and the addresses for three synagogues, including the Great Temple of Radauti, a gift of the Kaiser to the Jewish residents of this town, built in the 1880s.

The morning before my departure from Czernowitz, I spoke by phone with Prof. Tania Grinberg of the Jewish Community Office of Radauti. She directed me to Hotel Azur (a new hotel on the main road to Radauti from Czernowitz via Domesti). Once I settled into this hotel (\$17/night for a pleasant room with some shortcoming like an exposed electrical outlet, and a missing toilet seat), I found my way with the help of a local policeman, to her office. She welcomed me very warmly, and was a constant source for information throughout my visit. My knowledge of French and German was very useful in Radauti.

Prof. Grinberg offered to open the doors of the Great Temple for me - a stunning sight in the center of the village. The building was in surprising good condition with gold

ornamentation highlighting its architectural features. I later learned that it had been renovated about 17 years ago. The interior was stunning as well, and I photographed it extensively. My cousin Mendel helped to re-build the Bima and benches after WW2, so I photographed these areas in particular. This was a moving experience to be in the Great Temple, which I knew to be just down the street from a family home. Today, it is the only remaining Temple in Radauti, serving a community of just 94 people, mostly elderly. I went to Shabbat services on Saturday morning, held in a prayer room just inside the main doors. I was one of only five men in attendance. They were quite friendly and curious about me. I took photographs of Mr. Benyamin, Mr. David and his son, and Mr. Koffler and sent them copies for the New Year.

I mentioned to Prof. Grinberg the name of my cousin Mendel's friend, Shike Stenzler. She recognized his name immediately. It was a real thrill to find a living connection to my family. Though now 90 years-old and blind, Shike could remember my great-grandmother Hinde Brucker Schachter, and others in the family of my Radauti great-grandfather Leiser Schachter. I now have Israeli addresses for these families (given to me later in the trip by Prof. Grinberg), from whom I am certain to learn more.

Shike's son Daniel spoke English quite well and agreed to interpret for me the following day. In Radauti, I planned to visit the archives and cemetery, and to try to find ancestral homes. With Daniel's help on day 2 in Radauti, my visit was successful in all these objectives. Since the archives were busy on a Friday morning, they advised us to return in the afternoon. Daniel then took me to find the cemetery caretaker. He took us into the apparently unlocked cemetery on the eastern edge of town. The cemetery was in fairly good condition, not ruinous like the one in Sadagura. Tania checks on the cemetery each month and tells the caretaker what needs doing! With the help of photos of my great grandparent's graves, given to me by a

relative about 3 weeks before I left, the caretaker found these two gravesites within about 30 minutes. They were both in amazingly good condition. My camera was clicking away, as I photographed these stones and many others with the names SCHACHTER, BRUCKER, and KASTNER (for a dear cousin). Even Daniel found his grandparent's monuments as we wandered about. The domed Temple at the entrance to the cemetery is now a storage area for odds and ends like old iron fences and bales of hay. The monument to the victims of the Transnistrian holocaust is found to the right as you enter the cemetery. It is a striking and beautiful structure.

My visit to the archives later that day was unexpectedly successful. In January 1998, I hired a professional genealogist, Prof. L. Gyemant <gyemant@zortec.ro> of Cluj Napoca University in Transylvania, to research the pre-1890 records housed in the regional archives of Suceava, near Radauti. Prof. Gyemant provided me with a report in early June, 1998, prior to my departure. Since the post 1890 records are found only in the archives in Radauti, I planned to research these records on my own. For each record I requested, the look-up process was somewhat tedious, and it was apparent that the Radauti city hall archive was not accustomed to receiving visitors interested in their family history. It was clear, though, that they had many of the pre- and post-1890 records of the Jewish community in this archive. I found birth records for my grandmother and most of her siblings but I failed to find two of the marriage records I sought. I also found the death records for my great grandparents, but failed to find any death records for their parents. Perhaps they died at another location during WWI? Most of the records found were in German, and the post WWI records were in Romanian. I was not permitted to photocopy the records; instead, I hand copied German records, and Daniel copied the Romanian records. There was no charge for any of this work and I thanked them warmly. On my last day in Radauti, I braved another

