

# שרשרת הדורות Sharsheret Hadorot

חקר תולדות המשפחה היהודית

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## *My Link*



When you receive this issue of *Sharsheret Hadorot*, the celebrations of sixty years of statehood will be behind us. The day before Israel's sixtieth birthday, we honored our fallen soldiers and civilians. The sole historic significance of the fourth of Iyar is the fall of the four kibbutzim of the Etzion Bloc, which protected Jerusalem's southern flank. The War of Independence took some six thousand Jewish lives, as people lost parents, children, siblings and friends. One who was born barely ten weeks before independence but never saw his father, who fell in Gush Etzion, is Shilo Gal, whose article about his father's family appears in this issue of *Sharsheret Hadorot*.

When I first spoke to Shilo about this article, I thought that the main point of interest would be how he completed his genealogy research despite his recent handicap. But the first draft of the article brought up a different point entirely. We, in the genealogy community, have certain ways of doing things. We have genealogy databases and gedcoms, we have our resources and discussion groups and archives and meetings and we think we know how things are done. But many others do their family research without knowing any of these things and it is useful for us to be aware that such researchers are out there and how they work. Shilo's article gives us a glimpse through that window. For that reason, I did not change the simple title of his article "Writing a Family Tree."

A second article illustrating how the writer did his research is from Gidon Levitas, the new president of the Netanya branch of IGS. Gidon traces his family from Lithuania to Eretz Israel, on to South Africa and back to the State of Israel.

Reports on meetings are generally consigned to the back of *Sharsheret Hadorot*, but Martha Lev-Zion's report on a Negev branch field trip to Yad Vashem for a hands-on introduction to the newly released Arolsen records is an exception. I participated in that session and can report that there is much to learn and much new material, even compared to the old Arolsen microfilms that Yad Vashem has had for decades. Yad Vashem will do a search for specific individuals, but for those who want to cast a wider net for unknown family members, nothing compares to doing it yourself. In the one hour we were there, I found at least four new Pikhholz leads, including one survivor. This new resource is a must for anyone whose family was affected by the Holocaust.

Another article on a research source is by Harriet Kasow, who tells us about the immigrants to the United States through the southern port of Galveston Texas.

We have two feature articles about families. Evyatar (Tari) Chelouche, who is new to the field of genealogy, writes about his Algerian Chelouche family, which is well represented here in Israel. We also have the third and final installation of James Montel's article on his French Montel and Esdra families.

Edward Gelles provides historical context to our genealogy knowledge with his article about his family's role in the migration from the Baltic lands to the Black Sea, with stops all along the way.

We have two articles about the histories of specific towns. IGS member Ruth Marcus tells us about her father's Eliashberg's hometown of Lunna, in present-day Belarus. A second article is a book review by Mathilde Tagger on *The Jewish Community of Volos, Greece* by Raphael Frezis (translated from Greek to Hebrew).

Rabbinic expert Rabbi Meir Wunder reports on new sources that contribute to research into rabbinic genealogy and Gabriel Horowitz tells us about the annual reunion of the illustrious Horowitz family, which took place in December.

In the previous issue of *Sharsheret Hadorot* we inaugurated a column offering reviews of online resources and genealogy tools. In this issue, we present a review of Logan Kleinwaks' innovative site shoahconnect.org, which allows researchers to contact one another through a common interest in Pages of Testimony at the Yad Vashem website. I have written the first two columns in this series but I hope that others will continue it.

We conclude with our other regular features. Yehuda Klausner brings us the story of a special type of marriage annulment, called "mi'oun," relevant only to marriages of young girls. Finally Harriet introduces us to the library's newest acquisitions and Meriam Haringman summarizes – with the help of Mathilde Tagger and Liba Maimon – recent issues of several genealogy journals from our colleagues abroad.

We also bid farewell to Mathilde Tagger, who has left our Editorial and Translations Board after many years of service. We wish Mathilde well as she dedicates her time to other genealogy projects and we look forward to her continued appearances as a contributor to *Sharsheret Hadorot*.

*Israel Pickholtz*



## **From the Desk of Michael Goldstein**

### *President, Israel Genealogical Society*

The four months since I assumed the presidency of the Israel Genealogical Society have been a time of learning, both about the scope of the president's role and the intricacies of the organization. I am all the more committed to working together with you, our members, to improve and expand the IGS, and I am particularly delighted that my predecessor Chana Furman continues to play an active role in helping us attain these goals as well.

I am impressed with the vibrancy of the organization, its branches and volunteers and of the high caliber of lectures and activities. It is my pleasure to share these highlights of various activities on our agenda with you.

#### **Organizational Progress**

Tivon has now become an official new branch of the Israel Genealogical Society. We welcome Tivon chairman Shaul Hollander to our National Board and wish continued success to our newest branch.

Gidon Levitas has assumed the chairmanship of the Netanya branch. Previous chairman Joe Isaacs will continue to remain active in the branch and the organization.

Plans are being completed to organize a French-speaking group in Jerusalem in cooperation with Beit Frankfurter.

The recent Seminar "Litvak Links: Latvia and Africa," held by the Litvak Special Interest Group – Israel in conjunction with the IGS, was an outstanding success. We commend Rose Lerer Cohen and her colleagues.

#### **Upcoming Events**

A Seminar Day on Sephardic Genealogy, dedicated to the memory of one of our founding members, Mazal Linenberg-Navon, will be held on June 19th at 1:30 PM at Beit Frankfurter. The seminar is in conjunction with the Sephardic Special Interest Group (SIG).

Plans are underway for our fourth annual One Day Seminar (Yom Iyun), which is planned for 4 Kislev 5769, 1 December 2008. Members will receive details in due course.

At the same time, our National Board, spearheaded by Billie Stein, is examining the feasibility of holding a Regional Seminar for Europe and Israel in 2010. My expectation is that we will move

forward on this and we will keep you informed of our progress.

### **IGS Website, a Special Source of Pride**

Over the next few months, there will be dramatic changes on our IGS website. In addition to the new databases constantly being posted, we are redoing the look and content. Webmaster Rose Feldman is taking the leadership in this exciting effort.

The Eretz Israel Indexing Project (EIRI): This flagship project of the IGS website, <http://www.isragen.org.il>, remains a source of pride for us all. The daunting task of acquiring permission to transcribe, transliterate and upload the data for the constantly growing EIRI Project involves interaction with a host of archives, government and para-governmental agencies; private foundations and NGOs, as well as individuals who may hold valuable

documents. Issues of privacy must be dealt with, as some of the persons included in the data may still be alive. Some of the original documents contain as many as 30,000 names. I salute the tireless efforts of those responsible for the EIRI Project and urge all members to visit the site regularly.

### **Volunteers are Needed!**

The EIRI Project and all other activities of the Israel Genealogical Society require volunteers. I call on our members to step forward and lend a hand!

Funding our Projects – I thank all those who have donated to the IGS and hope that more of our members and friends will do so. At present, we are preparing a detailed description of projects open for funding and sponsorship. This will be sent to our membership, for each of us to promote to potential donors throughout Israel and the world.



The Israel Genealogical Society  
extends its condolences  
to Past President and Distinguished member,  
**Jean-Pierre Stroweis,**  
on the passing of his father.



*The Israel Genealogical Society*  
*Fourth Annual Seminar on Jewish Genealogy*  
***Oral Tradition and Lore as Sources for Family Roots Research***  
*Will be held on Monday, 4 Kislev 5769, 1 December 2008*  
*Details will be announced soon*

# In search of Roots of the Chelouche, Schelouche, Schlouch, Chlous and Slous Families in Algeria from late 18<sup>th</sup> to the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Evyatar Chelouche*

## Introduction: Chelouche in Eretz Israel

My great-great-great grandfather, Abraham CHELOUCHE, sailed from Oran for Eretz Israel in the mid 19th century. According to family tradition documented by M.D. Gaon,<sup>1</sup> Abraham Chelouche arrived in Eretz Israel in 1840, accompanied by his wife Simcha, his daughters Rika and Hana as well as his sons Aron, Eliyahu and Joseph. At the end of a difficult journey they reached the bay of Haifa. When the passengers were transferred to alighting boats to be taken ashore, one of the boats capsized with eighteen of its passengers, including the two younger sons of Abraham, Joseph and Eliyahu, drowning.

Haifa in those days was a small Arab village. The family stayed there for a while and then moved to Nablus, which was an important commercial center. From Nablus they moved to Jerusalem finally settling in Jaffa where Abraham Chelouche is recorded in the 1849 Montefiore census, the earliest documentation of the family's presence in Eretz Yisrael.

The young Aron Chelouche, the only remaining son of Abraham, trained as a goldsmith, became a moneychanger and later was an investor in land acquisition. He was a dominant figure in the life of the Jewish community in Jaffa and one of the founders of Neve Tzedek, established in 1887 as the first Jewish neighborhood outside the Jaffa city walls and where a street bears his name. His two younger sons, Joseph Eliyahu and Jacob, played an important role in the

founding of Ahuzat Bayit in 1909, which later was renamed Tel Aviv.

The family played an important role in the development of the recently founded city. Their business, named Fabrique Chelouche Frères that provided building material was managed by Abraham Haim, the eldest son and Joseph Eliyahu. The latter was also a building contractor who was responsible for the construction of thirty-two of the first houses of Tel Aviv.

