

שרשרת הדורות

**Sharsheret Hadorot**  
*JOURNAL OF JEWISH GENEALOGY*

Contents

Editorial.....	I
From the Desk of Chana Furman, President of Israel Genealogical Society .....	II
<b>The Rossi, De Rossi Family From Jerusalem to Rome and from Rome via a Long Trip to Eretz Yisrael</b>	
Leah Artom.....	III
<b>Gelles of Brody and some Fraenkel - Horowitz Connections</b>	
Edward Gelles .....	VI
<b>Casa Shalom -The Institute for Marrano-Anusim Studies Gan Yavneh Israel</b>	
Gloria Mound .....	IX
<b>Family Names in Israel</b>	
Chanan Rapaport .....	XIV
<b>Belfer Family Reunion An Example of Jewish Identification</b>	
Harriet Kasow.....	XVII
<b>Report of the Activities of the Sephardim-SIG of the Israel Genealogical Society for 2004-2005</b>	
Mathilde Tagger, Coordinator of Sephardim SIG .....	XIX
<b>The Genealogical Holdings of the Jewish National and University Library, A Visit to the Library</b>	
Gilda Kurtzman and Susan Edel.....	XX
<b>South African Center for Jewish Migration and Genealogy Studies</b>	
Beryl Baleson .....	XXI
<b>The "Arolsen Files" as a Research Source</b>	
Sherry Kisos .....	XXIII
<b>The Granddaughter Who Came on Aliyah with Her Grandmother</b>	
Yehuda Klausner .....	XXV
<b>Abstracts of Foreign Journals</b>	
Compiled by Mathilde Tagger.....	XXVII
<b>Abstracts of Foreign English Journals</b>	
Compiled by Meriam Haringman.....	XXVIII

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## Editorial

The Israel Genealogical Society hosted the first National Seminar on Jewish genealogy in November 2005, and we are pleased to begin to publish with this issue articles based on lectures that were delivered on that day. We present two articles that do not deal with genealogy itself but with two of the many essential aids that are crucial to the researcher: sources and institutions. Ms. Sherry Kisos deals with the extensive material that one can find through the International Tracing Service, also popularly known as the Arolsen files, in Arolsen, Germany; Ms. Beryl Baleson describes the South Africa Centre for Jewish Migration and Genealogy, an important institution that provides information for those researching Jewish genealogy in South Africa. It was established within the framework of the University of Cape Town.

Two other articles cover institutions: one located in the city of Yavne, which was noted both in the past and present for its important intellectual achievement, is Casa Shalom, an institution of Jewish, educational and genealogical importance. Its goal is to study the genealogy of the descendants of the Conversos around the world and to ease the return to Judaism of those who want to take that step. The director of the institution, Ms. Gloria Mound, describes the wide scope of its activities and expresses the wish that the wider public will visit and join in this endeavor. I fully support her aspiration.

The second institution featured in this journal is far better known but it is certainly in place to mention it over and over – the Jewish National Library in Jerusalem. Gilda Kurtzman and Susan Edel describe a successful visit to its various departments.

Certainly, this issue would not be complete without dealing at least at some point, even in a few articles, with the core of genealogy, that is the study of families, generations of the past and names. We are grateful to the journal *Et-Mol* for permitting us to publish the article by Dr. Chanan Rapaport who provides us with a general survey on the history of family names and their origin based on part on the studies of the late Jerusalem genealogist Dr. Paul Jacobi.

In the area of family research we are delighted to publish an article on one of the oldest and most eminent families – the De Rossi Family - *Min HaAdumim*. Its author, Ms. Leah Artom, has traced her family tree back to distant generations. The second article in this area is by Dr. Edward Gelles describing the relationship between the Horowitz and Frankel families. The third item does not exactly discuss family research, but deals with its results – the large family reunion. Ms. Harriet Kasow arranged a reunion of her mother's family, Belfer. The backdrop of the reunion was a Bar Mitzvah in Philadelphia of one of the grandsons. In moving terms she details the preparations, difficulties as well as both the significant and the small celebrations that resulted.

I wish to call three more things to your attention:

Ms. Mathilde Tagger summarizes the activities of the Sefardi-SIG of the Israel Genealogical Society for the 2004/2005 year. Their meetings were important and interesting. I complement Ms. Tagger on her dedication to this endeavor and hope that the other SIGs will follow her example and report on their activities to us.

I am pleased to point out that the short reports from the lives of rabbis retold by Dr. Yehuda Klausner have become a regular feature.

After a one issue hiatus, we return to providing summaries of articles that appeared in English language genealogical journals. As you see, Ms. Meriam Haringman is now doing the summaries and we wish her well on her new endeavor. The French and Spanish journal summaries continue to be prepared by our loyal member Ms. Mathilde Tagger.

These lines are written while we are already into the second official week of winter. We even have had heavy rain and we anticipate more. I extend to all of our readers a pleasant and warm winter, but not at the expense of rain which we need a great deal of. Even the High Priest of old, during his prayers in the Temple on Yom Kippur when he asked God for rain, would add "give us rain and do not consider those who travel on foot." Like ancestors of those days, we would like dry roads but rain is essential for so many things that those who travel will have to adjust to it.

**In the name of *Sharsheret Hadorot* I congratulate from the depth of my heart  
the veteran members of the Israel Genealogical Society  
*Ms. Mazal Linnenberg-Navon, Mr. Shmuel Even Or and Attorney Shmuel Shamir*  
who were awarded the title of Distinguished Member of the Israel Genealogical Society.  
May you be blessed with many years of good health and continued activity.**

*Yocheved Klausner*

## From the Desk of Chana Furman President, Israel Genealogical Society

We, the members of the Israel Genealogical Society and our friends, welcome the appearance of Volume 20:1 of *Sharsheret Hadorot*, which marks the end of the first twenty years since the initial issue appeared. We have great expectations for the next twenty years and begin with a new cover for our journal.

There is another reason for celebration. The first national seminar of Jewish genealogy "Family Roots in the Land of Israel and in the World," which took place on Monday, 26 Heshvan 5766 (28 November 2005) at the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv was an extraordinary success that drew a large and wide-ranging group of participants. Our thanks go to Mr. Harvey Krueger of the United States whose generosity and sponsorship made the seminar possible.

We express special appreciation to the members of the Projects Committee – Mrs. Mathilde Tagger, Dr. Martha Lev-Zion and Mrs. Rose Feldman who worked day and night in constructing, planning, coordinating and developing plus worrying about the logistics in order to have everything ready. It was a job very well done. We convey our gratitude to all of our volunteers who were on duty the entire day of the seminar.

The seminar opened with a special ceremony. Mrs. Esther Ramon, Honorary President of the Israel Genealogical Society and one of its founders awarded special recognition to three of the founders and builders of the IGS, Mrs. Mazal Linnenberg-Navon, Mr. Shmuel Even-Or and Mr. Shmuel Shamir who were each granted the title of *Yakir IGS* [A Distinguished Member of the IGS].

In her opening words at the ceremony, Mrs. Ramon focused on the individual contributions of each of the honorees, from the very inception of the IGS to now. She also told of their own backgrounds and connected it to their personal family research. Attorney Shmuel Shamir responded in the name of the three and vividly reviewed the beginnings of the organization pointing out its difficulties and successes and the continuous growth of the IGS over the years.

Returning to our day-to-day activities: At the 2005 General Meeting of the IGS, we extended our appreciation to Mrs. Meriam Haringman who having served as secretary of our society for the past three years has retired from that position. Dr. Leah Gedalia was elected as our new secretary and we take this opportunity to wish her well.

The Yad Vashem site - the database of names on the Internet: readers in Israel are invited to help locate the submitters of the pages through our site [www.isragen.org.il](http://www.isragen.org.il) going to Search for Submitters of Pages of Testimony in Israel.

Additional volunteers are needed to continue our plan to transfer archival materials to a database. For details and explanations on the project please contact Rose Feldman at [rosef@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:rosef@post.tau.ac.il)

This is also another opportunity to thank all of those who are already involved in the undertaking.

Please DO NOT FORGET to keep us informed of any changes in your address, telephone or email. My address is [ehfurman@netvision.net.il](mailto:ehfurman@netvision.net.il)



**The Rossi, De Rossi Family**  
**From Jerusalem to Rome and from Rome via a Long Trip to Eretz Yisrael**  
*Leah Artom*  
Translated from the Hebrew

It is quite a privilege for me to be a member of the MIN HAADUMIM (in Italian ROSSI or DE ROSSI) family. An additional honor is that my family went directly from Jerusalem to Italy after the destruction of the Temple and that I have returned from that exile to Jerusalem where I have been living for nearly sixty-six years. Additionally, I was able to research the history of my family over a very extended period of time: tradition tells of several patrician Jewish families, among them the *Min HaAdumim* (Rossi or De Rossi) family that was exiled to Rome after the fall of Jerusalem. There are no records dating from that time but every history volume repeats this story citing contemporary testimony.

I learned of the origin of our family from my father while I was still a schoolgirl in Italy. I did not pay too much attention to it at that time, but I remembered his words later when I arrived in Israel and was again told of the special standing of my family. Only after I began my genealogical research, did I discover that my father's account was not simply a 'story,' and I could take pride in my family's aristocratic lineage. It is too bad that my father is no longer living and that I am unable to relate to him what I learned about the past history of our family over the course of hundreds of years.

I was aided in my research most significantly by the documentation I found in various archives: in Jerusalem at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People and at the Hebrew University; in Italy at the Government Archives in Rome and Ancona as well as in the Jewish community archives of these cities.

I found out that although in Hebrew and especially in religious memorial services the name always appears with the prefix, *Min HaAdumim*, some families in Italy dropped

the 'de' and used only Rossi. I could not find out why or when this happened as I found no reference to this even in documents where the full name appeared in Hebrew and only the name Rossi appeared in Italian.

As I mentioned, there are no surviving records about our family from two thousand years ago but I did find family records from nearly five hundred years ago. It is not possible to create an unbroken family tree but I was able to trace the generations starting from my generation to 1699 based on confirmed records.

In my research, I found evidence of the name Rossi in Southern Italy and in Sardinia. Rossi is the most prevalent family name in Italy, but not all of them are Jews. One reason is that assimilation was widespread throughout this time. This is not the place to deal with that phenomenon. In Rome, there are still Jewish families belonging to this family and I met several of them. Over the years some of them moved north and we can find them present in various cities in central and northern Italy.

What prompted Jews in general and among them members of the *Min HaAdumim* family to wander from place to place? We can point to various reasons: persecutions, monks sent by the church to incite the simple people against the Jews, the need to find a way to make a living by lending money to farmers, the possibility of getting protection from the lords of the smaller provinces who were grateful to the Jews for financing their wars with their neighbors and more. In the Middle Ages, Jews were found in isolated villages were only a few families, just enough to make up a minyan and preserve Jewish tradition, lived.