visit to the archives without a translator for one more record. Using a bit of German to communicate with the archivist, I found a death record which led me to the exact street address of a family home. I had suspected which home it was earlier in the trip, but the archival record confirmed this for me. I went back to the location, and asked in German for access to the courtyard. The woman in the storefront remembered that it had been a bakery many years ago, and this was the profession of Mendel's father - this was surely the house where Mendel and some of my other family members grew up. Despite the presence of two very concerned dogs, I persisted in entering the courtyard. After a few photographs, I turned around and left with great satisfaction at having found the house which I had heard so much about. Another family house around the corner had been demolished long ago, however. A neighbor could describe it, but all I could see was a vacant lot. The homes on the street were likely similar to this family home, so I took pictures of those as well.

The Carpathians and Gura Humorului

The Bukovina scenery was enchanting: Beautiful rolling hillsides, horse drawn carts, cows grazing on the roadside, and sometimes in the middle of the road, and then the stunning beech and spruce filled mountains to the west. The architecture was also very pleasant, and the water wells of Bukovina were the ornate types of fairy tales. My great Aunt once told me stories of Gura Humorului, a town south of Radauti but on the other side of a range of the Carpathian mountains. Suspecting that it might be the home of my Schachter great-grandfather, I paid a visit. I was lucky enough to meet two of the remaining seven Jews of this town, Mr. Hescovici and Mr. Iuni, the Community President. Mr. Hescovici showed me the cemetery which was in relatively good condition, in a stunning setting above the river on a gorgeous pasture and forest-filled hillside. Most of the stones have numbers stenciled on the sides, indicating that someone

has been here surveying or indexing the site. Here too, I found and photographed many Schachter monuments. I cannot yet find a link with my family and any of these burials, but this side trip to one of the very stunningly beautiful villages of Bukovina, and my chance meeting with two elderly Jewish residents, was well worth the visit.

Should I ever have the chance to once again visit the Bukovina region, I'll still have lots to do. I am sure that the archives and cemeteries of the region still harbor much more information about my family history. But this one visit, even if it turns out to be my only opportunity, will forever be etched in my mind.

Important notes for visitors to Sadagura

For interaction with the Jewish Community:

Mr. Joseph Burg

Sheptyzki Str. 13/9

274000 Chernivtsi

Tel and Fax: 380 3722 2-06-01

It is best to write in Russian or German. He will reply if you send two international reply coupons. Mr. Burg is an active Yiddish writer and a gem of a person.

Another important contact:

Mrs. Evgenia Finkel, Secretary (Mr. Burg is President)

Chernivtsi Society of Jewish Culture "E. Shtainbarg"

Teatralnaia Pl. 5 Room 30

Chernivtsi 274000

phone 380 3722 24170 or home 21258

Mrs. Finkel was expecting me and did so much for me it was unbelievable. She even lined up a young Jewish woman who teaches English to translate for me.

For research on Jewish vital records in Sadagura and surrounding communities, go to:

Z.A.G.S. Archives

Kobilyanska Str. 31

274000 Chernivtsi Ukraine

Tel.: 380 3722 2-52-25

Enter the building courtyard, and climb the

stairs in the wing to your left to reach the Archives office.

If you go to Sadagura, you must see the Great Temple and castle of the Sadagura Rebbe:

Str. Marissa Theresa 192

Look for it behind the trees and shrub along the street. The cemetery is near a school on Nalepky Str.

For information on the history of Sadagura, contact:

Professor Grigori Ivanovich Cherveniyuk
Chernivtsi State University

(address available from author, in Cyrillic)

Prof. Cherveniyuk is writing a history of the ethnic groups of Sadagura. He will appreciate your photos and information on your ancestors.