Over the years, our family continued to document the genealogy of Aron Chelouche and his descendants. Only partial information exists concerning the descendants of his sister Rika, who married Nissim Carsenty and Hana, married to Alter Luria. However, the family had absolutely no information about its genealogical roots in North Africa prior to their immigration to Eretz Israel. The objective of the research documented in this report, was to uncover these roots and perhaps re-establish the link with other sections of the family that remained in Algeria.

## The Research Process

The first step of the research was to find all known non-Hebrew spelling forms of the family name Chelouche. We knew of three forms: Ben Chelouche,<sup>2</sup> Schelouche<sup>3</sup> and Chelouche – used by Aron and his brothers and still used today by all his descendants. Additional spelling forms and details of distribution in the North African Jewish communities are found in the work of Rabbi

1. Initially published in: *Joseph-Eliyahu Chelouche, Memorial Book (on the occasion of a year since his death)*. Published in Hebrew in Jerusalem by Confédération Universelle des Juifs Sépharadim, editors A. Almaliach & Y.A. Abadi, 1935. [Hebrew] Later reprinted in the publication of M.D. Gaon *Jews of the Orient in Eretz Israel*, 1938, pg. 670. [Hebrew]
2. There are only two instances in the history of our family where the form “Ben Chelouche” is used: On the tombstone of Abraham Chelouche and on the memorial dedication of a Torah Scroll in the Chelouche synagogue in Neve Tzedek, dedicated by Aron Chelouche in memory of his brother Joseph who died in 1865. See also footnote no. 8.
3. Found in French consular records from Jaffa, the earliest consular records are the Certificate de Résidence of Aaron Schelouche, dated 30 September 1888 and that of his eldest son, Abraham Haim, dated 1 January 1891 and recorded by Dr. Rina Cohen in *Recensement des Algériens*.

Maurice Eisenbeth.<sup>4</sup> This information is summarized in Table no. 1:

**Table 1: The Various Forms and the Distribution of the Name Chelouche in North Africa**

Form	Distribution
Schelouche, Chlous, Slous	Oran
Schlouch	Constantine, Oran
Chelouche, Chlouch, Slouch, Slouss, Slousse, Benslous	Oran, Morocco
Chlouss	Morocco

Using the known forms, a search was conducted for records existing in Archives d'Outremer (CAOM). The earliest civil records found in CAOM date from 1832, only two years after the beginning of the French conquest of Algeria. Fifty-eight records pertaining to forty-four different people were found in the communities of Oran, Sidi-Bel-Abbès and Guelma. An in

depth search of the descendants of the daughters of the various identified families, resulted in finding twenty-three additional records, relating to nineteen different people (see list of family names by marriage in Appendix A). Thus the total number of records found reached eighty-one. However, the number of actual recorded civil registration events of births, marriages and deaths, increased to 102, because some birth records had amendments in the selvedge noting dates of marriage and or death.

Likewise, the total number of individuals discovered increased from sixty-three to ninety-six after adding the names of parents and spouses mentioned in these records. Unfortunately, information vital to the research objective was missing in CAOM. The earliest information on Oran dates from 1837 and then continues from 1846 on. Table 2 captures the information gap regarding Oran in the years 1831-1860. Luckily, a relevant record was found in the birth reports of 1837:

**Table 2: Distribution of Records from Oran in CAOM 1831-1860**

Year	Birth	Death	Marriage	Year	Birth	Death	Marriage	Year	Birth	Death	Marriage
1831				1841				1851	288	481	182
1832				1842				1852	253		189
1833				1843				1853	268	196	2
1834				1844				1854	259	303	4
1835				1845				1855	269	161	
1836				1846		361		1856	304	238	
1837	135	104		1847		770		1857	299	272	
1838				1848	70			1858	302	308	
1839				1849	275	826		1859	151	399	
1840				1850	214	70		1860		128	

### Detailed findings

Study of the birth, marriage and death records enabled locating the ninety-six individuals found in six family trees, as summarized in Table 3.<sup>5</sup>

4. Maurice Eisenbeth, *Les Juifs de L'Afrique du Nord : démographie et onomastique, Alger 1936*.
5. An inter-relationship between these families might exist but this could not be established by reviewing the information in the records that were found.

**Table 3: Chelouche family cells in Algeria**

Family ID	Location	Head of family	No. of records found	No. of persons in tree	Different forms of family name spelling	Comments
1	Oran	Jacob Chelouch (b. 1802)	1	3		Earliest record found: birth of Issac ben Jacob Chelouch, (b. 6 Jan 1837)
2	Oran & Sidi-Bel-Abbès	Salomon Chelouch (b. & d. in Meknes)	6	9	Ben- Chelouch, Slouche, Slous	Son David, b. 1830 Meknes, m. Oran 1852, and later moved to Sidi-Bel-Abbès
3	Oran	Aaron Chelous	2	7	Chelous, Selouch	Son Jacob, b. 1783 d. 1853 is the earliest found Chelous presence in Oran)
4	Oran	Aron Chelouch (b. 1829-1832 <sup>6</sup> )	38	49	9 diff. See Table 4	
5	Sidi-Bel-Abbès	Salomon Chlous (b. 1835-1841)	31	24	Chlous, Schelouche, Schlouch, Chelouch	Complementing information existing in web-site <sup>7</sup> increases tree size to ~300 persons
6	Guelma	Mimoun Schlouch (b. 1841)	2	4	Challouch, Sellouch, Schlouch	

### Variants in the Spelling of the Name Chelouche

The Algerian Jews who met with French administration officials during the civil registration process spoke Arabic thus requiring the services of translators during the first years of French occupation. On the other hand, French officials who completed the registration documents transcribed the family name Chelouche, according to an arbitrary phonetic interpretation resulting in

the family name of the same person being spelled differently depending on the clerk who was on duty at the time of registration.

An example for this phenomenon can be seen in the case of the Family of Aaron Slouche (Chelouch) and Rachel Ksis (Abecassis/Kesis) (Family no. 4). In thirteen records the father's family name is spelled differently on nine separate forms, as can be seen in Table 4:

6. In some instances in which the exact year of birth was unknown, it was computed by subtracting the age from the date of the record. Due to differences between the records, in some cases we established a birth year range.
7. See: Chlous in the genealogical web-site of Beruck & Carpentier [www.genealogieberuckcarpentier.net](http://www.genealogieberuckcarpentier.net).



**Table 4: Different forms of Spelling of the Family Name of Aron Chelouch**

Father	Mother	Act	Name	CAOM Record #	Date of Act
Aaron Slousse	Rachel Ksis	Birth	Esther Slousse	1038	21 Nov 1859
Aaron Selouche	Rachel Kasis	Birth	Seltana Selouche	791	20 Aug 1862
Aaron Selouch	Rachel Abecassis	Birth	Farhi Selouch	1864	27 Feb 1864
Aaron Schelouch	Rachel Abecassis	Birth	Abraham Schelouch	665	24 Jun 1869
Aaron Chlouch	Rachel Bent Kassis	Birth	Esther Chlouch	1389	23 Dec 1871
Aaron Chelouch	Rachel Kassis	Birth	Nejma Chelouch	154	27 Jan 1877
Aron Chlouch	Rachel Kassis	Birth	Messaouda Chlouch	276	14 Feb 1880
Aron Selouche	Rachel Kasis	Marriage	Seltana Selouche	268	12 Sep 1880
Aaron Slouch	Rachel Abecassis	Marriage	Farhi Slouch	266	27 Sep 1881
Aaron Chelouch		Birth	Djoar Chelouch	2121	1 Dec 1883
Aaron Schelouch	Rachel Abecassis	Marriage	Abraham Schelouch	366	2 Sep 1896
Aaron Chlouch	Rachel Bent Kassis	Marriage	Esther Chlouch	101	22 Feb 1899
Aaron Chelouch	Rachel Kassis	Marriage	Djoar Chelouch	402	28 Aug 1901

In some cases, applications to correct earlier spellings of family names were submitted to the registration authority. This is the case of the children of Mimoun Schlouch of Guelma (Family no. 6). The name of his first son, born on 6 October 1874, was registered as Mikael Callouch. His second son, born on 9 December 1876, was registered as Gabriel Sellouch. The spelling of the family name was corrected to Schlouch on 26 April 1906.

A review of more recent records shows that the spelling of family names became fixed as follows: in Oran – Schelouch; in Sidi-Bel-Abbès – Schlouch, Slous and Chlous and in Guelma – Schlouch. Therefore one can expect to find these forms in later generations during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Using the Names of Deceased Children for Subsequent Children**

Two instances were found, in which the names of daughters who died at an early age, were used again by their parents for naming subsequent children:

1. Seltana Selouche (b. in Oran, 18 August 1862), daughter of Aaron Selouche and Rachel Kasis (Family no. 4) was married (in Oran, 12 September 1880) to Samuel Casis. Their second child was a girl named Zahara, (b. 24 April 1884 and died 5 days later, 29 April 1884). Their third child was a girl who died when she was three years old (Rachel, b. 25 October 1885, d. 25 February 1888). Their fourth child was a girl who was named Zahara (b. 16 April 1891), the same name that was given to the second child.
2. Salomon Chlous (born 1841) and his wife Esther Levy (1848-1900) of Sidi-Bel-Abbès near Oran had eleven children (Family no. 5). The fourth child was a girl, Messauoda who died when she was six months old (b. 4 June 1871, d. 27 December 1871). The ninth child, a girl, was given the name Messaouda after her deceased sister (b. 1 June 1882, d. 13 September 1898).