I would like to point out some of the information about the *Min HaAdumim* family that is based on documents I studied and in available literature.

I was able to trace the presence of the family in Rome in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and in 1269 in Ancona, the city of my birth. I located a *Sliha* (religious penitential poem) on the occasion of the earthquake that occurred in that year in that city composed by Shlomo Min HaAdumim. He was the son of Moshe the son of Yekutiel of Rome. This indicates that a branch of the family moved from Rome to Ancona at this period. Shlomo ben Moshe was an educated man; his wife was Paula Min HaAnavim, a well-known family that was also among the exiles from Jerusalem. In literature she is listed with the name *manuensis*, that is copier of ancient Jewish books. I discovered that after Paula gave birth to two sons, her husband died and she gave birth to a third son after his death. She subsequently remarried.

Among the members of the Min HaAdumim family living in Rome we can mention a few noteworthy personalities: Immanuel ben Shlomo, a *paytan* (composer of religious liturgical poetry) who lived between the years 1200-1300; in the 14<sup>th</sup> century there was Moshe ben Yekutiel the author of *Sefer Hatadir* that includes laws and determines with exactitude the text of synagogue prayers. This book served as a trustworthy guide for the order of prayers for hundreds of years. It was written between the years 1373 and 1390, copied in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and is found in manuscript form in the Palatina library in Parma, Italy in the De Rossi collection bearing number 2999.

There was a strong attachment among Italian Jews to the Land of Israel and numerous famous travelers went there as pilgrims. Among them were David Min HaAdumim who left the city of Cesena with his sister Hannah, his wife Sara and his family. After many adventures – his son was kidnapped by thieves and freed afterwards in Cyprus, his brother-in-law died in Sidon – he finally arrived at Safed. In a letter from him dated 1535, he writes an account of the journey, about the commercial status of the city and about the clear air that cured his wife. Ya'ari quotes this letter.

In the Government Archive in Rome there are documents that refer to a woman by the name of Giulia De Rossi and her property located in the area of the city that later became the Ghetto. In Archivio Capitolino also in Rome, I found a notarized document without a date and with its end missing but bound with other papers from the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It speaks of the same woman and the notary seeks help from anyone who knew her while she was still alive. He requests testimony on the possessions that became hers after the death of her father, mother and brothers. After her death, these possessions passed to the nuns of S. Lorenzo in Panisperna. I searched other archives in an attempt to find documents dating from the same period and I contacted the nuns in the hope of finding something more about this incident, but I came up with nothing. No one knows where the documentation can be found since in the time of Napoleon the nuns moved to a different location.

As I stated, members of the Min HaAdumim family migrated to various locations in Italy and appear over time in assorted cities, for example: Rubeus Salvetus who lived in Ferrara in 1310, Menahem Min HaAdumim the son of Elia, a Torah scribe whose son was also a Torah scribe who lived in Forli, and others.

Later, we find Azariah Bonajuto, who in a letter appears as Zaccaria Bonajuto, the son of Moshe Min HaAdumim who lived between 1513 and 1578. He was born in Mantua (Mantova) and lived in Ferrara. He was a rabbi, physician, an expert in the Italian, Latin and Greek languages and also studied archeology. He left us various works, the most famous of which is *Meor Einayim*, which caused great controversy in its time because of his critical philosophical ideas. Reading this book was forbidden to all until they reached at least the age of twenty-five. It was first published in 1574 and was not published again for two hundred years. He also composed the inscription on his tombstone. He was the father of three daughters. I have in my possession a copy of

a letter dated March 14, 1576 to a priest named Stefano Cattaneo from the city of Novara, where he thanks him for the money sent in exchange for the book which he had sent to him. In addition, he writes to the priest that he is sending him other works and compliments him on his proficiency in the Hebrew language. The priest refers to Azariah Bonajuto Min HaAdumim as 'The Very Learned Rabbi.' The letter is found in the Government Archive of Parma, Italy. I was able to get a copy from the director of the archive whom I approached after reading an article. Among the things that Azariah Min HaAdumim claimed what that the origin of the word 'academy' was in Hebrew – eked + adam.!

Mention should be made of Shlomo Min HaAdumim (1570-1628) who lived in Mantua, the renowned musician. Among his compositions was *Shir HaShirim asher l'Shlomo* [The Song of Songs of Solomon]. He lived in the court of the Duke of Gonzaga. His sister was also a member of the court and a singer known as Madama Europa. Her children were also musicians. They moved to Piemonte (Piedmont) under the protection of the House of Savoy when wars raged in Mantua. Regarding the family in the city of Ancona, as I mentioned I was able to trace back from my generation to 1699, the year that Shabtai Min HaAdumim the son of Immanuel was born. It can be assumed that Immanuel was born around 1650.

During the persecution of the Jews in Italy during World War II, a number of descendants of the Min HaAdumim family were martyred in concentration camps. Liliana Piciotto Fargion in her book in memory of those who perished in the Holocaust lists nine members of the family who died in Nazi death camps.

Here I would like to call attention to Walter Min HaAdumim who was a partisan during World War II in the mountains of Northern Italy. He was twenty-one when he was executed by the Nazis on March 21, 1944 along with twenty-five of his comrades in the Piedmont region. He was so thin that his

partisan *nom de guerre* was Zanzara, mosquito.

My research is not yet over: there are Italian archives that I have not yet investigated, such as the Archive of the city Ferrara, Florence and others; the Jewish Community Archives in Rome was not yet organized when I was in that city. I could only review lists from 1868 and a little more.

I now have a computerized record of more than 1,100 names of people who are part of the 385 Min HaAdumim families. I have not yet completed recording all the lists; a great deal of work still awaits me.

\*The word *eked* means collection. During the Haskalah, when every effort was made to find a Hebrew word for every foreign language term, they used the phrase *Beit Eked Lehakhamim* – Collection or Gathering of Scholars, for academy.

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*Leah Artom, nee Rossi (Min HaAdumim) was born in the city of Ancona, Italy. At the age of four her family moved to Bologna where she completed her studies in government schools. Prevented by anti-Jewish legislation from entering the University and because of the persecutions she settled with her family in Eretz Yisrael in 1939 studying at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She married Rabbi Menahem Immanuel Artom in 1942. They had five children, four of whom are still living, and are blessed with numerous descendants. She spent various periods of time in Italy because of her husband's responsibilities as he was selected as a teacher and chief rabbi in Venice and Turin. There she began her research into the Artom family and published a book on her findings*



based mostly on notary documents from over four-hundred years. After the death of her husband, she published a book in his memory in Hebrew as well as a book in Italian. She

lives in Israel; during her various periods in Italy she devoted time researching her family, a project that she has not yet completed.



## Gelles of Brody and some Fraenkel - Horowitz Connections

*Edward Gelles*

### Introduction

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries my father's people were dispersed to distant corners of the Austrian Empire. My grandfather, Nahum Uri GELLES, was the Rabbi of a small Galician town. His line went back to Brody where a sizeable Jewish community once flourished. A progenitor of the Gelles rabbinical line was (Moses) Menachem Mendel Levush also known as Moses Gelles, after his father-in-law, a Rabbi Gelles.

Moses Gelles around the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was a scholar of the study group known as the Brody *Klaus*. The Levush epithet, used by some of his family for several generations, was the name given to the 16<sup>th</sup> century scholar and community leader Rabbi Mordecai YAFFE of Prague after the title of his major work. Two grandsons of Moses Gelles married respectively a daughter of Rabbi Pinchas SHAPIRO of Koretz (1726-90) and a descendant of Chief Rabbi Shmuel HELMAN of Metz (ca 1670-1764). Brody connections included the families of Rabbis Yehoshua-Heschel HAKOHEN and Yehuda ZUNDEL, and the MARGOSHES. A granddaughter of Moses Gelles married Rabbi Meir Shlomo FRAENKEL, of Brody. The present article deals with Fraenkel and HOROWITZ connections.

### Fraenkel

Numerous families that came to Poland centuries ago adopted the name Fraenkel as an indication of their German origin. The Fraenkels of Przeworsk spread to other

Galician towns including Rzeszow and Brody. They were also found at Sanok and Linsk. One of the branches retained their original name of ENGELHARD and some of them carried epithets such as *Reisher* (coming from Rzeszow) or *Pashawer* (from Przeworsk). A kinsman was Chief Rabbi of Grodno and they produced rabbis in Shidlow, Tysmenica, Przeworsk, and elsewhere (Wunder 1978).

Abraham Zeev Wolf Fraenkel (ca 1780-1849), author of *Meshiv Kahalacha*, was a Dayan at Brody before becoming ABD of Przeworsk. His first wife was a descendant of Rabbi Shmuel Shmelke Horowitz of Nikolsburg and his second wife was a daughter of David NATHANSON, Rabbi of the Tailors' Synagogue in Brody (*Arim Veimahot Beisrael*). Abraham Zeev Wolf Fraenkel was a son of R'Benjamin of Linsk and Rzeszow, described as a wealthy man of good lineage. The latter had a brother Moshe Fraenkel of Przeworsk whose sons included R'Dov Ber Fraenkel of Brody. The records of the Brody Beth Din reveal that R'Dov Ber of Brody was the father of Rabbi Meir Shlomo Fraenkel, a son-in-law of Josef Gelles, son of Moses Gelles. In another reference to the relative affluence of the Fraenkels, a sister of Rabbi Meir Fraenkel is described as the wealthy Finkel, wife of Reb Wolf Bolechower, who sold one of her thirty five synagogue seats to establish a trust in memory of the late Feige, daughter of Rabbi Yoshua Heschel Hakohen and wife of Michel Levush, son of Moses Gelles. Evidently, the branches using the names of Levush and / or

Gelles formed a close-knit family in that period (Records of Bet Din).

Blume Engelhard-Fraenkel, daughter of Nathan Pashawer Fraenkel, was a first cousin of Rabbi Meir Fraenkel. She married Yakov Shaya LOEW whose family had lived at Sedziszow (Shendishew) for several generations. Two of the later Loews succeeded each other as head of their community and town mayor [LOW family papers including notes by Willy Zeev Low were made available to me by Ms. Marilyn Schmitt Low].

These Loews first came to my attention as a family connected with my mother's people. My maternal grandmother Chawa WAHL was a sister of Blume Wahl who married a Loew. Their son Dr. Abraham Loew (1891-1954) was a first cousin of my mother, Regina Griffel (Gelles 2002). However it was the Fraenkel connection with my father's Gelles family that first led me to examine the Fraenkel - Horowitz nexus.