On the web

For information on Sadagura, visit <http://www.jewishgen.org/ShtetLinks/sadgura/sadgura.html>

In Suceava, there is an English speaking tourist agency which can reserve Suceava hotels, book train tickets, etc. Ask for Christien Janos or "Teddy" at

Bukovina Estur

Strada Stefan cel Mare 24

Suceava

Tel 40 302 223259

Fax 40 302 520223

It is possible to stay in Suceava (where, for about the same price, Hotel Alice has much nicer accommodations than Hotel Azur in Radauti). It is only a 45 minute drive to Radauti from Suceava; train and bus service is available as well.

Important notes for visitors to Radauti

To contact the Jewish community in Radauti:
Prof. Tania Grinberg (speaks some French

and German)

Comunitatea Evreilor (Jewish Community Office)

Aleea Primaverii 11

Block 14, Apt. 1

Radauti 5875

office 40 30 461333

home 40 30 462713

Great Synagogue of Radauti: Str. Uno Mai 2
(must not be missed!)

Vital records for the Jewish community are kept in the City Hall archives division:

Primaria Municipiului Radauti

Str. Piata Unirii nr. 2

Jud. Suceava

cod. 5875 Romania

Facing the main entrance, the archives are on the first floor, make a left turn and it is the last door on the left. They can "translate" old street names and numbers into their current street addresses.

On the web

For information on Radauti, visit <http://www.jewishgen.org/ShtetLinks/radauti/radautz.html>

Born and raised in New York City, Bruce Reisch studied biological sciences at Vassar College, Cornell University and finally at the University of Wisconsin where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1980. He is currently a professor of grape genetics at Cornell University and past President of Temple Beth-El, Geneva, New York. His interests in genealogy date back to his youth when his Bukovina grandmother and her sisters would tell stories of growing up in this far away land. This interest re-emerged two years ago following a surprise phone call from a Vermont woman who is surely a distant cousin (b.reisch@cornell.edu).

Celestial Factors and Jewish Names

Mathilde Tagger

On Aug. 11 of this year there was an eclipse of the sun, the last of this millennium. The astronomers forecast that the next one will occur in another 80 years, so that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be able to observe it. I suppose that this fact influenced me to analyze the close relation between celestial factors and Jewish names.

The moon and the sun are an integral part of man's life because they separate day and night. Without the sun there would be no possibility of life on Earth. The moon's revolutions around the earth provide the source of the following every day Hebrew expressions: *month*, *honeymoon* and *moonstruck*, and, of course, the Hebrew calendar is based on the moon.

The centrality of the sun and moon in man's life is evidenced in family and given names. Stars are also a source of names, perhaps because of their mysteries. From the moon we get the given names: *Levana* (Hebrew), *Luna* (Spanish) and *Kamra* (Arabic). Family names relating to the moon are *Yareah* (Hebrew), *Yarac/Yarak* (Italian deformation of the Hebrew). Incidentally, this name is reputed to derive from the name of the French town *Lunel* and *Lunel* comes from *lune*, moon in French.

Mund, moon in German, is reflected in the family names *Mundberg*, *Mundstein*, *Mundschein* etc. Other languages add suffixes. *Sahar*, crescent in Hebrew, is used as a male given name.

The use of sun as a given name is found in the Spanish *Sol* and its diminutive *Solica*. (*Sol* should not be confused with the Ashkenazi nickname for Solomon or Shlomo). There is also the biblical name *Shimshon* (Samson) which is derived from the Hebrew *Shemesh* meaning sun. *Shemesh* is a family name used by Iraqi and Iranian Jewry. There is also its variant *Shamosh* that appear in Syria.

Ashkenazi family names that include the German word *Sonne* (sun) are: *Sonnenberg*, *Sonnenblick*, *Sonnenfeld*, *Sonnenschein* (Sunshine), *Sonnenstein* and *Sonnenthal*. In Russia, the names *Soltsov*, *Solntsev*, *Solntse* and *Sonts*, are based on *slontse* = sun.

Shining stars are represented by the following names: *Kochava*, *Bat Kochav* and *Bat Kochava* which are new Hebrew given names from *Kochav* = star. We find *Stella* (Italian) and *Estrella* (Spanish), *Nadjma* or *Nadjum* (star or stars in Arabic). A special star is *Noga*, which was the name of King David's son but is currently used in Israel for girls. The name expresses the brilliance and glitter of the star. The new Hebrew family name *Shavit* = comet and is also used as a given name. Another name is *Orion* which represents a group of stars.