No instance of using the name of a boy who died at young age for another child born

subsequently was found. Hence it is impossible to establish whether such a practice existed.<sup>8</sup>

### **Immigration Routes**

When and from where did the Chelouche families come to Oran? It is known that Jews migrated from Morocco to Oran, internal migration, within North Africa and from Oran to Eretz Israel, external immigration.<sup>9</sup>

An example of the former case is that of Salomon ben-Chelouch (Family no. 2). The marriage certificate of his son David ben Chelouch to Zahara bent Djian (Oran, 13 December 1852), states that David's parents, Salomon Chelouch and Semha bent Maklouf, were born and died in Morocco and that he was born in Meknes. At a later stage in his life he moved from Oran to Sidi-Bel-Abbès, where he had two children with his second wife Semcha bent Amози. An example of the latter case is found in the story of my ancestors, Abraham Chelouche and his family.

The death certificate of Jacob Chelous (Family no. 3) indicates that he was born in 1783 in Oran. Hence we have proof that the Chelouche presence in Oran pre-dates the French conquest and did not result from it. This does not rule out the possibility that some of families might have moved from Morocco to Oran as result of the new opportunities and new aspirations resulting from the French conquest.

### **Family Links within Algeria**

Is there any internal relationship between the six families whose records were found? Can some of these trees be merged into a wider family?

The investigation of the records found provides some hints of a possibility of such relationship. In the case of the

families of Oran (Families 1, 2 and 4) there is a common attribute – the registered address. The address recorded in the birth certificate of Isaac Chelouch (Family no. 1, b. 6 January 1837) is Impasse Quatre Bras no. 6. The address of Aron Chelouch and Rachel Kasis (Family no. 4) is also Impasse Quatre Bras with no mention of a house number. The address of David ben Chelouch, as noted on the birth certificates of his daughters (Family no. 2) is also Impasse Quatre Bras, again with no indication of house number.

It follows that if three out of the four families identified in Oran lived in close proximity, they might indeed have belonged to the same family.

Sidi-Bel-Abbès is situated approximately 70 km from Oran. It developed around a French military camp that was established in 1843. The first Chelouche record related to this town is the birth of Samuel Slous on 28 August 1866 (Family no. 5). We also discovered that David Slous (Family no. 2) moved from Meknes to Oran and then to Sidi-Bel-Abbès, sometime before 1880. From where did Family no. 5 come to Sidi-Bel-Abbès and are families 2 & 5 related? These are open questions.

### **Family Links - Algeria – Eretz Israel**

As mentioned earlier, one of the objectives of this research was an attempt to find a link between the Chelouche family that immigrated to Eretz Israel and the family that remained in Algeria.

Unfortunately, the absence of records in CAOM on inhabitants of Oran up to the year 1846 made it impossible to find birth certificates of the children of Abraham Chelouche. Aron, the son of Abraham was registered in the French Consulate in Jaffa as being born in Oran on May 1840. However,

8. There is a mystery in our family since according to our knowledge Abraham Chelouche had two children named Joseph. The first drowned in Haifa Bay in 1840 and the other died on the day of his wedding in 1865 and is buried in Jaffa. The reuse of the name of a son who died in tragic circumstances seems to be in contradiction to both religious and known traditional practices. This subject is still being researched hence the interest to find examples if such a practice existed in North African Jewish communities in of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
9. Michal Ben Yaakov, *The Montefiore Censuses and Research of the Jews in the Mediterranean*, in Pe'amim, no. 107, pg. 142. [Hebrew]

no original birth record confirming this was located.

Table 5 compares the names found in the families that stayed in Oran, and those appearing in the family who migrated to Eretz Israel. A potential clue to the existence of some connection may be found in the study of birthdates and the repetition of personal names across generations and families.

In the Israeli branch of the family we find Abraham, who emigrated from Oran and died in Jaffa in 1854, his son Aron, who came from Oran and died in Neve Tzedek in 1920 and his grandson Abraham Haim, born in

Jaffa 1864 and the eldest son of Aron. We find similar names in Family no. 4 from Oran: Aron Chelouch (born between 1829 and 1832) named his first son Abraham. The fact that the names Abraham and Aron were common in North Africa prevents us from reaching a definite conclusion.

Based on the study of the gaps between birthdates, one can speculate that either Abraham Chelouche, from the Eretz Israel branch and Aron Chlouch (Family no. 4) might have been descendants of Jacob Chelous (Family no. 1). But we do not have any evidence to support either theory.

**Table 5: Comparison of Names and Gaps in Birthdates across Families**

Years	Family No. 1 (Oran)	Family No. 3 (Oran)	Family No. 4 (Oran)	Abraham Chelouche Family (Eretz Israel)
1760-1770	Aaron Chelous b. 1760 (assumed)			
1770-				
1780				
1780-1790	Jacob Chelous b. 1783 (Calculated from act #609)			
1790-1800				
1800-1810		Jacob Chelouch b. 1802 (Calculated from act #4)		
1810-1820				<b>Abraham ben Chelouche</b> <sup>10</sup> b. 1815 (assumed)
1820-1830			Aron Chlouch b. 1830 (Calculated from 5 records)	
1830-1840		Isacc Chelouch b. 6 Jan 1837 (Birth Act #4)		<b>Aron Chelouche</b> b. 1829 (Gaon) / May 1840 (Consular rec.) Eliyahu Chelouche b. 1831 d. 1840 (Gaon) Joseph Chelouche b. 1833 d. 1840 (Gaon)
1840-1850				Joseph ben Chelouche b. 1845 (Montefiore census, calculated)
1850-1860				
1860-1870			Abraham Schelouch b. 1869 (Act #665)	Abraham-Haim Chelouche b. 1864 (consular rec.) <b>Joseph-Eliyahu Chelouche</b> b. 1870 (Memories)
1870-1880				Jacob Chelouche b. 1880 (Personal notes)

10. Bold font emphasizes the author's ancestors; Small font in parenthesis contains the indication of the source of data.

## Summary

In this research we discovered ninety-six members and descendants of Chelouche families originating in Algeria. These were divided into six family trees. We showed a possible inter-connection between three of the four families from Oran, but were unable to establish a positive definite link between the Oran families and the family of Abraham Chelouche who migrated to Eretz Israel towards the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We found evidence of the Chelouche presence in Oran before 1783 and that at least one family came to Oran from Morocco. On several occasions we found that the names of daughters who died at a young age were given again to daughters born later.

As many other Jewish families in Algeria in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the descendants of the Chelouche families migrated from Algeria to France, a process that was completed close to the Algerian indepen-

dence in 1962. They settled in the French cities of Paris, Lyon, Cannes, Montpellier and Strasbourg with one branch going as far as Tahiti.

One can only hope that sometime in the future open access to records remaining in Algeria will be possible and new information will be revealed, linking the different family branches living in Israel, France or elsewhere.

## Topics for Future Research

This report focused on the Chelouche families of Algeria. There are other interesting topics, beyond the scope of this report, which will hopefully be covered by future research. To name but a few: The origin of the Chelouche name, the Chelouche families of Morocco and the fact that there are people bearing the Chelouche name living today in Algeria, France or elsewhere who are Muslims.

## Appendix A: Family Relations through Marriage

The following table summarizes the marriage relationships of the descendants of the Chelouche families:

Family ID	Location	Head of Family	Marriages of Sons	Marriages of Daughters
1	Oran	Jacob Chelouch	Baghi	
2	Oran	Salomon Chelouch	Maklouf, Djian, Amozi	Saida
3	Oran	Aaron Chelous		Arfe
4	Oran	Aron Chelouch	Kesis (Kassis, Abecassis), Okrich(?)	Casis, Schecroun, Sayag, Ben-Kemoun, Bettan, Ben-Achouil, Ettouati
5	Sidi-Bel-Abbès	Salomon Chlous	Levy, Ben-Haim, Farouz,	Ghozi, Camilleri
6	Guelma	Mimoun Schlouch		Boutboul

*Evyatar (Tari) Chelouche was born in Tel-Aviv in 1956 and is a descendant of the Chelouche Family, one of the founding families of Neveh Tzedek and Ahuzat Bait. After his military service, he acquired a B.Sc. in Computer Science from the Technion, an M.Sc. in Computer Science from The Naval Post-Graduate School,*

*Monterey-California, and an MBA from Ben-Gurion University. Currently employed as a program manager in the high-tech domain. As a hobby-philatelist, Evyatar researched the domain of Israeli Machine Vended Stamps, and created a web-site on this topic.*

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## Writing a Family Tree

*Shilo Gal*

Translated from the Hebrew

I did not know the details of my paternal grandmother's family because my father, Akiva, may God avenge his soul, fell in the Battle of Kfar Etzion on the eve of the establishment of the State, 4 Iyar 5708 (May 13, 1948), when I was two months old. My father, born in 1924, survived World War II and married my mother Margalit, nee LAHMAN, after the war at the Lev Training Camp near Brussels. He came on Aliya directly to Kfar Etzion in 1946 and was killed there.

My grandfather Joshua Menahem Mendel died forty years ago, when I was young. At that time I had no interest in genealogy and survivors of the Holocaust generally did not speak of their origins or what they went through.

In 1992 my work took me on a visit to Hungary and while I was there, I visited three villages of family interest. One was Bonyhád, south of Budapest where my GALANDWER family had lived. The second was Táb where my grandfather lived after his marriage and the third was Pápa, where my father studied in a Yeshiva in his youth.