#### **Horowitz**

The ancient family, believed to be of Sephardic origin that took its name from the Bohemian town of *Horovice* in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, flourished in Prague and later in Poland developing many branches and separate rabbinical dynasties. Meir Horowitz of Tykocin (known as the *Maharam of Tiktin*), who died in 1746, became head of a line that harks back through his mother to Yoshua ben Joseph, the author of *Meginei Shlomo* and *Pnei Yoshua*, and through his first wife to Saul Wahl and Judah Loew of Prague. The Chasidic FRIEDMAN dynasty of Ruzhin is descended from his second marriage to Matel, the daughter of Efraim Zalman KATZENELLENBOGEN.

Grandsons from his first marriage include the Chasidic Rabbis Shmuel Shmelke Horowitz of Nikolsburg (1726-1778) and Pinhas Horowitz (1730-1805) of Frankfurt, as well as their first cousin Isaac Horowitz (1715-1767), ABD successively in Horochow, Glogau, Brody, and Hamburg. Isaac's wives were Reize LANDAU, Raitza BABAD, and her niece Beile Babad, and a total of

seventeen children are mentioned in the literature. Eleazar and Beile were from his marriage to Raitza, the daughter of Jacob Babad.

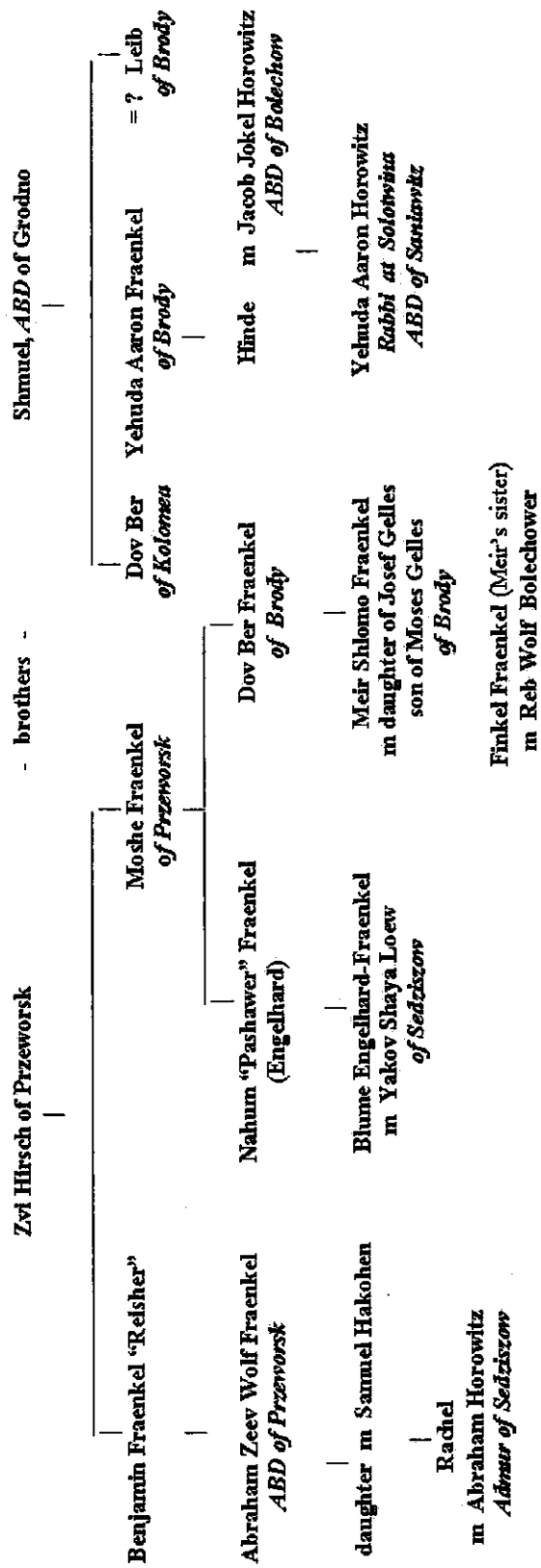
Eleazar was the progenitor of the Horowitz rabbinical dynasty in Stanislaw and Beile, who married Menachem Mendel RUBIN, ABD of Lesniow and Linsk, was the forebear of several rabbinical lines. Her son Naftali Zvi Rubin was the founder of the Ropshitz dynasty and grandfather of the first Admor of Sedziszow, Abraham Horowitz (1823-1905), who married a granddaughter of Abraham Zeev Wolf Fraenkel of Przeworsk. A letter from Rabbi Meir Horowitz of New York, a great-grandson of Abraham Horowitz, addressed to Max Low dated 6 September 1966 sets out his descent from Abraham Zeev Wolf Fraenkel (the name written in earlier times as LEV or LAAV, became the family name Loew, later anglicized to Low). Another son of Beile Horowitz and Menachem Mendel Rubin was Jakob Jokel Horowitz (1773-1832), the ABD of Bolechow. A son from the latter's first marriage to a daughter of Menachem Nahum ZAUSMER of Stryj was Efraim Fischel Horowitz (ca 1790-1860), who became ABD of Munkacz in Hungary (Wunder). His father's later marriage to a daughter of Yehuda Aaron Fraenkel of Brody gave him a half-brother Yehuda Aaron Horowitz, who was a Rabbi at Solotwina for some time (Wunder).

Rabbi Zvi Aryeh WEINSTEIN became ABD of that town after Horowitz moved to the neighboring province of Bukovina in about 1859. Weinstein's daughter Esther married my grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles. He succeeded his father-in-law in Solotwina on the latter's death in 1884. That is the starting point of the rabbinical succession at Solotwina and the family nexus dominated by rabbis of the Horowitz and Babad families (Gelles 2005).

These connections are described in my forthcoming book *An Ancient Lineage – European Roots of a Jewish Family* to be published by Vallentine Mitchell.



Horowitz-Fraenkel-Gelles



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*Dr Edward Gelles was born in Vienna. He fled with his family to England in 1938 where he has lived ever since. He has a doctorate from Oxford University. He was a research scientist and art dealer. He is now devoting himself to writing about historical and genealogical matters. A book on his family including Gelles, Griffel, Wahl, Chayes, Safier, Loew, and Taube is in preparation.*



## Casa Shalom -The Institute for Marrano-Anusim Studies

Gan Yavneh Israel

*Gloria Mound*

The origins of the work conducted today at Casa Shalom are perhaps unusual, but it is an entity that has within a few years made considerable strides, becoming both internationally and academically respected and a clear example of how unexpected events can be a catalyst for unique and important research.

The whole concept was initiated almost as a holiday hobby in the Spanish Balearic Islands of Ibiza and Formentera, known as the Pitiüses Islands, in 1978, when it emerged that within these backwaters Jews had been protected by the Islanders and survived from after the expulsion in 1492 until modern times. Jewish customs and ritual were discovered, along with documents, including a 14<sup>th</sup> century Megillat Esther, now undergoing restoration by the Spanish Government. That along with the revelation that four buildings had been secret synagogues, some in use until the Civil War

in 1936, the importance of the discoveries began to be appreciated more widely. Within a few years the research expanded to the larger Balearic Islands of Majorca and Minorca. See our informative web-site at [www.casa-shalom.com](http://www.casa-shalom.com)

From the Judeo-Spanish Conference at Glasgow University in March, 1984, the Department of Hispanics has taken a positive interest in the ongoing research. Since 1988 Gloria Mound has been nominated annually an Honorary Research Fellow and each Head of Department has sat on the Board of Casa Shalom. The Institute has been supported since its inception in 1994 as an amuta [non-profit organization], by Mr. Elie Schalit and the JNF UK and the Neil Davis UK Charitable Trust. Its main support continues to be through its wide international membership and stalwart band of volunteers. Such valuable assistance enabled research in Spain, Portugal, the United States, Canada,

the Caribbean, South America and Africa, culminating with meeting people with hidden Jewish origins and the collection of valuable genealogical data about past and present families and communities.

Local volunteers assist in translations and general office activities. Much time and effort is given over to E-mail enquiries and help with genealogical searches as we hold considerable onomastic dossiers and have published and lectured widely. To all questions we reply as helpfully as possible, using our unique database. Because of our limited budget we can only continue research if the enquirer becomes a member of Casa Shalom. The membership charge is very small. We have a sliding scale starting at \$36 per year, which includes our free journal with reduced rates for other publications and off-prints. We are always most careful to be discreet and keep the privacy of those that desire it.

Visitors have been welcomed from all over the world, many from families of hidden Jewish background, desirous learning more about their Jewish heritage. From our Institute's limited resources, books, *Mezuzot*, *Talitot*, candlesticks, Hebrew textbooks, dictionaries and other items are often requested and sent to many parts of the universe. There are plans to hold more seminars, open days and tours to places of Jewish interest, some hitherto unknown.

While each area of the research has a distinctive personal history, the constant theme has been the tenacity of the Jewish faith. Today, whilst perhaps not large by comparison with some, a unique library and photographic collection as well as audio cassettes and archival material have been amassed during extensive travel and research. Except for a small amount of paid secretarial help all other assistance is given on a voluntary basis. Accumulating new information on a daily basis, as well as aiding those who seek answers to questions on Jewish identity and ritual occupies many hours. At all times we endeavor to assist scholars and students with information. The enquirer's initial question frequently leads in

turn to the enrichment of our research data about Marrano life and practices. In the nearly thirty years since we began our investigations, we have contributed to a number of prestigious publications, including the *Encyclopedia Judaica Year Book*. We have also attended innumerable conferences in Israel and abroad. The fact that we are able to supply so much firsthand personal material has meant that our lectures have proven very popular. They make history come alive to all levels of audiences, both for adults and children, and especially where there are problems of Jewish identity. A large number of papers on all facets of Marrano-Anusim studies have been published and more are forthcoming. Increasing attention is given to the Holocaust and how refugees fleeing the Nazis were helped by local secret Jews.

In 1997 the first of *The Casa Shalom Member's Journals* was published and received many accolades for its high standard and new material contained therein. It has also proven to be a lifeline to so many isolated Marranos-Anusim in many parts of the world.

Recently, one of our main projects has been the previously unknown early Jewish immigration to Florida/Cuba and Puerto Rico. The majority of this influx came from the northern Balearic Island of Minorca in 1768 through the Canary Islands when the British occupied both Florida and Minorca. Our findings have pushed back the previously accepted Jewish history some one hundred and fifty years. In a few cases, at the other end of the spectrum we have been fortunate enough to trace the present day descendants of some of these families. The work has been in association with the University of Miami's Department of Jewish Studies. We now hold a very large amount of archival material on this subject at Casa Shalom, showing important historical links to nearby American states like Louisiana and also to Cuba and Jamaica. From these areas new data continues to arrive all the time. We are deeply indebted to St. Augustine, the oldest city in the United States, which has shown such a positive interest in our research

and where so many of the Minorcan immigrants finally settled.