We shall add the Hebrew family name *Bar Kochba* based on the famous hero's name. The family name *Kochavi* should also be noted.

Stern means star in German and from it are derived such names as *Stern*, *Sternberg*, *Sterne*, *Sternglanz*, *Sternheim*, *Sternlicht*, *Sternbuch*, *Sternfeld* etc. *Shahak* for sky appears as a given or a family name in Hebrew. Another new family name is *Raquia* which means firmament. It correlates with the German name *Sternfeld*, field of the stars. There is also the family name *Nadjuma* (Arabic) = star which is used by Yemenite Jewry.

It is not my intention here to present a lexicon of names connected with light, dawn or darkness, the origins of which are connected to the heavens.

The celestial factors providing Jewish family and given names are reflected in all the countries to which the Jews were dispersed.

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In Memory of Dear Member Dan Barlev

Esther Ramon

A year has passed since we lost one of our most faithful and committed members, Dan Barlev, whose genealogical aim over the years was to gather information about his Bruell family ancestors (the surname Barlev is a Hebraized form of Bruell).

The ancestors of his paternal grandfather lived more than 250 years ago in the small town of Lichtenfels in Upper Franconia, Bavaria, a town which had developed from a settlement established about a thousand years ago. Dan specialized in genealogical research on that region of Germany, and all our members, as well as users of the General Archives for the History of the Jewish People, would consult him on their research into Bavarian and wider German genealogy. The General Archives placed at his permanent disposal all their booklets and papers on Fuerth and Nuernberg.

Dan worked in close co-operation with Charles Stanton of New York, a well-known researcher and gatherer of information on the Jewish families of Bavaria, who drew the family trees for Dan on his computer.

In 1990 Dan published a fascinating article entitled *Annals of the Bruell Family - Discovery of Family Members who Established Institutions in the Holy Land*. The article appeared in the Israel Genealogical Society's booklet "Their Father's House - Studies and Sources in Family History 3-4, and describes how Dan discovered the connection between the Bruell family and the Ratisbonne family, founders of the Ratisbonne Monastery in Jerusalem and the community of Notre Dame de Sion.

We remember him with affection. May his memory be a blessing.



IGS Library - New Acquisitions

*Harriet Kasow**

The newest arrivals came as a result of my trip to the United States to attend the 19th Annual Conference of Jewish Genealogy, which took place in NYC Aug. 8-13. There were quite a number of booksellers peddling their wares as well as individual authors selling their own works.

Family Finder Sorted by Town. 19th Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy. New York. JGS of New York. 1999 80pp.

Feldblyum, Boris

Russian-Jewish Given Names; their Origins and Variants. Teaneck, N.J. Avotaynu, Inc. 1998 138pp.

Frazin, Judith R.

A Translation Guide to 19th Century Polish-Language civil Registration Documents and Death Records. 2nd Edition. Northbrook, IL. JGS of Illinois. 1989 311pp.

Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives. Rev. ed. Washington, DC National Archives Trust Fund Board/ NARA. 1985 304pp.

Historical Atlas of the Holocaust. New York. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum/Macmillan Publishing. 1996 252pp.

Immigrant and Passenger Arrivals. A Select Catalog of National Archives Microfilm Publications. Washington, D.C. National Archives Trust Fund Board. 1983 171pp.

Kugelmass, Jack and Jonathan Boyarin; Editors and Translators

From a Ruined Garden; the Memorial Books of Polish Jewry. 2nd Expanded Edition. Bloomington, Indiana. Indiana University Press/ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 1998 353 pp. Geographical Index & Bibliography by Zachary M. Baker

Kurzweil, Arthur and Miriam Weiner Editors

The Encyclopedia of Jewish Genealogy. Sources in the United States and Canada. Northvale, N.J. Jason Aronson, Inc. 1991 226pp.

Lackey, Richard S.

Cite Your Sources. A Manual for Documenting Family Histories and Genealogical Records. Jackson, Miss. University Press of Mississippi. 1980 94pp.