In each cemetery I photographed those tombstones that appeared to have some connection with my family. I took them from close to make it easier to read the inscriptions afterwards. Even so, some took a full day to decipher. I used a magnifying glass and utilized various computer techniques after they were scanned into the computer.

Bonyhád has two cemeteries. One old and in poor condition where it appears people were buried until 1800. The second, the "new," is a Neolog cemetery and kept in good condition. Its care is funded by visiting Jews. I photographed dozens of tombstones bearing the names of our family and the names of families that I knew were connected with ours. All of these fit into my family puzzle. People whom I previously thought were distant relatives turned out to be closely related. The opposite was also true.

The cemetery in Táb was clean but in disrepair. I photographed the name of my grandfather, that appears on a monument erected in memory of those who perished in the Holocaust. He had lost his entire family, except for my father: two brothers, three sisters, a wife, a son, three daughters, a son-in-law and two granddaughters. The names of these family members are recorded on his own tombstone on Har Hamehuhot in Jerusalem. A photograph of that stone appears in the Hebrew version of this article.

The Pápa cemetery is well kept. I wandered about its grounds and saw a small structure. I opened it and was surprised to see that I had found the tombstone of the head of the yeshiva, Rav Yaakov Yehizkiyahu Greenwald, who died in 1940. Out of the great respect my father had for his rabbi, my brother Yaakov and I, according to my middle name Yehizkiyahu, are named for him.

Upon my return to Israel, I related my experiences to my late cousin on my paternal grandmother's side, Hershy-Zvi Greenfeld. He told me that as a child before World War II he remembered a party in his house on publication of the book *Ben Zakkai* written by his grandfather's grandfather on his mother's side, R'Yohanan SPITZ. In it my father is commended for writing a family tree on the inside cover. He saw that the name Akiva appeared in every generation and so he traced it back to the outstanding Talmudist and Halakhic authority Rabbi Akiva Eiger (1761-1838). My father's maternal grandmother, Sarah Schlessinger, was the granddaughter of the daughter of Rabbi Akiva Eiger. Eiger is the name of the town where he served as rabbi but he came from the Schlessinger-Guens family. Unfortunately, in the booklet it is indicated that the branch of those descended from Sarah Schlessinger is not recorded. I found a copy of the 1907 edition of the book *Ben Zakkai* in the Jewish National and University Library

in Jerusalem, but I had hoped to find the later edition that appeared about 1930.

After searching the Eiger name in telephone books in the pre-Internet era, I met with Akiva Eiger a member of Kibbutz Netzer Sereni who had researched the genealogy of the Eiger family. However there is no known familial connection between us. He sent me a copy of a brochure of the Eiger family tree. In 1913 an organization was established in the name of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, one of the luminaries of Jewish life, which set as its goal the publication of his works and organizing the Eiger family tree. I received a rather detailed tree. I also had in my possession a family tree created some twenty years before by a family member. This tree did not include my father's mother's family. Naturally, it needed to be updated to our time. I put all this material away until I had time to work on updating and organizing it.

In the year 2000 I suddenly had the time. I had a stroke resulting in 100% disability and my being confined to a wheel chair. During my rehabilitation, the challenge of completing my late father's work of trying to connect the family tree with Rabbi Akiva Eiger was rekindled. I had no idea that there were software programs for building family trees so I did this on Microsoft Organization: the father of the family the head of the organization; his wife – the assistant and the children – the subordinates. For each name that appears on more than one page I assigned a particular color, continuing with that color on every page each time that name appeared. Since the same names appear in the family from generation to generation, the color scheme makes it easier to trace the continuity of the family line.

In the Hebrew version of this article (p. 11), you can see two sample tree charts, where my father appears in purple, connecting the pages. My grandfather is in yellow and the shades of green (my brother and me) connect backwards and forwards to other unshown pages. This prevents the confusion that might result from given name repetition.

I was able to obtain a great deal of information from tombstone inscriptions. In those days it was customary, in addition to listing the dates of birth and death, to inscribe

the mother's name on the lower part of the tombstone. Additionally, words of eulogy for the deceased, in themselves treasury of information, were also engraved. These tombstones, with all the data contained on them, are steadily being lost to our people. The effort to photograph and preserve them and others like them in Europe and the world is a most commendable project.

I also checked the National Library for books by authors whose names were familiar to me. In this way I found a book written by my grandfather's brother, Mordecai, who was a teacher in Kosice, Slovakia. Even his daughter did not know about the book. Since I felt that I needed photographs of the tombstones, at my own expense, I sent a Hungarian-speaking friend to Hungary for a few days and he brought me what I needed.

In the introduction to books, it was traditional to include information about the author's family. This is an excellent source of information that I found useful for my family.

I also entered all the names on Excel sheets so that one could immediately find which page to go to find a particular name.

After a year's work of twelve hours a day, I developed a family tree of my father's family that is 300 pages long.

### **A Summary of my Paternal Grandmother's Family Tree:**

R'Yohanan Spitz 1800-1870

Zvi Menachem Nobel

Jacob Nobel 1856-1937 and Sarah Schlessinger  
(the sister of R'Bunim Wolf Schlessinger  
1847-1913

The grandson of R' Simcha Bunim 1765-1829, who  
was the brother of R' Akiva Eiger of the  
Schlessinger-Guens family)

Perl Nobel – perished in the Holocaust in 1944  
and Yehoshua Menachem Mendel Galandwer  
1895-1967

Akiva Galandwer 1924-1948 and Margalit  
Lahman 1925 –

Shilo Yehizkiyahu Gal 1948- and Ziporah Yisrael  
1948 –

From my mother I was able to obtain information only as far as my grandfather. These data are included in the tree but are only incidental. There are dates of birth and death but there are no photographs or stories. There is background information on the settlement of Jews in Hungary who were brought from Austria in the 17<sup>th</sup> century along with others to settle areas of Hungary. There were three Jewish families among these people: Kritzler, Galandwer, these two married among each other, and Polak. The tree includes these three families and it was distributed to grandchildren and family members. The title of the book is *The Family Tree – Polak, Kritzler and Galandwer*.

*Shilo Gal was born in Jerusalem in March 1948, during the siege of Gush Etzion. His name Shilo derives from the letters making up the Hebrew phrase “The Convoys of the Ten and the Thirty-five” who fell in battle on their way to the besieged Gush Etzion. At two months, his father fell in the battle for Gush Etzion and never saw Shilo. Shilo returned to Kfar Etzion after the Six Day War and was a member of the kibbutz from its reestablishment. In addition to his membership on the kibbutz, he headed the Gush Etzion Regional Council for twenty years. After his retirement, he was the advisor on settlement affairs for Prime Minister Ehud Barak. He moved to Elazar in Gush Etzion in 5752/1991; married to Zipi, they have five children and ten grandchildren.*

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## Getting Acquainted with the Arolsen Files at Yad Vashem

*Martha Lev-Zion*

The Negev branch of the Israel Genealogical Society completed a very successful special field trip meeting on 12 March at Yad Vashem to learn about how to research the materials now available at Yad Vashem from the Bad Arolsen records of the International Tracing Service (ITS). Zvi Bernhardt of Yad Vashem gave an excellent presentation.

In 1956, Yad Vashem received from the ITS 5,000 microfilms concerning Jewish records. Zvi stressed that the ITS now added new information, but not new material to what was already available at Yad Vashem. He noted that there is little information available on Poland and Ukraine and as a rule the further east from Germany the less data is available. If an individual was not incarcerated in a camp or was murdered by the Einstatsgruppen, then the researcher could expect to find no information that particular person.

Incarceration material from the concentration and work camps as well as the major Ghettos is available at Yad Vashem. Information on survivors has not yet been received but all material should be available at Yad Vashem by 2011.

There is a master index, called the Central Names Index, or CNI to all ITS material. If the name is not in the CNI, then nothing is available for that person. Zvi cautioned that the search system is very cumbersome, but Yad Vashem decided in the meantime to use the system developed by ITS, since instituting something simpler and more exact would entail a delay of years.

How is a search performed? If the computer is not already open to the database, on the desktop is a file named “OUS Archive.” Open this folder, go to “Global Finding,” from there to “Central Names.” This will bring up search fields. Enter the last name, first name and any other field if desired. The surname is a required field. This will then bring up a three-part screen. Since not all names have been digitized, one might see just one name and a lot of blank lines below it, but each space, if clicked on will produce a card with information.

If “T/D” is written on the card, if there is a 6-digit number or two sets of three digits each, this indicates a “Tracing Document.” Cards might be written on both sides so make sure

that you digitally flip the card to the second side to see if something is written there. Any information on the flip side indicates whatever tracing information was found about the individual.

Other abbreviations you might see on the cards are:

VCC – Various Concentration Camps, followed by a number. These relate to lists.

Kartei – cards

OCC – Other Concentration Camps

These notations can help you get additional information on the individual from copies of original personal files.

Information on survivors can easily be obtained by going to [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org) and checking their Holocaust Database.

Help, which is greatly needed and appreciated, is available in the reading room of Yad Vashem. What I have written here is only a drop in a sea of information about how to search and what you might find.

Yad Vashem is willing to do a reasonable number of searches for specific people and has

a form on its website that can be filled in electronically for each individual and returned to Yad Vashem. Because of signed international agreements, the Arolsen database is not available off site, but may soon be available at their branch at Beit Wohlen.