Our library has now a beautiful new extension, opened by Israel's 5<sup>th</sup> President Yitzhak Navon last January. It contains many important and rare items about Crypto-Jews not only in Hispanic countries, but also in places like Iran and Sao Tome Y Principe. The latter are two Islands off the Gulf of Guinea, where two thousand children between the ages of two and twelve years of age were taken in 1493 from Lisbon as slaves. Five hundred years later some vestiges of Jewish awareness and practices remain amongst the descendents of these children. We have also conducted seven Passover Sedarim for the Marranos-Anusim in the Balearic Islands.

In Israel, in addition to adult lectures a number of classes have been arranged in schools on the subject of Crypto-Jewish life with great success. Many children of immigrants to Israel are from a secular and mixed marriage in the former Soviet Union and endure serious identity problems. We are proud to help such students understand their heritage. With almost equal appreciation the lectures, always accompanied by unique slides and usually musical and interview recordings, have been even more successful in Europe and America. The question of those who wish to return to Judaism openly and lead a fully observant Jewish life is difficult and complex, but happily in the last few years our efforts to better acquaint the necessary authorities with the history and situation of *Anusim* are bearing fruit, but it often incurs expense on the part of Casa Shalom and therefore ongoing support is vital.

#### **Short Resumé of Casa Shalom Holdings**

Asterisk \* denotes that personal testimonies are also included.

#### **General and Anglo-Jewish History**

First edition *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1900-1906. Funk and Wangalls, NY) and other sets of early and modern Encyclopedias.

\* Research papers and photos of the late Rabbi Abraham Chaitowitz, recipient of the first United Synagogue (UK) Sir Robert Waley-Cohen Memorial Travelling Scholarship Prize in 1973. These papers include much material concerning findings in Churches and Monasteries on the Spanish mainland as well as Majorca.

Bevis Marks Records of Births Marriages & Deaths from inception of the Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews in London from 1660 until 1901.

Transactions and index of the Jewish Historical Society of England.

\* Extensive Anglo-Jewish and colonial books and archival material, including hitherto unknown Jewish settlement in the town of Banbury, UK.

All Fighters (Jewish) World-Wide Against Fascism in the Spanish Civil War Including the Lincoln Brigade. Freemasonry and Marranos Conference 2003.

#### **America**

\* Marranos in Boston, New Orleans, Florida etc. with Iberian links to remote places where Jews were sheltered for generations, Caribbean Islands and Brazil.

\* Florida Papers relating to early settlers and most important items relating to the Minorcan Immigration, Jewish practices, including manuscripts on families who later left for Cuba and other places in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico and Atlantic Islands. We also hold several testimonies about Crypto-Jewish practices in the Southwest part of the United States, Cuba and Puerto Rico.

#### **Mainland Spain and Canary Islands/Madeira, Morocco, Libya**

\* Lucian Wolf and Haim Beinart's works on the Jews of the Canary Islands.

\* Jews and secret practices, persecution, inquisition, food etc.

\* Papers relating to Jews in the Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Azores, Sao Tome etc., both past and present.

Achivos Espanoles Simancas. The Spanish National Archives is not open to the general public, but we were given access and hold in

addition to Spanish items, copies of documents relating to Italy with specific books on Sicily, Genoa and Venice.

\* Holocaust studies in relation to Spain, Portugal, Libya and Marranos in this period.

\* Statements from Marrano families.

\* Statements relating to Jewish life in Libya and Morocco.

### **Balearic Islands**

Copies of Jewish land sales and disputes prior to the official dissolution of the Jewish Community in 1435, from Santa Clara Convent (partly in Hebrew), Palma de Majorca. Movement of secret Jews from Majorca to Salonika and Italy, mostly Leghorn (Livorno) and Sicily.

\* Lives and ritual amongst the local secret Jews in Majorca known as *Chuetas*.

\* Minorca Genealogy, showing links to New Zealand and United States families. Copies of ancient Ketubot (Jewish marriage contracts) of Palma-De-Majorca, Minorca. Secret synagogaues, one discovered by Head of Jews Free School in 1930s.

Copies of fourteen fragments comprising 85% of a total 14<sup>th</sup> century Megillat Esther, found in Ibiza, now being restored by the Spanish Government.

\* Balearic Periodicals/newspapers/old films/photos including Freemasonry guide books.

\* Walter Benjamin's, Raoul Hausman's, Elliot Paul's sojourns in Ibiza 1932-36. Activities of the Nazis in Majorca & Ibiza both pre-Spanish Civil War & post World War II.

\* Information and works pertaining to the life of Baram, an Israeli painter and his artist wife Bella Brisel when they lived in Formentera in the 1950s/60/70s. Baram received the first officially permitted Jewish burial in the Pitiuses Islands for 500 years. Later buried on the Mount of Olives Jerusalem.

\* Works of Isodoro Macabich Llobet, Juan Mari Cardona, prime historians of Ibiza and Formentera.

\* Papers relating to Prince Luis Salvador of Hapsburg's life (1847-1915) and works on the Balearic Islands, and many other places

he visited and had homes. In all his travels he paid particular attention to a country's flora and fauna. Records of his finding of secret Jews in Ibiza; his unusual and somewhat bizarre friendship with Nathaniel von Rothschild of Vienna; copies of seventeen letters by Rothschild to the Prince etc.

Works of Nito Verdera and Rafel Bauza Socias and their theses that Columbus came from the Balearic Islands and was a secret Jew; copy of Columbus letter from Cuba in 1503, later translated into English (18c).

### **Portugal**

Archival material on the Islands of Sao Tome Y Principe, including some from the Inquisition archives in Lisbon relating to the sending of 2000 Jewish children to the Islands as slaves in 1493 and the residue of Jewish customs still remaining.

Information on past and present Portuguese communities, both open and secret.

### **Publications of Gloria Mound and Casa Shalom on the above subjects:**

We hold slides, cassettes, films, photos on most of the above subjects, including a number from pre-Spanish Civil War in 1936. Photos and testimonies of Republican bombing of the battleship Deutschland in Ibiza harbor in 1937.

Papers of family of Chief Rabbi of Bulgaria, Rabbi Moritz Grunwald, who was selected to be Chief Rabbi of the UK in 1892, but never took office because during the visit he succumbed to the flu and died. His son and grandchildren led secret Jewish lives in Ibiza from 1932 until modern times.

**In conclusion** I would like to say: We are a recognized non-profit organization, which aims to reach out to those of Jewish and non-Jewish origin who desire to know more about their Jewish heritage. We provide a hitherto unavailable facility, but only connect members to each other if **both** sides wish it. The Institute welcomes members to visit the Library by previous appointment. We have no lending facilities, but will gladly provide bona-fide members even by post with

photocopies at very low cost as not all who enquire from us have access to a computer. We look forward to welcoming you at Casa Shalom in the not too distant future.

*Gloria Mound was born in London in 1930. She studied in Spain 1985-88 and made aliyah with her husband Leslie in 1988. In the same year the University of Glasgow accorded her the honor of being an Hon. Research Fellow, which has been renewed each year since. Although most of her day is taken up with directing the activities of the Institute, she greatly enjoys being with her*

*children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, gardening and music. Her aim is to train a suitable person to carry on the work of Casa Shalom when she can no longer do so.*

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President Navon opening the library of Casa Shalom



## Family Names in Israel \*

*Chanan Rapaport*

Translated from the Hebrew

I was delighted when the bi-monthly historical journal *Et-Mol*, published by the Ben Zvi Institute (established by and named after the second president of the state of Israel) invited me to edit a new feature dealing with both historic sources and folkloristic aspects of Jewish family names. I believe that the topics discussed could extend the historical sources of Jewish immigration and contribute not only to the research of the Jewish family, but also to the study of the political science, sociology and anthropology of the world's Jewish communities.

Anyone of our readers who has researched the meaning or history of their name already is aware of some of what follows. Even so, we intend to collect and concentrate in one place what is known about Jewish family names and explain their etymology.

In contrast to what many assume, family names appear among Jews in various European countries as well as in North Africa at a relatively early period. The late Dr. Paul Jacobi, the noted genealogist who researched more than four hundred Ashkenazi Jewish families, divided the first thousand years of the appearance of Jewish family names, 700-1620 CE, into four main and eight sub-periods. In order to simplify the description we have focused on four main groups.

**The Founding Families:** The first grouping consists of families whose names appear between the years 700 and 1000. The names that follow are some of them: Kalonymides, Schimonides, Saltiel, Alfasi, Berdugo and others.

**Ancient Families:** These family names first appear between 1000 and 1450 and following are some of the names in this grouping: Rashi, Luria, Abulafia, Abarbanel, Rapaport, Livai-Loew, Spira, Sasson, Sarfati, Treves, Amar, Hakohen and more.

**The Old Families:** The third grouping consists of names that first come into use between the years 1450 and 1515. A sample of these names follows: Bacharach, Weil, Eger, Cordoba, Algranati, Oettingen, Guenzburg, Meisels, Catalan, Rothschild, Teomim and others.

**The Early Families:** These names first appear between 1515 and 1620 and include the following: Chayuth, Isserles, Barutdji, Benaroya, Klausner, Broda, Pardo, Oppenheimer, Schor, Trepero, Rivlin and others.

The family names mentioned above involved only a small portion of the Jewish people. The vast majority used personal names along with the father's name to refer to a specific person. The individual called to the Torah as 'Ya'akov ben Moshe' meant a specific person in that community who was called upon to receive the honor of fulfilling a religious obligation. This pattern continued until various countries resolved for a variety of reasons such as record keeping, organization, taxation, military service and many others to require family names for all inhabitants and especially for the Jews who dwelled among them.

Emperor Joseph II of Austria passed a law in 1787 requiring all Jews to adopt a German sounding family name. Jews in Silesia were required to do so in 1791. The Russian Empire passed a similar law only on 9 December 1804. Some thirty years later, on 31 May 1835 an additional law was enacted requiring all the Jews in the Pale of Settlement to adopt family names. Napoleon on 20 July 1808 ruled that all Jews were to adopt clear and permanent family names. The law in Poland requiring Jews to adopt family names dates from 1822.

Between 1807 and 1852, the German city-states, which were independent at that time, required the adoption of family names. The



first to do so was Frankfurt-am-Main in 1807, followed by Prussia in 1812, Saxony in 1834 and the last was Oldenburg in 1852.

It should be emphasized that the names that were in use prior to the above dates were recognized and legally recorded without any change.

The influence of both environment and culture in the pattern of determining the name is more evident in those names that pre-date the laws requiring their adoption but can also be seen in names adopted after the passage of these laws. Following are examples of each category:

1. Name determined by the name of the place where one was born, where he worked as an adult or the place he came from: The following indicate plains, districts or cities: Reis or Reiser from the Reis Plain; Grunwald – green forest; Halpern, Heilbronn – from the city of Heilbronn in Württemberg; Oettingen from the city of Oettingen located in the Reis Plain; Treves or Dreyfus from the city of Treves. There is no need to analyze obvious names such as Berliner, Warshavsky, San’ani, Hamburger, Alfasi, Frankfurter, Posner, Toledano, etc.