Mohrer, Fruma and Marek Web. Compilers and Editors

Guide to the YIVO Archives. New York. Yivo Institute for Jewish Research. (Armonk, N.Y. M.E. Sharpe) 1998 428pp.

Pogonowski, Iwo

Jews in Poland; a Documentary History. New York. Hippocrene Books. 1998 425pp.

Rose, Christine and Kay Germain Ingalls

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy. New York. Alpha Books (Macmillan). 1997 327pp.

Schwartz, Rosaline and Susan Milamed

From Alexandrovsk to Zyrardon; a Guide to YIVO's Landsmanshaftn Archive. New York. Yivo Institute for Jewish Research. 1986 95pp.

Syllabus. 19th Annual Conference on Jewish Genealogy. New York. IAJGS 1999

Weiner, Miriam

Jewish Roots in Ukraine-Moldova; Pages from the Past and Archival Inventories. Secacus, N.Y. Routes to Roots Foundations/Yivo. 1999 600pp.

Wigoder, Geoffrey

Dictionary of Jewish Biography. New York. Simon & Schuster. 1991 567pp.

Wynne, Suzan F.

Finding Your Jewish Roots in Galicia: a Resource Guide. Teaneck, N.J. Avotaynu, Inc. 1997 220pp.

** Harriet Kasow is IGS Library volunteer*

Announcements

A new book on Genealogical Research in Ukraine and Moldova

The Routes to Roots Foundation, Inc. [a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation] is pleased to announce the publication of "Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova: Pages from the Past and Archival Inventories," by the noted genealogist and historian, Miria Weiner (author of "Jewish Roots in Poland").

"Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova" includes the most comprehensive listing of archival inventories ever published in English for both Ukraine and Moldova (formerly Bessarabia). The archival inventories were compiled in official cooperation with the Ukrainian State Archives and Moldovan National Archives, and include never before published archival inventories for both the smallest villages and the largest cities in Ukraine and Moldova.

The 624 pages include: 970 color photos of 190 towns, 121 black and white photos, 115 document examples, 20 maps in color and 1,392 towns in the archival inventories (book weight: 5-1/2 pounds).

Price: \$60, for orders outside of the United States add \$15 for shipping/handling; all foreign payments (checks) must be on a U.S. bank). Visa and Mastercard accepted.

For excerpts of the book and order form, visit our web site at <http://www.rtrfoundation.org> If you live outside of the United States, click on "international distributors" on the order form on our web site.

A new Discussion Group

Anna Olswanger is startan on-line discussion group for members of the Olswanger families in North America, England, Australia, Israel, Lithuania, and other countries. You can post and request information about your family tree, or just shmooze with other members.

To join the on-line group, send an e-mail to Anna Olswanger at :

[<olswanger@mindspring.com>](mailto:olswanger@mindspring.com).

Anna Olswanger is a member of the St. Louis

Jewish Genealogy Society and the Jewish Genealogy Society of Los Angeles.

Important Notice

The following announcement that appeared in the "Jerusalem Post" may be of interest to our readers.

"**Keren Kayement Leyisrael**", The Jewish National Fund, wishes to make it publicly known that it possesses a list of missing persons from Eastern Europe dating to WWII relating to land properties which were or are being administrated by **KKL - JNL**.

KKL - JNL is now equipped to handle public queries and invites persons wishing to obtain further information concerning missing relatives to write to us, supplying details of the missing person and his or her family connection.

Letters should be mailed to the **Office of the legal advisor, Keren Kayement Leyisrael, P.O.Box 283, Jerusalem 91002**. All queries will be considered and answered.

Please be advised that KKL-JNF has released the names of missing persons from Eastern Europe in World War II whose properties in Israel it managed in the past or manages today. The lists contain also names of people who were subject to one form or another of KKL-JNF handling in the past, but for whom there is no corresponding property.

Should you find the name of a missing relative on the list, you may write to KKL-JNF, supplying details on the missing person and stating your kinship to him/her. We cannot answer genealogical questions about missing persons. Please direct these to the Missing Relatives Search Bureau.