*Dr. Martha Lev-Zion, a historian of modern European intellectual history is the founder and president of the IGS Negev branch. A former member of the board of directors of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, she is the past president of the international SIG Latvia and serves on the steering committee of the Courland Research Group. Her genealogical research focuses on the German states of Franconia, Thüringen and Courland [Latvia]. She was one of the organizers of the 2004 International Jerusalem Conference and the one-day seminars hosted by the Israel Genealogical Society. She is the author of Taking Tamar.*

<http://www.avotaynu.com/books/tamar.htm>



## **Is Sauce for the Goose also Source for the Gander?**

### **Sources of Evidence Used During Genealogical Research of the Levitas Family**

#### *Gidon Levitas*

When I feel tempted to say that I have thoroughly examined all possible sources of evidence in my family research, it transpires time after time that this field of endeavor has a beginning and a middle but no predictable end. Like an unfinished symphony, whose melody and chords we know, there is always a possibility of continuation and completion, if not by me, then by a future researcher. New evidence may be discovered, evaluated and integrated into the family saga at any time.

This article lists sources of evidence retrieved to date in my ongoing effort to authenticate and elucidate chapters in the LEVITAS family genealogy and history. Discrepancies between written documents, personal testimonies and family stories have led me to adopt the tongue-

in-cheek title for this article. Oral family history, stories heard and remembered, can in some ways be thought of as sauce for a goose served for dinner but can they also be considered sources equally reliable and as sturdy as the proverbial gander? This can only be put to the individual test by disclosing relevant source materials.

Stories about searches are of interest themselves. Sometimes I followed leads from colleagues, other times I charged ahead into uncharted territory, following a hunch or simply browsing, seeking whatever seemed likely to yield relevant data and confirm or refute various perspectives and/or facts. As in all genealogical enquiries, luck played a part in



various instances where I had seemingly come up against a brick wall or to a dead end.

## Documents

Documents can tell a story. Sometimes they only offer rudimentary outlines of a life or a family history and on occasion they unveil mysteries. The well-known term, “paper trail,” can mean that most persons can be traced or followed as they move through life. The “trail” consists of documents they have signed or those in which they are mentioned. As a rule, both the living and the dead leave paper trails. Locating them, especially those from the distant past, can be quite complicated requiring numerous visits to various archives and relevant institutions.

My Levitas branch, one of many with the same family name, is linked by marriage to the SHAGAM family of Lithuania, via my paternal grandfather Israel Levitas from Zagare, who married Yona Toibe Shagam from Kurseinai, about 1890. Israel and Yona Toibe had five children: three sons, including my father Dov Berel and two daughters. I have no document confirming their marriage but a population census of 1922 in Tel Aviv lists them and three of their children as a family living together.

The five children – Aryeh (Aharon), Frieda (later GREENSTEIN), David, Dov (Berel), Hannah (later MALEVATSKY) – and the parents all left Lithuania and immigrated to Eretz Yisrael. Aryeh came to Eretz Yisrael in 1906 and a few years later immigrated to South Africa. David and Frieda arrived in Eretz Yisrael about the year 1913, while Dov, Hannah and their parents, Israel and Yona Toibe came to Eretz Yisrael between 1920-1922.

As previously mentioned, a Tel Aviv municipal census in 1922-1923 lists the family. Rose Feldman and colleagues translated the entries of this census. My grandparents (Israel & Yona Toibe Levitas), my father (Dov), an uncle (David) and an aunt (Hannah) are recorded as tenants in the hostel of the Lipschitz family on Ahva Street,

Neve Tzedek, a Tel Aviv neighborhood. Additional evidence of the family in Tel Aviv was found at the Municipality of Tel Aviv Department of Building, Planning and Engineering. Plans were submitted about 1927 for the construction of a one-story, two-room apartment on Bar Kochba Street. I visited this home in 1949 when my aunt Frieda was still living there.

My father, Dov, subsequently left Eretz Yisrael for South Africa in 1928. The South African Jewish Rootsbank database lists arrivals of immigrants to the country, including passengers on a steamer of the Holland Africa line, the Randfontein. My father seems to have come on this boat.

Twenty six years later, in 1954, Dov, his wife Rose, their two children, Yona (later Haffner) and Gidon (myself) left South Africa arriving as new olim in Israel. My personal documents include my old South African passport and my certificate as a new oleh to Israel.

## Locating Lithuanian Documents

Birth, death, marriage and emigration certificates from Lithuania, which would authenticate life stories and events, are at present difficult to obtain. I was told that all district administration documents in the Shavli (Siauliai) province, which included the towns of Zagare and Kurseinai, were dumped and burned by Russian troops departing Lithuania in 1991.<sup>1</sup> References to documents in Lithuanian revision lists (revisions of original Russian census lists) and related material translated into English and accessible on JewishGen websites, particularly the Family Finder, offer suggestive evidence that the family lived in Kurseinai and immigrated to Eretz Yisrael. A verification option still remaining is to apply to the Lithuanian State Archives in Vilnius, which may have copies of documents and data from censuses or residents' tax files. Lithuanian revision lists from JewishGen, Family Finder and Lithuanian internal passport documents list several Levitas names.

1. Genealogical researcher Len Yodaiken told me that Russian troops dumped and burned district administrative documents in the Shavli/Silualiai province before withdrawing from Lithuania in 1991

## Gravestone Inscriptions

Inscriptions on gravestones of Israel and of Yona Toibe (Tova) Levitas at Nahalat Yitzhak cemetery in Tel Aviv state that Israel was the son of Shmuel Yitzhak Levitas and Tova, a daughter of Yisrael Yona Shagam (Shoham) of Kurseinai (see websites of burial society *Hevra Kadisha* showing copies of documents).

Yisrael Yona Shoham (Shagam) married Malka and after her death married Reisel Lana Rik. He died in August 1907 and is buried in the cemetery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Burial sites for him and his second wife Reisel are listed in *Hevra Kadisha* records, a computerized database. He is listed as son of Shmuel Moshe Shoham (see illustration of gravestone inscription).

The inscription reads, "Here lies a most distinguished Rabbi, Yisrael Yona, son of Shmuel Moshe of Kurshan, died Elul 5667, August 1907."

Yisrael Yona and Reisel had no children. After his death, Reisel subsequently married Shmuel Lipkin, Rabbi of Salant. She is also buried on the Mount of Olives. Her grave is in the old cemetery and bears the inscription, "Rabbanit Reisel Lana Lipkin, daughter of Rabbi Pinhas Shmuel Yaen of Panevezys, 11 June 1939." Rabbi Shmuel Lipkin died in 1909.

## Websites

A plethora of websites can be explored in searching family roots. One very useful site for South African Jewish genealogy is the S.A. Jewish Rootsbank, the Database at the Centre for Jewish Migration and Genealogy Studies: [http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/CGI/cgi\\_RootWeb.exe](http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/CGI/cgi_RootWeb.exe). It contains data on births, cemeteries, communities, death and estates, marriages, military records, naturalizations, passenger arrivals, as well as additional information concerning the S.A. Jewish community. I gleaned much information about my Shagam family relatives from this source, including dates and places of deaths and burials.

Naturally, the JewishGen.org website, with various subsections, especially Jewish Family

Finder and special interest groups, offers a wealth of relevant data, including invaluable reports from individuals writing about their own family searches and journeys.

## Archives

I visited various archives in my search finding and photographing many relevant documents. In the South African State archives on Roland Street, Cape Town there were records pertaining to the Shagam brothers – my father and paternal great uncles. These include records of wills written and estates settled, as well as applications for naturalization dated 1902. Of particular and direct personal relevance is my parents' marriage certificate from the civil marriage registry of 1933.

Many documents thus revealed bear witness to the vicissitudes of migration and establishment of roots in new countries – a major and powerful theme of the Jewish people's long and bitter saga over the generations, particularly during the past two centuries.

Evidence collated in these searches serves to link us with our past and helps us appreciate our heritage. I think it is our duty to pass it on as a legacy to our children and descendants, as we are commanded in our Jewish tradition. (See illustration in Hebrew Section).

## Acknowledgments

My appreciation to genealogist Eva Floersheim who suggested a framework and sources.

*Gidon Levitas, born in Cape Town, South Africa, 1936, came on Aliya to Israel with his parents and sister in 1954. After army service in the Nahal corps, he was a member of Kibbutz Gonen until 1963. Subsequently he worked as a journalist, a social researcher and a municipality social community worker for Project Renewal in Netanya. He is married and has three children and eight grandchildren. A retiree today, he engages in family genealogy studies and is the new president of the IGS Netanya branch of IGS.*



## From the Baltic to the Black Sea

*Edward Gelles*

The history of the Jews in Europe has many different facets and I have tried to touch upon some of them in a recent genealogical study (Gelles, 2006). I traced age-old migrations across the continent in a predominantly west-east direction from the Atlantic to the Russian pale and back again. Within this overarching picture there were numerous diversions, reversals and individual transplantations. The physical character of the continent set natural barriers and also provided openings along the great rivers and stretches of coastline where ancient and not so ancient port cities became centers of commerce and of Jewish culture. The geographic and demographic background had much influence on the socio-political changes over the centuries. Important migrations also took place in a south-north direction, from Italy across the Alps and from Constantinople and its coastal littoral along various routes to a wide area of southeastern Europe. While some of these migrations were in the distant past there were significant movements in more recent centuries that fell within the ambit of my family studies.