2. Names determined by the name of the family’s founder: Abramsohn – son of Abraham; Markus – son of Mordecai; Nahmias – son of Nehemiah; Heimann or Bibas in Ladino – son of Hayim.

3. Name determined by the mother, the central figure in the early family: We have a mother and her name is Sarah and the family name becomes ‘the son of Sarah’ or in Yiddish Surkis; the son of Rivke, becomes Rivkes or Rivkin; the son of Hannah becomes Chinitz and the son of Bat-Sheva (Bas-Sheva) becomes Bashevis.

4. Name determined by the profession or occupation of the family’s ancestor: The Hebrew name Katzav is in German Metzger (butcher), Doktorovitz – doctor; Hakim – doctor in Arabic; Rabbiner – rabbi in German; Haham – the term used for rabbi in Sefardic communities; Amar – builder in Arabic; Bauman – builder in German;

Alfandari – tax-collector in Arabic; Kaufmann – merchant in German; Barutdji – manufacturer of explosives in Turkish; Trepero – collector of old items in Arabic; Cohen and the variant Kaplan – clergyman in German; Attar – spice and flavorings merchant in Arabic and the list does not end here.

5. The family name is determined by the first letters of the father’s name (acronym) or by a position occupied by the founding father of the family: Rashi – Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki; Rambam – Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon; Hagra – the Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu of Vilna; the names Schatz – designated person to lead the congregation in prayer; Katz – righteous Kohen; Babad – son of the head of the rabbinic court; Shub – one who slaughters and inspects the meat, and Schor – one who slaughters meat and is a rabbi, etc.

6. A name chosen because of the beauty of the area in which the family lived, a nice sounding name or the name of an animal or object: Apfelbaum – apple tree; Himmelfarb – the color of the sky; Rosenberg – rose covered mountain; Berdugo – bud; Livai/Loew/Lowe – lion; Morgenthau – morning dew; Hammer – hammer; Gold – gold. Most of these names have a Germanic source.

7. A name derived from an anagram – reversal of the letters of the original name. Weil consists of the letters spelling of Levi. However, we know of some Weil families whose name originates from a town located in Southern Germany near Stuttgart.

8. Names determined by the shield on the façade of the house of the founder of the family: Rothschild – because of the red shield that was over the door of the family house in Frankfurt-am-Main and Gans – because of the goose [in German Gans] on the shield of the family house. The shield served as a means of identifying a particular house parallel to today’s use of numbers.

9. A name decided by a nickname of the family’s founder: Altmann – old man in

German; Kurz – a short person in German or its variant, Kutchuk – a short man in Turkish; Grossmann – a large man; Abulafia – healthy in Arabic; Klein – small in German; Zairi – small in Arabic and Gutmann – a good person in German.

10. Names set by the day of the week, month or season that had special significance for the family: Sonntag – Sunday; Montag – Monday; Mai – the month of May; Sommer – German for summer; Winter etc.

11. The name chosen because of a book written by an ancestor: Halevush – *Levushim*, ten volumes written by Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe and published between 1590 and 1620; Taz – *Turei Zahav* written by Rabbi David Halevi and published in Lublin in 1646; Shach – *Siftei Kohen*, written by Rabbi Shabtai Hakohen published in Krakow 1646/7; Hashelah – *Shnei Luhot Habrit* by Rabbi Isaiah Halevi Horowitz, published in Amsterdam in 1757; Bakh – *Bayit Hadash* written by Rabbi Joel Sirkis and published in Krakow between 1831 and 1840.

The actual names of the above rabbis are unfamiliar to many and they are mostly known by the names of the books they authored.

12. Name chosen by adopting the name of a different family: this generally occurred when people adopted the name of a prominent family with which they wanted to be identified. Many incidents of this type are known where the name Rapaport was chosen since a number of people wished to be connected with this famous family of Kohanim. This usually took place when a man married a woman who bore the name Rapaport and it was adopted at the urging of the father-in-law. However, there are other instances where a name was chosen without the existence of any marital connection between the two families. This is only one example of many.

13. The name was chosen for its cultural or nationalistic significance that the family wanted to emphasize. The Zionist movement

that unfurled the banner of the return to the ancestral homeland and the revival of the ancient Hebrew language had a negative attitude to family names that had any connection with the years in exile. We find, even before the state was established in 1948, a large-scale movement to change to Hebrew sounding family names. The most common change was to choose the Hebrew name of the father. Another approach was to match the sound of the two names. Thus the family name became Reuveni if the father's name was Reuven; Pinhasi for Pinhas; Shimoni for Shimon, etc. It is important to point out that the leaders of the pre-state Jewish community and subsequently the government set the example for those who came after them and initiated this trend. All of the 'Who's Who' followed. David Green became David Ben Gurion, Moshe Shertok became Moshe Sharett, Golda Mayerson became Golda Meir, Ben Zion Dinaburg – Ben Zion Dinur, Ziaman Aaronowitz – Zalman Aran, Zalman Rubashov – Zalman Shazar, Yitzhak Shimshelvitzevitz – Yitzhak ben Zvi, Rachel Lishansky – Rachel Yana'it, Levi Shkolnik – Levi Eshkol and many more.

This is a brief summary of a much wider field covering the sociology, history and folklore of Jewish family names of the various communities. In future issues, we will go into more detail learning about the origin of each family name on its own.

My deepest thanks to Mrs. Mathilde Tagger for her help on the subject of Sefardic and Oriental family names and to Mrs. Harriet Kasow for her help in locating the sources for this article.

\*This article first appeared in the quarterly *Et-Mol*, Volume 31:1 (183), September 2005, and is printed with the express permission of the publisher to whom we are grateful.

*Born in 1928, Dr. Chanan Rapaport served as a commander in the Haganah underground before and during the War of Independence and subsequently in the IDF. He holds a doctorate in Clinical Psychology*

and completed post-doctoral studies in psychotherapy and research in the United States. Between 1965-1982 he served as general and scientific director of Machon Szold – the national institute for research in the behavioral sciences. During those years he also served two Prime Ministers, Golda Meir and Yitzhak Rabin, as adviser for societal problems. He was the psychological adviser to the Minister of Education and Culture as well as the director of the

research program in the Ministry of Education and Culture. Today he is the director general of the Rapaport Research Center, which was founded in 1990. Since the death of Dr. Paul Jacobi, he has served as the executor of his estate. He is a member of the executive board that directs the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and the Paul Jacoby Center at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem.



### **Belfer Family Reunion** **An Example of Jewish Identification** *Harriet Kasow*

The descendants of Raisel, daughter of Aaron HASS (CHESSMAN) 1874-1924 and Yechiel BELFER 1876-1967, son of Mordechai got together on November 21, 2004 to have a family reunion. The venue was a brunch at a local hotel in the Philadelphia area and fittingly was part of a weekend celebration of the Bar Mitzvah of our grandson, Eitan Zvi.

The children of Raisel and Yechiel (Rosie and Charles) numbered six, Feiga (Fanny SCHUSTER 1900-1981), Motiou (Max BELL 1901-1971), Aron (Harry BELL 1903-1980), Henia (Anna RACHMAN 1908-1989), Chana (Jenny KULCHINSKY 1906-1941) and Hinda (Helen SADOFF 1910-1962). Helen was my mother. These official names were gleaned from the Ellis Island database from where I learned that they came from Bar, Ukraine. Yechiel had come in 1913 and went back one time. His three older children came in March 1922 and his wife and three younger children came in October 1923. These six children had nineteen children and these nineteen children in turn had fifty-three children. There are two more generations that are not finished.

The BELFER family had always kept in contact and resided mainly in the area of New York and New Jersey. Our family moved to Miami, Florida and some others followed. But as the years went by there was less and less contact except for those that lived very close to each other or who would make the winter trip to Florida and see family.

Living in Israel has made me more conscious of the importance of the family in Judaism. Remembrance and veneration are also qualities valued here. In addition, as a student of history I was curious about my roots. Volunteering at the Israel Genealogical Society has increased my knowledge of how to search and what to do to start a family tree. Being the second youngest of the nineteen first cousins, I started corresponding with them and accumulating family data. With the opening of the Ellis Island Database, I found all the information about the BELFERs as they all arrived to the United States via this gateway.

The first principle of family research is to ask the relatives for any information they have and record it. A genealogical software

program is essential and I chose Dorotree because I wanted to have Hebrew names and dates. It seems that one form of Jewish identification for the Jewish American family whose roots are from Eastern Europe is the tradition of assigning Hebrew names. Almost all the BELFERs have Hebrew names. This of course is an aid in genealogical research in tracing the sources for these names as they were usually named after relatives. The other and most important process was in the response to having the family reunion. I did nearly everything by e-mail or snail mail (the cost to call to the United States from Israel is an expense although I had some wonderfully informative conversations in this way). This "everything" consisted of first getting everyone's e-mail addresses and then pursuing family vital statistics. I had visited cousins two years prior to our reunion and told them that I would like to organize a family get together. The enthusiastic response to the idea reflected the interest of renewing family connections. The children of the first cousins have moved out of the New York, New Jersey and Florida axis following their respective dreams and aspirations.

The responses as reflected in the e-mail and snail mail correspondence that I have preserved range from the mere thank you to I would like to know what being Jewish is all about, as I only connect this with my grandfather (one of the six children) to the college children of mixed marriages who would like to hear of their ancestors. I also managed to coach from them stories they heard while growing up, and had also the help of a videotape made by my Aunt Anna who described life in the town and how they had to move to Romania during World War I and the pogroms and even factual evidence that my grandmother Raisel had siblings, some of whom died in the pogroms and none of whom came to the United States. This was invaluable if not always accurate but the basis for continuing research. I also prepared a forty page family history that included: how I got started in searching the family roots and history of the name Belfer, which means an assistant to the melamed in the

cheder. That must have been a profession of one of our ancestors. I included as well, the descendants' list extracted from my genealogical software program (Dorotree), addresses and other items extracted from the Internet including the Page of Testimony from Yad Vashem and the JNF Trees for Israel. If the family buys 900 trees we could have a garden named the Belfer Garden.

I sent out about one hundred announcements and the response was that sixty-seven relatives and spouses appeared. I had asked for pictures and they were displayed. I made a huge laminated family tree and hung it up along with an enormous map of Ukraine. I gave a short description of what I had done and the histories and t-shirts from Israel with the Hebrew names printed were part of the package for those wanting it.