Office of the Legal Advisor
Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael
POB 283
Jerusalem 91002
Israel

Please note that the names have been transliterated from Hebrew and may have led to discrepancies in the spelling.

JGS Journal Abstracts in English

Compiled by Harold Lewin

This selection is merely a guide to some of the more interesting English JGS literature. Those fortunates who do discover something interesting are urged to locate and read the original article, since the abstract never does it justice. Note that **3pp. (4)** at the end of an abstract indicates an article of about 3 pages length, with its location in Ref. No.4 of the **Key to Journal References**. Please accept our apologies for all missing credits and changes of title.

Czech Republic

The History of the Jewish Community of Olomouc is described in a slim book by Jaroslav Klenovsky and Miroslav Papousek published by the Jewish community of Olomouc in 1997-1998. **2pp. (1)**

Countries of Former Russian Empire & Empire of USSR (excepting Baltic States)

Sources for the Genealogy of Jewish Colonists in 19th c. Southern Russia. In this translation of an article by Dimitry Z. Feldman excerpted from a Spring 1999, RAGAS report, the history of Jewish colonization is described. Several archival lists are suggested for research. **4pp. (1)**

Reuniting of Two Children with their Brothers. Kelly Modlin's fascinating account of the continuing research into the true identities of Pnina Modlin and her childhood girlfriend Luda, describes reunification with the brothers lost 58 years ago in eastern Russia. **4pp (1)**

Genealogical Clues in Czarist Decrees by Michael Steinore show how the Czarist government's many anti-Jewish decrees in the Pale of Settlement during 1776-1908 directly influenced their family history. **4pp. (3)**

Linking Genealogists to Jewish Communities in the Former Soviet Union was originally published in *Mishpacha* and in it Ellen Shindelman suggests asking the Rabbi

of the relevant Jewish community to compile a list of those Jews remaining in the town. This sometimes results in a matching of names with those one is researching, and by initiating such contacts, projects of mutual benefit both to researcher and Jewish community may be established. **2pp. (4)**

Jewish Documentary Sources in Moscow Archives, reviewed by Jeffery Veidlinger, is the first in a series to be published jointly by the Russian State University of the Humanities in Moscow, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York. **2pp. (5)**

France

WWII Vichy Regime anti-Jewish Laws and their Circumvention through Fictitious Pedigrees. Ernest Kallmann describes the frenetic efforts of French Jews during WWII to prove family residency in France over five generations so as to avoid the harsh laws enacted by the Vichy regime. **2pp. (1)**

Alsace-Lorraine and the Mobility of its Jews at the End of the 19th Century is an excerpt of a paper by Anny Bloch presented at the 5th International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Paris, July 1997. She explains how historical events have influenced the mobility and occupations of Jewish families from the beginning of the 19th century. **1p. (1)**

Germany

Computerization of Hamburg Emigration Lists. Juergen Sielemann writes that within four years, genealogists will have Internet access to the data on five million emigrants who exited Europe via Hamburg during 1850-1934. The hand-written material is being computerized by a team of 27 staff members of the Hamburg State Archives beginning with period 1890-1914. **1p. (1)**

Primary Source Material for

German-Jewish Genealogy at the Central Archives. Esther Ramon and Hadassah Assouline provide lists of place-names relating to the contents of the Gatermann Collection, comprising bound, miniature photocopies of birth, marriage and death registers from German Jewish communities. For photocopies, archival sources of some original documents are provided. 9pp. (1)

The German Jewish SIG formed recently by Arthur Obermayer, covers several German-speaking regions including parts of Switzerland, Bohemia, Alsace, Lorraine and Austria. 1p. (4)

Holland

Rotterdam Departure Records by Mary Barkan, describes the use of this 1,053 microfiche collection at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. 1p. (6)

Israel

In Genealogy in Israel: May 1999, Sallyann Amdur Sack provides a useful summary of genealogical activities in Israel, placing the emphasis on developments at Yad Vashem. Changes in accessing the Paul Jacobi bequest at the National Library, plans for computerizing the entire Central Archives catalog and Ottoman Empire ancestry research are described. 5pp. (1)