I indicated in my book that the name of GELLES or GELLIS is found scattered between such landmarks as Memel on the Baltic coast, to several Lithuanian towns including Vilna, to Grodno in Poland, then to Silesia and Volhynia, Podolia, and Galicia, where the city of Brody was for a period of time of special significance for Jewish culture. From Czernowitz in the neighboring province of Bukovina the traces turn westwards to Hungary and Austria and southeastwards to Moldavia with its capital city of Kishinev. Old trade routes lead from there to the Black Sea, where the great port of Odessa was founded at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While some of these families that appeared so separate in space and time most probably had ancient connections, the origin of others of the same name remains unresolved.

The Baltic and Black Seas provide two vital outlets to the world at either end of the vast

stretch of land in which generations of Jews had tried to make their home and had been fought over for centuries by people of different cultures and religions. While the great Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth was in the ascendant many Jewish communities flourished under its protection. The incursions of Bogdan Chmielnicki's Cossacks in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century marked the beginning of Poland's decline and the rise of the power of Muscovy. Polish Jewry continued to suffer through the following period that was marked by the war of Polish succession and the power struggles leading up to the three partitions among the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian Empires in 1772, 1792, and 1795. Large parts of Silesia and western Poland came under Prussian rule, much of Lithuania became Russian and the Austrian Empire incorporated Galicia. These frontiers remained by and large until the end of World War I when the Polish Republic was reconstituted.

At the same time the power of the Ottoman Empire had been in steady decline since the siege of Vienna was lifted in 1683 with the timely help of the Polish cavalry led by their King Jan Sobieski. In the subsequent period, a series of Turkish wars extended the power of Austria in the Balkans and that of Russia in its southern borderland. These political upheavals and their economic consequences, including changing patterns of trade, improving communications and rising birth rates had a major impact on Jewish migrations, to be followed in due course by the effects of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian pogroms.

The demographic pattern of my extended family connections has inevitably been a consequence of these upheavals. The Holocaust all but put an end to the millennial presence of the Jews in Eastern Europe. It remains now as a vital history lesson. We can learn much about great cultural achievement and also much about intolerance, greed and other forms of human folly. At the time of writing, the Jews have

largely left the arena, but the great line from the Baltic to the Black Sea, spanning many countries and cultures, is as historically important as it ever was. The Baltic economy is on an upswing and even Brody has risen from the ashes of the Second World War as a terminal of the Odessa – Brody pipeline.

The old Prussian port of Memel was but a short distance over the border from the Lithuanian trading centers of Kretinga (Krottingen) and Gorzd (Garsden). Gellis and related families who later flourished in England, America and South Africa came from this area. Isaac Gellis of Memel (d.1906), who developed the kosher food industry in 19<sup>th</sup> century New York, may well have been of the same stock as Aaron Gellis, restaurateur of Baden near Vienna, who was granted permanent residence there in 1805. At one time or another, some of these people moved from Lithuania to the Silesian towns of Lissa and Krotoschin. They included the families of Rabbis Siegfried and Benjamin Gelles, who came to England as refugees before World War II.

My immediate family was based in Brody 300 years ago and some time before that they appear to have been in Prague, which in the 16<sup>th</sup> century lay at the cross roads between Italy and the Rhineland on the one hand and Galicia, Silesia and points further east on the other. One of the great rabbis of Prague in that distant period was Mordecai Yaffe (1530-1612), known as the Levush after the title of his famous work. He became in turn Chief Rabbi of Grodno, Prague, and finally of Posen in Silesia. Descendants of the Levush were to be found in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in an arc from Grodno north to the Baltic coast and west to Silesia. The names Yaffe, Levush, and Gelles (Gellis) were linked by marriage in several instances. One rabbinic Gellis family from Grodno left for the Holy Land in these early times and has been there for at least ten generations. When Brody in Galicia came to be of some importance early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a trading center between the Russian and Austrian Empires, its Jewish population increased and its rabbis and scholars came

from far and wide. Shmuel Gelles, Chief Rabbi of Siematycze, was a direct descendant of Uri Feivush Ashkenazi, Chief Rabbi of Vilna and later Nasi in Jerusalem. Rabbi Shmuel may be the Rabbi S. Gelles who was the father-in-law of Moses Menachem Mendel Levush, also known as Moses Gelles, who was a scholar of the distinguished study group known the Brody Kloiz (Klaus). The latter is the progenitor of my immediate paternal line. One of his grandsons married the daughter of Rabbi Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz (d.1790), one of the greatest Hasidic rabbis of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and another descendant married a granddaughter of Chief Rabbi Shmuel Helman (d.1764) of Metz. Collateral and later lines of the Gellis rabbinical family spread across Galicia, Podolia, Moldovia and Hungary.

Gelles were widespread in Hungary. Some had been established since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the so-called seven communities around Eisenstadt in the Burgenland and were probably kinsfolk of ours. Others may have come later from Galicia, such as the printer Moshe Eliyahu Gelles of Ungvar, whose family was decimated in the Holocaust. The yeshiva at Munkacz also featured in the family annals.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Gelles and related Weinstein, Brenner, and Horowitz are found in the Bukovina including its capital, Czernowitz and in neighboring Bessarabia (Moldavia). A nexus linking Kishinev and Czernowitz bears evidence to family movements in the 20th century. A noted American cardiologist links his Gelles line to Chalfan (Halfin) of Kishinev, harking back to earlier days in Western Europe.

One of the outstanding achievements of the Empress Catherine of Russia was the establishment of the seaport of Odessa in 1794. This city became one of the jewels of the Russian Imperial crown and the home of a large and flourishing Jewish community. Galician Jews flocked to the new port with its promise of comparative freedom and liberal economic regime. Among these were many from Brody. Indeed the earliest synagogue and Jewish school in Odessa bore the Broder name. A family to whom

we were distantly related was that of Meir Shor, who later adopted the name of Brodsky. His descendants were among the wealthiest Jews in Russia. His son, the industrialist Abraham Brodsky (1816-1884), was a leader of the Odessa community, which also included families by the name of Gellis.

In due course many Jews set sail for America or made their way to Israel from this new port city. Local records found in Istanbul of the Gellis name include Ashkenazi Jews who died in the early years of the 20th century, so these may have been relatively recent arrivals from Galicia or neighboring lands during the migration that gathered pace in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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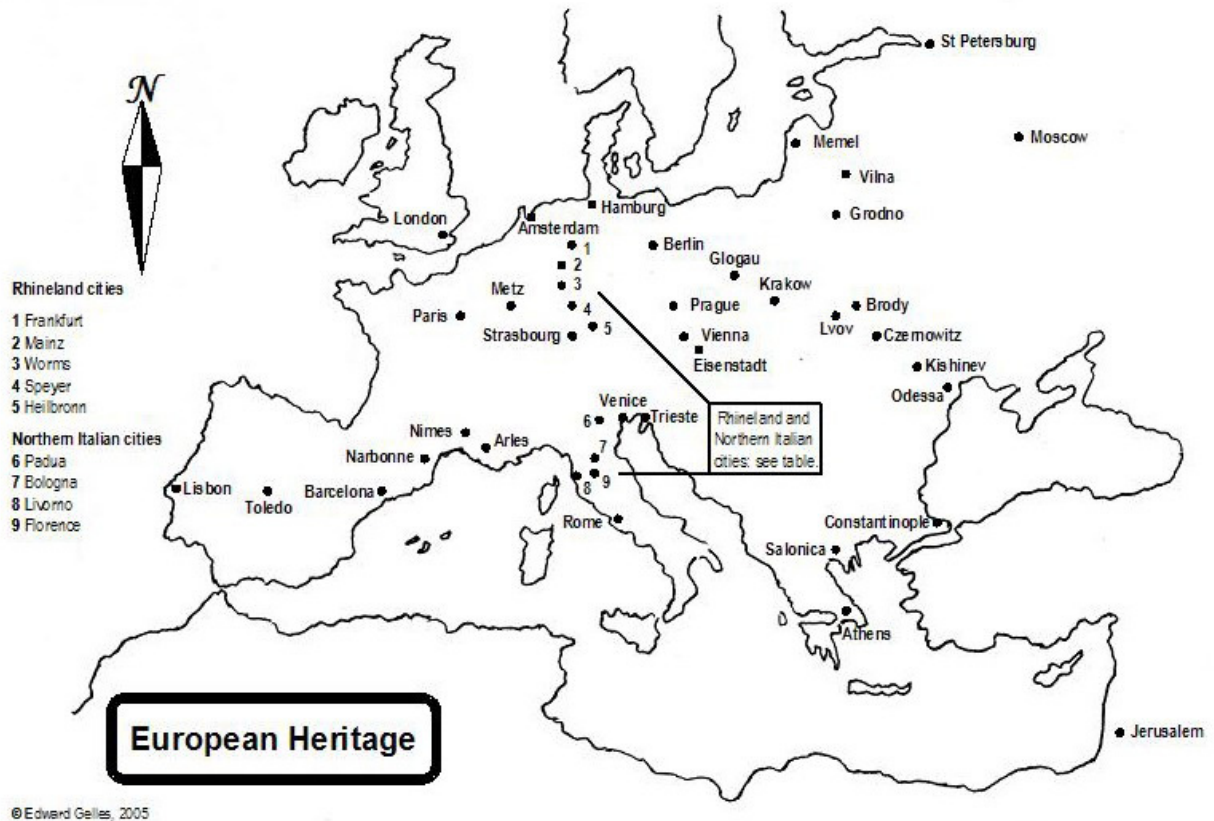
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**Private Communications**

In regard to presence in Grodno, Gorzd, Kretinga, Lissa, Krotoschin, Czernowitz, Kishinev and Odessa from (among others) Rabbi I.Gellis, H.C. Gellis, J. S. Gelles, J.M. Gelles and Z. D. Gellis.