For me, one of the most moving moments was seeing my first cousin who had not seen me in sixty-two years. The last time he saw me, my brother was babysitting for me in Brooklyn, New York. In many cases I met the children and grandchildren of my first cousins for the first time. Not all of our four daughters had met my cousins and this was a real joy to see all these young people in one place.

This was a modest enterprise that might not have come about if I had not lived in Israel these many years. My Jewish identification has certainly increased here past the point of no return. I hope to have another reunion in the near future to cement and maintain what was begun.

*Harriet Kasow is the Media Librarian for the Bloomfield Library of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the Hebrew University, Mt. Scopus. She is also the volunteer Librarian for the Israel Genealogical Society. She is retiring this year and will be spending a sabbatical year in the Philadelphia/New York area doing family research as well as visiting and organizing the next reunion.*

## Report of the Activities of the Sephardim-SIG of the Israel Genealogical Society for 2004-2005

*Mathilde Tagger*

Coordinator of Sephardim SIG

The Special Interest Group focusing on Sephardim was established in 1997 as a result of the Paris International Jewish Genealogical Conference where it was decided to attempt to develop genealogical study among Sephardim wherever they lived. The Sephardim SIG of the Israel Genealogical Society was the world's first to be established. The journal *Etsi* dedicated to Sephardic genealogy commenced publication in 1998 and two years ago, the Sephardic SIG in the framework of the British Genealogical Society whose center is in London came into being.

Following is a list of the meetings that the IGS Sephardim SIG conducted over the past year.

The first meeting took place in October 2004 in cooperation with the IGS Tel Aviv branch. The topic was the Chelouche family, which originated in North Africa and one branch of which settled in Eretz Yisrael in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Chelouche family was one of the founders of the city of Tel Aviv. The speaker was Dr. Or Aleksandrowicz a descendant of the family. The lecture was subsequently published in *Sharsheret Hadorot*, 19-3, 2005.

The second meeting was held in conjunction with the IGS Jerusalem branch in March 2005. It focused on the Sarfati family of Fez, Morocco, that dates back to early medieval France by way of Spain. The speaker, Dr. Vidal Serfaty spoke of his family, which is among the most prominent rabbinic families

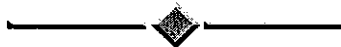
of Morocco. The surname Sarfati is found under various spellings.

Our third meeting together with the IGS Tel Aviv branch was held in July 2005. The topic was the Behmoram/Behmorash family that originated in Edirne, Turkey and from there, spread for the most part throughout the Ottoman Empire. The speaker Dr. Arieh Behmoram told about the family and detailed in particular the origin of the uncommon name that is in reality an acronym utilizing the first letters each word of the Hebrew phrase – 'son of our honorable teacher Rabbi Menahem.' This is a rare occurrence among Sephardic Jewish names. He reported that a family gathering was planned to take place in September in Istanbul, Turkey.

The main focus of the IGS Sephardim SIG is on Jews from North Africa and the areas of the former Ottoman Empire. This is clearly seen in the three programs it sponsored last year. In addition the Sephardim SIG submits articles for publication in our quarterly *Sharsheret Hadorot*. Its goal is to promote further Sephardic genealogical research.

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

[www.sephardicstudies.org/entrance.html](http://www.sephardicstudies.org/entrance.html)



**The Genealogical Holdings  
of the Jewish National and University Library**  
**A Visit to the Library**  
*Gilda Kurtzman and Susan Edel*

With the cooperation of Rosalind Duke, Chief Librarian and deputy director of the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL), an interesting and productive field trip to the JNUL for a group of avid genealogists from Petach Tikva took place in May 2005. The library, once under the auspices of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is now an independent government institution but is still housed in the same building on the Givat Ram campus.

The library has in its collection all material that has been published in Israel, and also books, periodicals and manuscripts that have been published outside of Israel but which relate to the history of the Jewish people, its culture, history, language, etc. The material is in all the Jewish languages, i.e., Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, (and also in other languages) and its collections of Hebraica and Judaica are the largest in the world.

Ms. Rachel Steiner of the Reference Department organized the trip and arranged for librarian Ms. Nurit Harvey to be our guide. We were graciously received by Ms. Harvey, who gave us an introduction to the history and services of the library. After that we were taken to various departments that are of special interest to Jewish genealogists. We first visited the Map Room and found a wealth of books of ancient and more modern maps. Although the librarians will not do personal searches, the Historic Cities Project aims to present documents, literature, books and maps of the past and future of historic cities and to make the location of them easily accessed on the web.

Our next stop was the Manuscript Room to view the many family histories collected by the late Rabbi Shmuel Gorr that have been generously donated to the library by Mr. Chaim Freedman. This collection has not yet

been catalogued and as such is unavailable except upon special request. It consists of:

- a) Research of families who retained Rabbi Gorr's research service. As his area of specialty was rabbinic genealogy, many rabbinical family trees are in the files.
- b) About 50 family tree scrolls drafted by Gorr.
- c) Data about *shadarim* (donation collectors) sent from Israel to Australia.
- d) Articles written by Rabbi Gorr on genealogical topics.
- e) Lists of donors to Shemesh Tzedakah in Jerusalem by the names of the communities abroad.
- f) Surnames (unpublished).\*

The Dr. Paul Jacobi collection of family histories is in the Main Reading Room and can be seen upon application to the librarians. The collection consists of monographs on 400 families, genealogy books and handwritten material amassed by Dr. Jacobi over a period of approximately fifty years of genealogical and historical research, mainly rabbinical. A catalogue of the collection is placed near the main desk of the library. Once you have found the reference to the family you are searching, the librarian will bring you the file.

At this point the group was taken to the Main Catalogue Room where we received an explanation of how to search on the computer, using the Aleph System. Adjacent to this room is a small room containing some reference books on topics of genealogy, Jewish history and Jewish names.

On the lowest level of the library are the Ancient Manuscript Room and the photocopy machines. Most of the manuscripts and books have been digitized and a list can be downloaded from the library website.

The catalog of Jewish publications can be found at <http://aleph500.huji.ac.il/F>

Other publications at  
[http://aleph500.huji.ac.il/F/?func=file&file\\_name=find-b&local\\_base=huj01&con\\_lng=eng](http://aleph500.huji.ac.il/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b&local_base=huj01&con_lng=eng)

A sample of some of the collections can be seen on the Internet:

The maps are at <http://maps-of-jerusalem.huji.ac.il/> and <http://historic-cities.huji.ac.il/>. The Ketubot (marriage contract) collection contains over 1200 items from countries all over the world, covering a period of 900 years. The address for this collection is <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/ketubbot/>.

At <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/newspapers/index1024.html> one can search for a subject from historic Israeli newspapers although only the issue number is given. However, this makes finding the articles much easier when you do visit the library. The National Sound Archives may be of interest to genealogists who want to get a feel for the liturgical music of the periods they are researching. By downloading MP 3, the researcher can actually hear the music. The link is: [www.jnul.huji.ac.il/eng/music.html](http://www.jnul.huji.ac.il/eng/music.html).

Our group felt the trip to have been very successful and worth more visits to investigate in depth the overview we received. They also found all the staff extremely helpful and recommend that all genealogists pay a visit the library.

\* Source: Chaim Freedman.

*Susan Edel has been researching her families in Germany for about four years. She can trace most of them back to about the 1760s and one branch back to the early 1600s. She is involved in several genealogy-connected activities including indexing the Frankfurt IRG cemetery and in helping to produce an updated Stammbaum of the Feuchtwanger family.*

*Gilda Kurtzman has been researching her families in Lithuania for about eight years. She can trace two of them back to approximately 1750 encompassing eleven generations. She is involved in several genealogical activities, mainly translating/transliterating cemetery databases for JewishGen (JOWBR) and the ongoing projects in Pusalotas.*

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**South African Center for Jewish Migration  
and Genealogy Studies \***  
*Beryl Baleson*

An initiative of Mendel Kaplan, a Cape Town businessman who attended the London 2001 Jewish Genealogy Conference was to set up a center primarily to research the estimated 15,000 core families who migrated to Southern Africa between 1850-1950 mainly from England, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia and Belarus. The center can be accessed at: [http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/CGI/CGI\\_ROOTWEB.EXE](http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/CGI/CGI_ROOTWEB.EXE)

The Center, *The South African Center For Jewish Migration And Genealogy Studies*, is

under the umbrella of the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Institute for Jewish Studies at the University of Cape Town and is solely an academic research institute. Upon completion public access will be available at *The Discovery Center*, South African Jewish Museum in Cape Town.

This Center is the first academic one in the world to study Jewish migration and genealogy. The aim is to conduct the study on a graduate level. Students and researchers are employed for data entry and research, with responsibilities to liaise with the South



African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, the South African Country Communities Project, Chevra Kadisha for burial data, the Beth Din, the Chief Rabbi's Office for marriage and other data.

The research focuses on the locations from which the families originated, patterns of migration to South Africa, where families first settled, the connections to the broader non-Jewish communities, subsequent movements, inter-relationships of families and places to where they have emigrated.

The thinking behind the inception of Jewish Migration and Genealogy project is therefore twofold:

To map the entire history of Jewish migration to and from South Africa and to integrate the genealogical data in multi-disciplinary research initiatives.

Names of former South Africans living in other parts of the world as well as input from these people will be most welcome.

At the **Discovery Center** easy, on-line access to information on Jewish origins, migration and settlement in South Africa will be provided. Information on family trees is available at the touch of a button and a useful directory presents details of modern-day Jewish life in Cape Town.

What you will find in the Discovery Center:

#### **The Roots Bank**

The Roots Bank of the Discovery Center was initiated as part of a greater endeavor - the Jewish Genealogy and Migration Center, a joint venture between the South African Jewish Museum and the Kaplan Center at the University of Cape Town. This project researches the histories of Jewish immigrant families and communities throughout South Africa - their origins, the migration patterns and ultimate destinations, including the families who migrated overseas.

The Roots Bank offers detailed information on Jewish origins in Lithuania, Latvia, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Migration module of the Roots Bank contains the names of some 56,000 emigrants

who passed through the Jews Temporary Shelter in London, as well as more than 1,000 Jewish names from various Shipping Manifests.

The Discovery Center also presents information on more than eighty South African villages and towns. The South African Jewish Museum, working in conjunction with the South African Friends of Beth Hatefustoth, continues to enhance this section as more research is completed. New information is also added to the Discovery Center on a regular basis. For example, the section on villages and towns in the Roots Bank now contains practical tourist information about synagogues in the Cape region. In addition to photographs, information on the current status of old synagogues, contact details, cemetery locations and census information is available. Information is also available on local museums with specifically Jewish content.

A new search facility provides access to the Family Trees section. Family tree information is enhanced on an ongoing basis, as visitors to the museum submit their details on specially designed forms. The Discovery Center has recently added a section on family histories. Information and photographs submitted by individual families are now on view.