Poland

The Polish Genealogical Society of America is described by Peter Jassem who also mentions a web site, two periodicals and several books dealing with Polish genealogical subjects. 3pp. (2)

Gombin and the Imperial War Museum, London. Jeremy Freedman describes the adoption by the Imperial War Museum, of the Gombin shtetl, as an integral part of the museum's National Holocaust Exhibition. 2pp. (7)

Pinkas Kehillot Polin, comprising Central Poland (Lublin-Kielce counties), and edited by Abraham Wein, is the 6th in the 8-volume Yad Vashem Pinkas Kehillot Polin series and

presents 265 Jewish localities from large communities such as Radom, Czestochowa and Chelm, to localities that had Jewish populations exceeding 100. 1p. (8)

United States

United States Immigration Records Update, by David Abrahams, describes historically significant immigration and naturalization records covering 1940-1970. These Alien or A-Files, often contain rare family histories, photographs and documents seldom found in any other resource. 2pp. (3)

Finding Lost New York Professionals is no longer so difficult, since the New York State Education Department's Office of the Professions maintains an on-line license verification service. Accountants, architects, optometrists and many other professionals are now easily traceable. 1p. (4)

Genealogy and Computers

What's New on JewishGen comprises a valuable section of Internet Corner contributed by David M. Fox, who lists the main SIGs and their hosted mailing lists and clarifies accession of the JewiDiscussion Group, JRI-Poland and other important databases. 5pp. (1)

The Macintosh-based Reunion 5.0 Genealogy program is described by Jerome B. Jacobson, who praises its many positive features. 2pp. (3)

Guide to Genealogy Software describes Marthe Arends' new 269pp. guide that provides info on 33 genealogy database programs and details the manufacturer, key features, cost, etc. 1p. (4)

Holocaust Studies & Holocaust Claims

Efforts to Redeem Holocaust-Era Insurance Policies. Irene S. Goldstein discusses Jewish genealogists' cooperation with B'nai Brith International in helping heirs recover unclaimed assets of murdered Holocaust victims. 2pp. (1)

International Tracing Service Digitizes Its Files. Computerization of a Holocaust-era

central card index comprising 61 million names, has been underway for the past 18 months at the Red Cross International Tracing Service in Arolson, Germany. Target date for completion of card scanning is October 1999, although information access problems have not yet been addressed. **1p. (1)**

The Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities (in English), will be based on Yad Vashem's Hebrew Pinkas Kehillot project, of which 19 out of 29 volumes have so far been published. The Encyclopedia will be an abridged version of the Pinkas and will comprise three volumes (about 1,800 pp.) and will encompass the history of some 6,000 Jewish communities in Europe and North Africa. **1p. (8)**

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Jewish Genealogy - General

Internet Accessibility of LDS Family History Catalog. In two articles, Gary Mokotoff clarifies Internet access to the Mormon Family History Department genealogy catalog and provides valuable guidance on exploiting it. **4pp. (1)**