*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 now devotes himself to writing about historical and genealogical matters. A book on his family including Gelles, Griffel, Wahl, Chayes, Safier, Loew and Taube appeared in 2006.*



# The Montel and Esdra Families of Marseille<sup>1</sup>

*James Montel*

## Part III: Legacy and Rediscovery

### Official Secrets

Sometimes genealogical information is hard to find because documents are kept as official state secrets.

After the liberation of Marseille, Hélène questioned some of her brother's neighbors, but did not gain any useful information. Later on, Laure's surviving son, Roger, made official inquiries with the government, but there were no answers. As late as 1980, Arthur Duell made an inquiry to the International Tracing Service and they claimed no knowledge of Albert and Laure. As far as the legal institutions were concerned, it was as if these two people had never existed.

Historians knew, however, that the Germans had kept detailed lists of all the trains deporting Jews from France and that copies could still exist in Paris. Thanks to the work of Serge Klarsfeld, these documents were made public for the first time in 1978, and the English translations were published in the United States in 1983.<sup>2</sup> For each train leaving France for the East, the Germans recorded the name, birth date, and birthplace of each person on board. They also documented the assignments and selections made upon arrival. Albert Esdra and Laure Bergeron are listed in Convoy 62, leaving Drancy for Auschwitz on November 20, 1943.

In 2004, additional state secrets were released, this time the lists of political prisoners deported from France. Upon inquiry to the *Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Déportation* [Foundation for the Memory of the Deportation], I obtained detailed information about the deportation of Jean Coutarel to Buchenwald (see Part I).

### Impact of the Shoah

As I learned the diverse and sometimes quirky biographies of the generation of Reine Montel and her first cousins, a larger picture began to emerge. Many of her elder cousins suffered shaky childhood experiences living without their fathers during World War I. But all of this generation faced a major struggle for survival during the Shoah. Indeed, most of them were lucky enough to survive, but at the cost of going into hiding, going into exile (domestic and foreign), or changing their identities in some way:

Ferdinand Lop fled Paris and stayed in Annecy (in the Alps).

George Lop was sent to an internment camp in the Pyrenees.

Alfred Lop kept low profile in Paris

Ferdinand (the younger) and Simone Montel converted to Catholicism.

Elise, Alice and Reine Montel hid out in Aubagne.

Jean Coutarel was sent to Buchenwald.

Elise Coutarel worked in a textile factory in Avignon while her husband (Louis Cavalier) was held prisoner in Germany.

André Montel obtained Catholic identity papers.

Raphael Esdra escaped through Spain to North Africa.

Georgette Esdra and spouse Maxime Cremieux moved out of their heavily Jewish neighborhood and used the alias *M. et Mme. Rousseau*.

Roger Bergeron identified as Protestant and was forced to work in a munitions factory near Toulouse.

When my parents came to visit me in Israel a few years ago, we went to see the monument,

1. Continuation from *Sharsheret Hadorot*, Volume 22, Number 1, February 2008.

2. *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France, 1942-1944*. Serge Klarsfeld.

*Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de France* [Memorial of the Deportation of the Jews of France], dedicated to the Jews who were deported from France. The monument, located in a forested area south of Beit Shemesh, is a large concrete wall displaying over 80,000 names on the pages taken from the Klarsfeld publication. After locating our family names, my mother looked around at the trees and recalled another connection with Israel from decades past. After the war, the Jewish National Fund had an international fundraising drive to plant trees in Eretz Yisrael and an agent approached David Montel for a contribution. After all he had been through, he felt proud of the pioneer movement in Eretz Yisrael and gave what he could. As we drove away in the rain, she said, “These are his trees.”

### **Unofficial Secrets**

Some stories are too difficult or painful to tell while others are simply forgotten. Various objects saved over the years – an antique leather pocketbook, old coins from the Far East, a World War I army helmet, a dusty book in Hebrew that nobody knows how to read – hold pieces of the story locked safely away. These precious stowaways prompt us to ask questions to those who might still remember and help our elders recall what was forgotten. They help us to unravel the details of a fragmented story with four people named Ferdinand and two aunts named Benjamin.

Many pieces of the story came together when I visited my Tante Elise and Tante Alice in Marseille in 1989.

Elise still lived in the David Montel residence on Avenue Pasteur. In the living room was the secretary with the foldout top where David had worked and kept his important papers. The amount of family history contained in the drawers was overwhelming. I sat there for weeks leafing through the letters, certificates and photos. Each day brought new questions and my aunts answered what they knew.

One paper I found had a hand-written ascendancy diagram of the Elisabeth Duserre family going back several hundred

years. Alice recalled an episode of desperation in 1943. When Raoul and David Montel realized that they were really in danger, they began to think of possible escape plans. Raoul’s idea was to find a way to pass as non-Jewish. So together, they reconstructed this genealogy of their mother, which Raoul then used to obtain Catholic identity papers.

While I was in Marseille, my aunts took me on a tour of where family residences used to be in Rue Sainte and Rue Lafon. One windy afternoon, Elise drove us out to Aubagne to see the farm and root cellar where they hid out during the war. The experience there was frightening and we stayed for only a few minutes. We were clearly strangers in the neighborhood. The entire time we were there, three large German shepherds were barking at us and throwing themselves against the high chain-link fence that surrounded the property. The present owner came out to see what was going on and Alice explained what had happened there long ago. He said he did not care and told me to stop photographing and leave.

### **Holy Books**

Another trove of information was located deep in the basement and frequently used bomb shelter of the apartment building on Avenue Pasteur. Numerous Hebrew books had been hidden there, including several *sidurim*, prayer books for the daily prayers and a complete set of *mahzorim*, the prayer books for the yearly cycle of Jewish holy days. All of these were Sephardic versions published in Livorno in the 1870s. Also preserved were a prayer book dated 1700 and printed in Amsterdam, along with a Hebrew grammar book that Ferdinand Montel and his brothers had used in school published 1870.

David’s engineering textbooks were every bit as holy to him and they were well preserved. This seven volume set, leather-bound with gold lettering and pen illustrations, was from his coursework at the *École Nationale d’Arts et Métiers de Chalons sur Marne* [National College of Engineering and Trade at Chalons sur Marne]. The books dated

1901-1906 cover the engineering fundamentals of kinematics, descriptive and analytic geometry, surveying, general and applied mechanics, structures, hydraulics and machines.

These precious books bring together another important thread in the genealogy. The Hebrew books attest to the traditional Jewish education that the children of Salomon and Elisabeth Montel received in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. At this time in France, however, there was overwhelming societal and economic pressure to assimilate. The modern and secular ideals stemming from the French Revolution were deeply ingrained in this generation, as demonstrated by the intense patriotism and idealism of David Montel and his profound disbelief that all of this could suddenly turn upside-down under Vichy.

At some point the Hebrew books went from the status of merely unused to being downright dangerous. They were hidden away safely in a place called “*la cave*” to wait for another generation.

On the other hand, the engineering books represent the sustenance of the Montel families. One of the few things we know about David Montel’s grandfather, Raffael David Montel, is that he was a *mecanicien* at the time when engineering as a profession was just being invented. David’s father, Salomon, went from *mecanicien* to inventor. David and all his brothers were educated as engineers, as were his daughter, nephews, nieces, and grandchildren.

After Elise Montel passed away, a large, unopened chest was discovered in the basement. The emotional weight of this chest was so great, my sister Miriam had it shipped to her house in Texas, where it could be opened safely and digested one photo at a time.

### Recognition

In the year 2001, for the first time the government of France opened a fund and a process for claiming compensation for material assets lost during the war due to the anti-Jewish laws enacted. This was administered by the *Commission pour*

*l’Indemnisation des Victimes de Spoliation* (CIVS). Pondering the artifacts and tidbits of information I had collected over the years, I decided to make a claim on behalf of the Esdra descendants for the confiscation of the *S. Esdra* leather shop and apartment on Rue Lafont. This was a huge impetus for me to put everything down in more coherent documentation. I was also hopeful that the process might yield information as yet unknown to us. Alice Montel and my mother provided numerous details about the business. The CIVS conducted an investigation and even contacted my mother’s cousin, Roger Bergeron, to corroborate the facts. This was a laborious process that took over two years. At one point I appeared before a special panel of the CIVS at the French embassy in Tel Aviv to witness the hearing and provide testimony. In the end, compensation was granted for the business, the apartment, the bank account and the personal belongings of Albert Esdra. By far, the most cathartic moment was receiving a letter from the government of France with the letterhead of the Prime Minister’s office, which recognized clearly that Albert Esdra did indeed exist, and by awarding the compensation, acknowledged and took responsibility for what happened to him and his sister.