#### **Submitting your family tree**

The South African Jewish Museum welcomes information you may have about your family history. If you want to share more extensive information please e-mail [info@sajewishmuseum.co.za](mailto:info@sajewishmuseum.co.za)

#### **Jewish Cape Town**

Information on the South African Jewish Museum, as well as the Kaplan Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Cape Town is accessible in the Discovery Center. The section on Jewish Cape Town provides an online directory of synagogues, kosher restaurants and suppliers of kosher food, institutions of Jewish education, Jewish communal organizations and cultural associations.

### Further information

For further information regarding the Discovery Center, please contact the South African Jewish Museum at e-mail: info@sajewishmuseum.co.za

\* This article is based on the presentation given at the IGS First National Seminar on Jewish Genealogy: *Family Roots in the Land of Israel and in the World*, Tel Aviv, November 2005.

*Beryl Baleson was born in Cape Town, South Africa to parents of Lithuanian and English/Latvian origin. She was active in the*

*Habonim Zionist Youth Movement and after matriculating in 1957 she spent a year in Jerusalem at the Machon Le'Madrichei Hutz La'aretz i.e. Institute for Youth Leaders from Abroad. Her further education included the study of English Literature and TEFL i.e. Teaching English as a Foreign Language. She and her family made Aliyah in 1977. Beryl has been actively involved in the South African Special Interest Group in Israel since 1999, first as the editor of its quarterly newsletter and now as the SA SIG Co-ordinator in Israel.*

balden@zahav.net.il

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## The "Arolsen Files" as a Research Source \*

*Sherry Kisos*

Since space is a premium, this paper will focus on practical aspects of the Arolsen files as a research source. There are three pamphlets published by the International Tracing Service (ITS) at Arolsen in Germany, which can be found in the Yad Vashem (YVS) Library and all include histories of the tracing service. The most concise and informative is the pamphlet from 1986. One can also find a very brief history on the website of the ITS.

Originally, the ITS files ("Arolsen" files) were brought to Israel on microfilm. In 2004, YVS decided to digitalize the files in anticipation of the 24<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, which would be held in Jerusalem that July. Until 2004, the files could only be viewed at the YVS Library in Jerusalem; once the files were digitalized, they could also be accessed at the Givatayim branch of YVS at Beit Wolyn.

The Arolsen files are basically index cards, which probably indicate sources for further

information. These index cards were started in the early 1950s by people at the ITS. They are not individual files. Individual files were not microfilmed and can only be found at the ITS headquarters in Arolsen. For those who are interested, one of the pamphlets written by Dr. Josef-Kurt Sella for YVS contains a complete list of all the material that was microfilmed.

Because of the nature of the cards, YVS decided not to incorporate the cards into existing material at YVS. The cards themselves therefore comprise a separate unit from other archival material at YVS. The original ITS order and coding was adopted and there is a master index of the cards. The cards themselves are arranged alphabetically-phonetically.

There is no standardization of the cards and the information appearing on the card depends upon the source of the original material, which also varies. There are records from Nazi concentration camps, hospital records, Displaced Persons (DP) records, Allied Forces' records, POW [prisoner of

war] records and search requests. There are records of people from almost every country in Europe – Jews, non-Jews and even Nazis.

There is obviously no search engine for the cards. One must go through each card on the reel in order prior to finding the name one is looking for. The spellings of the names vary, depending upon who was writing out the card and again, the source of the file. Names beginning with the letters “I” and “V,” non-existent in German, are incorporated into the letters “J” and “W,” respectively. Double consonants are generally ignored. If there are variant spellings, then it might be advisable to look through several reels.

The cards are usually in English or German. The German used is sometimes particular to the Nazi era and not in common use. One of the volunteers at YVS Givatayim created a three-page “dictionary” of these terms and abbreviations.

The information on the cards is also not standard. There are cards with only a last name and there are cards that list complete information on the person, including last known address in the native country. This is often the case when a person from outside continental Europe is looking for family in Europe.

We found a whole series of cards relating to one family, Goldflamm, from Warsaw, Poland, in which a brother-in-law in Los Angeles, California, was looking for his family. One finds cards for the entire extended family: parents and their siblings and the children. We know that it is the same family because the person requesting the search lists the addresses of each individual, as well as their relationship to each other and to the person requesting the search.

On all of these cards, the organization through which the search was requested is also listed, the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC.)

An even more interesting search was prompted by someone who is looking for his biologic mother. He himself was born in Munich in 1946, and then for some reason,

his mother left him in the Children’s Hospital in Munich. A year later, in 1947, he was sent to the United States for adoption. With the help of a friend from Germany, he traveled to Arolsen, Germany and managed to find his mother’s DP registration card. The card listed her original destination as England, but there was also penciled in a reference to Palestine, July 1946. I could not find the mother’s DP card at the YVS collection, but I did find the son’s card.

I compared the two cards and came to the very quick conclusion that there is absolutely no way that anyone could have connected the two people together. On the son’s card there is no mention of the mother’s or father’s name, just that he was in the Children’s Hospital; on the mother’s card, there was no indication that she had been married and had a child, but there was a number which indicated a personal file at the ITS.

We have asked the friend in Germany to see what she can find out about this personal file. We realize that the wheels of the ITS work very slowly; some would say, if at all. The original purpose of the International Tracing Service was to do just that: help people find their relatives in the aftermath of the Shoah. Today, the ITS sees itself in a different role and many people now question whether the archives at the ITS should remain in their present context or be moved to a different venue and under different auspices.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people who have helped make this research possible: Ms. Nadia Kahn, YVS Jerusalem, for “walking” me through my first reel of the Arolsen files; Mr. Zvi Bernhardt, also of YVS Jerusalem, for patiently answering all my questions regarding the Arolsen files; a special thanks to Ms. Chani Gatt, for making the YVS Givatayim Library a real home away from home; and last, but not least, to Dr. Martha Lev-Zion without whose pushing and prodding, I never would have done anything.

#### **Afterword**

There is no bibliography in the ordinary sense of the word. ITS published booklets and there are pamphlets put out by Yad

Vashem. One of the pamphlets can be downloaded from the ITS website.

One of our best resources for Holocaust research outside Israel is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Mr. Peter Lande recently wrote an article about the ITS and very kindly sent it to me before its publication. Ms. Ann Millin gave me some very helpful advice on where to look for more documentation.

There were several interesting highlights during the course of the research. I did things that were not within the normal framework of my daily schedule, nor did I ever expect that I would do them. I read books on subjects that I would not normally read and started looking for more books on those subjects.

But, the most interesting part was talking to people about the research and getting feedback. Many times, I was rewarded with many, fascinating stories that gave me a better perspective on the time frame in question.

Last, but not least, one of the by-products of this research, is a list of topics for further research, many of them are the result of

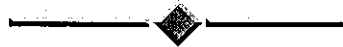
remarks and questions that I have heard during the research.

The website in English of the ITS is: [www.english.its-arolsen.org](http://www.english.its-arolsen.org)

One can also download the form for contacting the ITS from the website. I have been told that the best way to send the request is by post (regular air mail), not e-mail or fax. I would be interested in knowing if anyone ever gets an answer.

\* This article is based on the presentation given at the IGS First National Seminar on Jewish Genealogy: *Family Roots in the Land of Israel and in the World*, Tel Aviv, November 2005.

*Sherry Kisos first really became interested in the Arolsen files while working as a volunteer at the IAJGS Genealogy Conference in Jerusalem in July, 2004. She has looked through several reels of files in an attempt to help trace people for families outside Israel. Originally from New York, Sherry came to Israel over 35 years ago. She is married to Joshua, has eleven children and two grandchildren and lives in Petah Tikva.*



## **The Granddaughter Who Came on Aliyah with Her Grandmother \*** *Yehuda Klausner*

R'Shneur Shlomo Zalman the son of Levi Yitzhak SLONIM was born in 5609 (1849) in Hebron and died there in 5658 (1898). He was a sixth generation descendant of the Gaon Rabbi Eliezer GREIVER the Kohen (1744-1831) of Slonim, the son of Rabbi Ya'akov Sofer (d. 1765), a scribe and dayan (judge) in Pinsk and Ruzhany and the son in law of R'Eliezer Lipman ZAK as follows:

R'Levi Yitzhak of Slonim 1833-1895 of Hebron, the son of

R'Ya'akov Kulai SLONIM who settled in Jerusalem and died there in 1857 (his wife was Menucha Rachel b'Dov Ber SCHNEERSOHN the granddaughter of R'Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Hasidim and the first Lubavitcher Rebbe), the son of

Minya GREIVER the wife of R'Moshe Shlomo Zalman GREIVER-SLONIM of Shklov, the daughter of

R'Yitzhak Isaac GREIEVSKY the Kohen, the son of

R'Eliezer GREIVER the Kohen, mentioned above.

R'Shneur Shlomo Zalman's third wife was Sarah Gronya (born in Vilna) the daughter of R'Reuven Hertz JACOBSON; his first marriage was at the age of sixteen when his parents married him off to the daughter of his cousin, Leah Rivka the daughter of R'Yehuda Arie' SLONIM. This marriage failed, and his second marriage to the daughter of a distinguished family from Tiberias succeeded but after a short time his wife became ill and died at an early age.

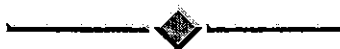
When the paternal grandmother of Sarah Gronya, Mrs. Batya Feiga the daughter of Reuven Hertz JACOBSON, was elderly, she wanted to move to the Holy Land and be buried there. Sarah Gronya's father asked his children which one would be willing to accompany her as she did not wish to be alone in Eretz Yisrael. The young girl Sarah Gronya agreed to leave her father's house and accompany her grandmother to Eretz Yisrael. They settled in Jerusalem and in 5635 (1875) at the age of sixteen, Sarah Gronya married R'Shneur Shlomo Zalman. Grandmother Batya Feiga died in Jerusalem on 1 Tammuz, 5641 (June 6, 1881).

R'Shneur Shlomo Zalman, an honest person loved by all, lived modestly and humbly. At about the age of forty he became ill and had to stop working, and his wife opened a business. In 5655 (1895), his father, R'Levi Yitzhak SLONIM died and in the beginning of the winter of 5658 (1898), R'Shneur Shlomo Zalman became ill and did not

recuperate. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month of Adar 5658 (March 4, 1898), he died and with great honor was laid to rest next to his father in Hebron. Mrs. Sarah Gronya, widowed at thirty-nine devoted herself to the education of her children. She was a righteous woman and until her final day she maintained her wonderful spirit and clear mind. At the ripe age of eighty-two on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Nisan 5601 (April 26, 1941) she died and was buried in Jerusalem. She was survived by seven children.