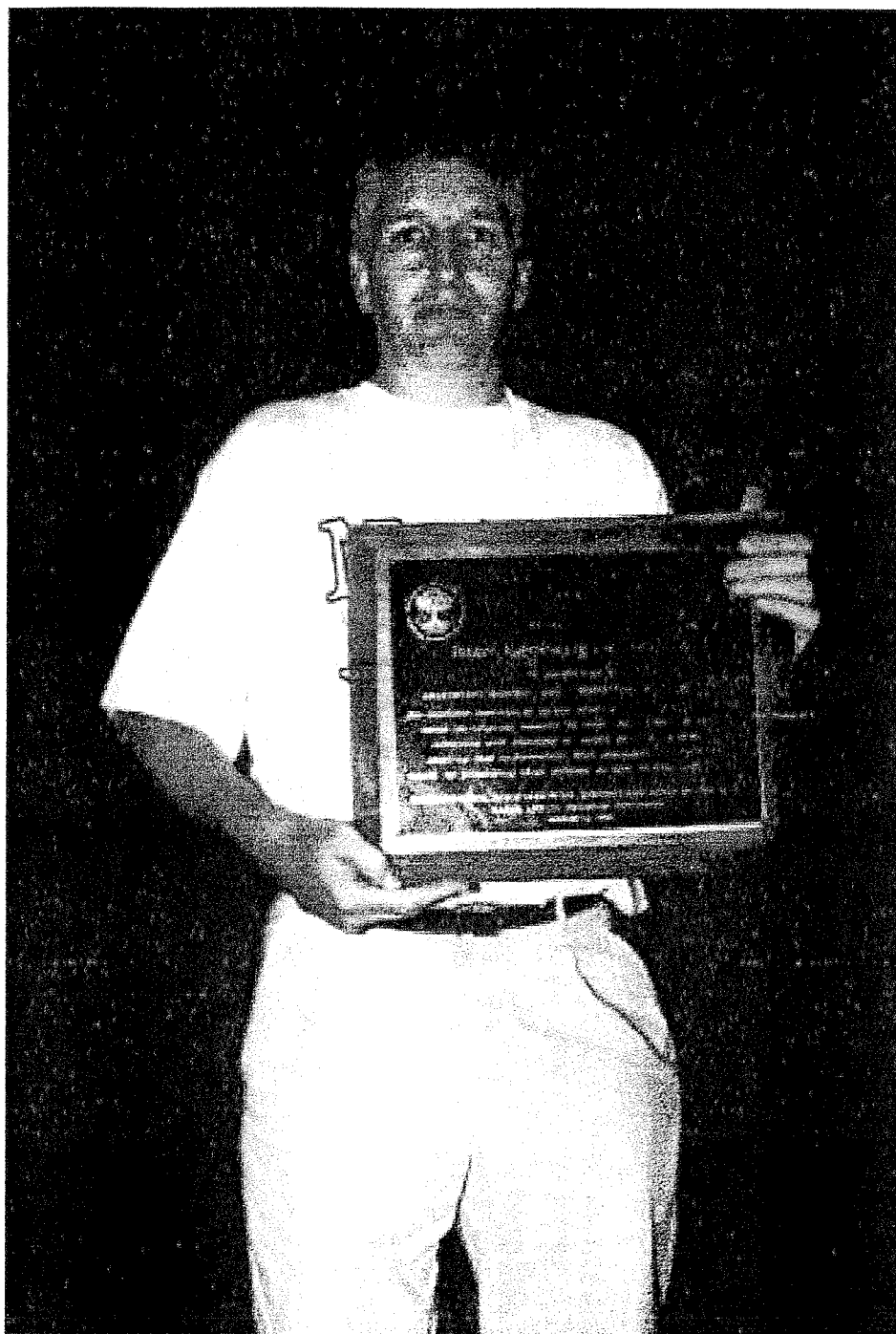
Rabbinical Genealogy

The Rabbi Pinchas Horowitz of Prague Enigma. Neil Rosenstein, in another of his erudite articles on rabbinical genealogy, discusses the doubt existing as to the true identity of Pinchas Horowitz, brother-in-law of the REMA, after whom Prague's Pinkas Synagogue was named. **2pp. (1)**

Key to Journal References

Ref. No.	Journal	Geographical Area	Issue	Year	Vol.	No.
1.	Avotaynu	International	Summer	1999	XV	2
2.	Shem-Tov	Toronto	June	1999	XV	2
3.	ZichronNote	San Francisco	May/August	1999	XIX	2-3
4.	JGSLI Lineage	Long Island	Winter	1999	XI	1
5.	Yichus y'all	Georgia	Spring	1999	6	3
6.	Family Lgacies	Southern Nevada - West	Spring	1999	2	2
7	B'nai Gombin	Gombin	December	1998	-	8
8	Yad Vashem	Jerusalem	Spring	1999	13	-





ד"ר-פייר סטרווייס, יו"ר החברה, מקבל את פרס IAJGS, ניו יורק, אוגוסט 1999
Jean-Pierre Stroweis, President of IGS, receiving the IAJGS Award, New York, Aug. 1999