\* Based on M. Sh. Slonim, *History of the Family of the Rabbi of Liadi*. Tel Aviv, Zohar, 5706 (1946).

*Dr. Yehuda Klausner is a Civil Engineer with BSc, CE, MA from the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology and PhD from Princeton University. He served as Professor of CE at Wayne State University, Detroit and The Negev Institute for Arid Zone Research, Beer-Sheva and since 1970 as a practicing CE and Consultant, specializing in industrial structures and soil and foundation engineering. He published many professional papers and a book on Continuum Mechanics of Soils. He was recruited recently as Professor of CE at the new Department of Civil Engineering, Ben-Gurion University, Beer-Sheva. In 1982 he became interested in the genealogy of his family and from there in the genealogy of related and other families and now his database comprises several families, especially Rabbinic families, that he is researching. He published many articles on genealogical topics.*  
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## Abstracts of French Journals

Compiled by *Mathilde Tagger*

### Revue du Cercle de Généalogie Juive (France) Vol. 21, No. 82, April-June 2005

For the twentieth anniversary of Cercle de Genealogie Juive, **Rosine Alexandre** recalls the Society's first steps and her activities as the first Secretary General.

**Pascal Faustini** initiates a new range of studies. "The Allatini, a Sephardic Dynasty across Europe" describes the fate of this family originating in Italy. Its wealth dates back to Moïse Allatini (1809-1882) owner of industrial mills in Salonika. Faustini sketches their and their related families' family trees.

**Pierre-Andre Meyer** searches the missing link between the families Spire and Spire Levy in Metz. He starts from a family tree published by Pascal Faustini in his reference book "La communauté juive de Metz et ses familles (1565 - 1665) to find the origin of the compound surname Spire Levy borne in Metz by a family during the 18th century. Where do the lineages of Abraham Spire (d. 1705), prepose (parnass) and Goudchaux Levy (d. 1718), also prepose, connect so as to create Spire Levy? He assumes that Goudchaux Levy married Nénche (Nenchen), daughter of Abraham Spire, the couple bearing the brothers Isaac and Alcan Spire Levy, the first to carry the double surname in Metz.

**Eliane Roos-Schuhl** complements our knowledge of her ancestors Dispeck, originating in a homonymic village (Diespeck). Ilse Vogel, a recipient of the Obermayer German-Jewish Award has devoted herself to keep the Jewish past of the village alive.

**Sister Emmanuelle**, a famous Catholic nun who has spent her long life helping the poorest to survive, has contacted our Society about her Dreyfus ancestors from Mommenheim in Alsace. Ernest Kallmann, while providing her the available information, has established a personal contact. He discovers that the name Emmanuel pervades her family tree and wonders why his correspondent, proud of her

Jewish ancestors, has chosen it as her religious name.

**Eliane Roos-Schuhl** guides us in deciphering the letter-and-number riddle appearing in an entry of the Worms Memorbuch.

**Bernard Lyon-Caen** publishes an 1850 census of the Jewish population of the town of Tours, discovered during a visit to the city archives. Jean-Pierre Bernard informs us that the cemetery of Nancy has recently set up an index of 2500 names.

### Revue du Cercle de Généalogie Juive (France), Vol.21, No.83, July-September 2005

**Claudie and Jacques Blamont** have researched Charles Valentin Alkan's paternal and maternal ancestors. Thereby they complement and detail the information so far provided by the various musicologists who have written about this piano virtuoso (Paris 1813 - 1888).

**Pascal Faustini** draws on his knowledge of the Koblenz Memorbuch to provide details about the Lahnstein and Bernkastel families. They appear on the Metz /registre de bourgeoisie/ (census of Jews authorized to live in the town) in 1665.

**Philippe Danan** recalls Adolphe Cremieux (Nîmes 1796 - Paris 1880), French politician, minister and senator. During a debate about the Jews in Algeria he stresses the patriotism of 17 such Jews who sign a petition in Pernambuco (Brazil) in 1871. An attempt has been made to try to identify those who signed.

**Georges Halbronn** reviews, with illustrations, the progress of a projected Memorbuch of the Rosenwiller Jewish cemetery.

**Fernand Deray** presents the status of his transcription of the vital records in Constantine, Batna and Ain Beda (Algeria).

### GenAmi 32, June 2005

**Pr Jacques Dupont**: The Thirty Years War; a war which destroyed archives and killed many Jews.

**Micheline Gutmann:** This is the history of the Marcus family, from Poland to Paris.

**Francoise Tirot-Lion:** Parisian camps of Austerlitz, Levitan and Bassano (1943-1944).

**Liliane Loew:** Some civil records in Bas-Rhin 1784-1792 concerning Mertzwiller, Oberbronn, Uhrwiller.

**Michael Bernet:** The story about the name Feivish.

GenAmi 33, September 2005

**Levy, Anne & Olivier Cahen:** Abraham

Lazard, from Bohemia to Lorraine, his descendants in the United States.

**Levy, Lionel:** Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

**Walch, Guy:** Introduction to a personal genealogy.

**Katz, Bernard:** The origin of General Joseph Katz, from legend to reality.

**Bloch, Jean:** Extracts from the Historical Journal of Alsace.

**Gutmann, Micheline:** A story of cantors in Alsace; Descendants of Samuel Hirschel Weill-Stern.

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## Abstracts of Foreign English Journals

Compiled by *Meriam Haringman*

### Roots-Key, Summer-Fall 2005 Vol.25 No.2/3

The latest edition of Roots-Key has a number of family histories which reveal the individual and group experience of immigrant Jews in America. Among them are: Henry Cohn and the Gold Rush, Henry Klein's dynasty starting with clothes and ending up designing the DC-1 through DC-10 series of airplanes, Wolf Glotzer-Glosser's textiles in Johnstown, Pa., how the leather belt production of Karl Konig helped the North win the Civil War, the Hymes-Prince family of South Carolina, and the Freschl family whose hosiery business started modestly in Bohemia and they built it up in the United States, while here too the next generation went on to aerospace.

### JGSLI, Summer 2005 Vol.XVII, No.3 (Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island)

There is an extensive article on the two graves of Zeev Jabotinsky.

### Jewish Genealogy Downunder, Australian JGS, Vol.7 No.2, May 2005

A project to type over 300 pages of radio announcements made by Holocaust survivors in Poland just after the war is in progress. It should produce first-hand data.

### Jewish Genealogy Downunder, Australian JGS, Vol.7 No.3, August 2005

A family reunion of the Ottolanguitui/

Ottolenghi/Langley families was held in June, 2005 in Melbourne, Australia and written up in this issue. Previous information on this family appears at this website: [www.geocities.com/ottolanguitui2002/](http://www.geocities.com/ottolanguitui2002/) "The Strange Story of Rabiner Kupfersztuch" aka "Warschauer Rav" during World War II in Berlin unravels the connection between two brothers 60 years later.

### Dorot, New York, Vol.26 No. 3, Spring 2005

There are updates on the holdings of the New York Public Library especially concerning genealogy. See also website [www.nypl.org/research/chss/lhg/genea.html](http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/lhg/genea.html) Newly opened (June 11, 2005) are the files on the United States Navy and Marine Corps. All the problems in using the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, Germany are discussed.

Online News describes sites where information can be attained for: the Port of New York Immigration; 1925 New York State Census, Manhattan; New York City Vital Records Indexes; 1911 Canadian Census, Central Zionist Archives Catalog. NARA websites have been redesigned with plenty of hyperlinks. Very different is the Index of the Repressed concerning Jews from Poland who were deported to USSR.



**Shemot, The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain Vol.13 No.2, June 2005**

Three family sagas appear in this issue: the history of Myer Davis – the father of Anglo-Jewish history, the Marks family downunder and the Black family.

There is documentation on the Naturalization Record at the National Archives and how to go about getting the documents.

“Colney Harch: the Victorian Mental Institution” and “From Shtiebel to Showbiz” are among the more unusual articles.

**Shemot, The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain Vol.13 No.3, September 2005**

Much family research is described in this issue in relation to the following families: Eckmann-Teutsch; Magid of Dubno-Krantz; Czaprak/Gold; Eisenstein from Czernowitz; Kaplans from Lithuania to Scotland; Dubowitz of Pasvetin; Lyon-Titterman; and Seligmann-Bergmann.

Aubrey Jacobus describes Jewish education at the Bayswater Jewish School in London in its pre-war (World War II) years while Susan Miller deals with the Court Jews.

**Avotaynu, International Review of Jewish Genealogy Vol.XXI No. 2, Summer 2005**

The issue of ITS (International Tracing Service - Arolsen) seems to be of concern in a number of journals (both Dorot and Avotaynu) and needs to be examined with a fine comb. Peter Lande treats the issue in the article “Holocaust Closure; The Role of Germany and the Swiss Red Cross.”

Ronald Doctor informs the reader on how to convert documents written in Hebrew and Yiddish into English. Converting or transliterating is a continual problem. This very detailed article is a positive addition in the attempt to solve many of the difficulties arising.

Eileen Polakoff gives practical advice on how to build a family website.

Stephen Gaffin goes to a smaller town where Jews lived to examine the local Jewish press and what can be learned about people. He

brings concrete examples of his findings especially in the newspaper “Jewish Civic Leader” which was published in Worcester, Mass.

Alexander Beider gives his opinion about Onomastics in his review on two books that have come out by Lars Menk on German Jewish Names and Heinrich and Eva Guggenheimer which deals with the origins of all Jewish names.

**Stammbaum, Journal of German-Jewish Genealogical Research, No.27 Summer 2005**

Gerhard Buck explains how one can learn about the Jews in the Duchy of Nassau in the period before 1816. He explains his methodology, brings documents and concrete examples of different people who lived there such as: Abraham Feist, Abraham Mayer der Jungere and Abraham Mayer der Altere, der Camberger. This is the first of two articles.

In the article about self help in Chicago Lisa Thaler describes the lives of German Jews who came as refugees in the 1930s. There is an excellent bibliography of published and unpublished sources at the end of the article.

Werner Frank brings a variety of websites which support German-Jewish genealogical research on subjects such as: archives, societies, communities, general and families.

Anyone interested in finding German-Jewish periodicals online has only to go to

[www.compactmemory.de](http://www.compactmemory.de) Irene Newhouse

explains how to get the most out of the site.

Elizabeth Levy tells about the Wallach family originally from Witzenhausen and now in Israel and the United States while Senta Wallach Seligmann recalls Kristallnacht and Eli Samson finds the missing link between his ancestors in Bernburg and Wolfenbuttel. Charles Marx describes his family roots in Edelfingen.

Book reviews: Rescued from the Reich: How One of Hitler's Soldiers Saved the Lubavitcher Rebbe; Die Judischen Idsteiner: 1648-1806; The Emigration of German Jews to America in the Nineteenth Century and Through Turmoil to Tranquility.