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## **Galveston Port and Immigration Museum: A Source for Family Research**

*Harriet Kasow*

The Galveston Plan was an organized movement to bring Jews to the United States via Galveston, Texas rather than through New York City. From 1907 when it started to 1914 when it concluded, about 10,000 Jews came to the United States via this port. Between 1881 and 1923, 2,000,000 Jews entered through the ports of New York (Castle Garden followed by Ellis Island), Boston, Baltimore and Philadelphia. The plan's purpose was to disperse Jews throughout the United States but such factors as employment possibilities in the Southwest and Midwest made it attractive as well.<sup>1</sup>

In an article in the *Jerusalem Post* of August 24, 2007, by Batsheva Pomerantz "Catching up with the Galveston Movement," she notes that the timing of the Second Aliya coincides with this movement. She quotes Dr. Gur

Alroey of the Land of Israel Studies Department at the University of Haifa, "The demographic makeup of the Galveston Movement immigrants greatly differed from those arriving at Ellis Island who included older people and families. This migration resembled those going to Eretz Yisrael. These weren't olim in the ideological sense but migrants." His Mass Jewish Migration Database <http://mjmd.haifa.ac.il> also includes those who went through Galveston.

During our stay in Dallas, Texas in October 2007 while babysitting grandchildren, we managed to get away for a day and visit the Galveston Immigration Museum. I met a possible relative in Dallas who told me of his parents and grandparents who arrived in Galveston in 1910. They immediately changed their name from Sadovnik, meaning gardener in Russian, to Gardner.

1. See Marinbach, Bernard. *Galveston: Ellis Island of the West*. New York. SUNY Press. 1983.

The original family name of my grandfather and father was also Sadovnik, which they changed to Sadoff in the 1920s. It is revealing to see another possible avenue for family

research – name changes. The website is searchable at <http://www.galvestonhistory.org/immigration-login.asp>



## **There Was a Small Town; Its Name Was Lunna**

*Ruth Marcus*

Translated from the Hebrew

“There was a small town; its name was Lunna,” so open the stories of my late father Isaac (Yitzhak) Eliashberg’s reminiscences of the town Lunna where he was born in 1910 and from which he departed in 1932 to make Aliya to Eretz Yisrael. Three Yiddish stories recording memories that my father wrote in 1970, were translated into Hebrew for me about three years ago and from then on I have been drawn to and have become engrossed with the town.

Following is a portion of the introduction that my father wrote in Hebrew:

There was a tiny village whose name was Lunna. It was on the banks of the Neiman, full of greenery and surrounded by thick forests. A village with 300 Jewish families not noted for its geniuses, rabbis, great scholars or illustrious historical past. True, the author of the town’s Pinkas (Chronicles) writes that Napoleon passed through during his war with Russia and Trotsky visited the command post that was quartered in one of the town’s houses during the war between the Bolsheviks and the Poles. Nevertheless, its pride was in its wagon drivers, shoemakers, tailors, homeowners, fairs and market days, its fires – the work of human hands, etc.

I loved visiting the town of my birth during Hanukkah breaks and the long summer vacation, and at the end of summer to wander through it inhaling its fragrant scents and absorbing experiences from its very existence.

There once was a village – today it is no

more. It, too, was consumed on the altar in the days of the Holocaust.

Today, Lunna is in Belarus a few kilometers south of the Neiman River that flows into the Baltic Sea. It has about one thousand residents, none of whom are Jews. The nearest large city is Grodno, thirty-eight kilometers to the northwest.

Prior to World War I, the Grodno region, including Lunna, was part of the Russian Empire. Between the wars the area was included in the Bialystok District of Poland. In 1938, on the eve of World War II, Lunna had a population of 2,522, of whom two thirds, 1,617 were Jews and the rest were Christians – Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox. With the outbreak of the war in September 1939 according to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact the Grodno region came under the rule of the Soviet Union. With the German conquest of the region in June 1941, the Jews of Lunna were assembled in the ghetto of the town of Wola, which was connected to Lunna. In November 1942 they were transferred to the transitory camp of Kelbasin near Grodno. After a number of weeks they were deported to the death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. With the exception of a few dozen Jews who were taken for forced labor and few of whom survived, most of Lunna’s Jews were murdered on their arrival in Auschwitz on 8 December 1942.

In the course of my research on the town of Lunna, I became acquainted with its day-to-day Jewish life prior to World War II, its paths and alleyways, the public buildings and

private houses it contained, the well-to-do and the ordinary people, the laborers and petty merchants. I felt that I knew the central characters in my father's stories. It was as though the pre-Holocaust town was coming back to life in me. At the same time, I conducted interviews with natives of the town and found material on the town in archives, through Internet sites and from other sources. These findings have been summarized in Hebrew in a booklet titled *There Was a Small Town; Its Name Was Lunna* that appeared in November 2005.

At the time the booklet was published, a register [Pinkas] was located that listed names and addresses of all the natives of the town who participated in the various memorial programs held in the 1950s. The last gathering took place in Tel Aviv in 1957. Most of the town's former residents who came on Aliya before World War II and participated in these events are no longer living. With the aid of this register, I began a project to locate their descendants, the second and third generation of former residents. This was a complex undertaking lasting for several months. Various Internet sites helped such as the Pages of Testimony of Yad Vashem, Hevra Kadisha and others. In the attempt to locate second and third generation descendants, I would begin the telephone conversation in the following manner: "Are you Ms. X the daughter of Ms. Y who came on Aliya from the town of Lunna?" When I received the answer: "Yes, that is I; how did you find me?" I knew that I could put a check mark next to another name on the lists. As a result of these searches a "Gathering of Descendants from Lunna" took place at Beit Wolyn in Givatayim in March 2006. Some 150 participants came from all over Israel, from Kibbutz Merom Hagolan to Arad. The get-together was very moving and a warm connection developed between the participants.

In August 2006, I visited the village with Eliezer Eisenschmidt, one of the town's few survivors of the Holocaust, his granddaughter Liat and Mira Feingold the daughter of Abba Margalit who came on Aliya from Lunna before World War II.

We spent a few days in the town. We traversed the streets and at each house Eliezer Eisenschmidt told us the story of the family that lived there before the Holocaust. He showed us the house where my grandfather Yehoshua Eliashberg lived with my grandmother Batya Eliashberg nee Kosovsky. Several families live there now and they let me wander freely through the house going into its various rooms. I looked from the window onto the market square and it filled me with emotion to see the very same sights my father saw in his childhood.

Before my trip to Lunna I surfed Internet sites and found two reports that were published in 2005 on the request of the Association of the Byelorussian Speakers to erect a monument in memory of the 1,549 Jews of Lunna who were in the town's ghetto and perished in death camps. I took the two articles with me to Lunna and during our visit to the city council building located on the city square, we showed them the request. To our surprise we were told that two weeks before our arrival a monument of natural stone was put up. We rushed as quickly as we could to the site of the monument. Immediately upon our return to Israel we asked that a list in Hebrew be added next to the list in Russian. To our delight, our request was approved.

Over a year has passed since that visit to Lunna and we still have not absorbed all of our collected impressions. After our visit I developed an Internet site on the town of Lunna that was launched in May 2007. The site can be found at <http://www.shetlinks.jewishgen.org/lunna>

It is my intention to add photographs and additional documents to the site. I will add the impressions and experiences of the August 2006 visit to Lunna with pictures of the houses formerly occupied by Jews. Since my objective is to enhance it with additional material, I call on all with roots in the village of Lunna to contact me.

*Ruth Marcus, born in Ramat Gan, holds a Ph.D. in statistics from the Hebrew Uni-*

versity in Jerusalem. Involved in genealogy since 1988, and researching the roots of her family in Jerusalem, Lithuania, Byelorussia and Hungary, she has published a number of articles and two books. They are, *The Holy Seed and its Buds, Jerusalem 1990* where she

explores the history of her mother's family in Jerusalem and *There Was a Small Town; Its Name Was Lunna, Tel Aviv 2005*. Her latest work on Lunna is posted on the Internet site [www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/lunna](http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/lunna)  
rotem100@yahoo.com



## New Developments in Rabbinic Genealogy

*Meir Wunder*

Translated from the Hebrew

There are a great number of sources that provide us with information on the time period of the past two hundred years. We have birth, marriage and death certificates in various archives along with lists and guides to a wide range of occupations. The development of the Internet has opened new vistas that provide us with access to riches of information not previously available. However, there is still quite a difference between the various collections. Germany, for example, has the greatest abundance of all as she had the most developed system of historic record keeping. Beginning with 1933 when they could still take their assets and records with them, many Jews left. There are some German Jewish families that can even trace their history back some 600 years. In contrast, the opposite holds true with Poland. Family lineage was not considered important as the emphasis was on the individual's line and 'in heaven everything was already known.' The devastation during World War II was also overwhelming and many religious collections did not survive. In Hungary the situation is different still. Its Jews were descendants of poverty stricken people who came from the north for economic reasons and who felt it very important to show that they descended from important personalities in the Jewish world. Books published there generally contain long biographical introductions; however, the family trees need to be carefully checked to see if they are accurate and do not contain fabrications or copied information.

From the period going back more than two hundred years we have rabbinic literature. In their title pages or introductions many books contain much genealogical information, which can generally be considered reliable as it was written contemporaneously. However, there is a different problem, that of interpretation. Either because of rabbinic style or the abbreviated form in which it was written not everybody understands the text in the same way. This source is of use only for rabbinic families or the descendants of the authors and does not provide solutions for those Jews who were neither authors nor connected to rabbinic families. Additionally, this material has been known for a long time, has been carefully studied by genealogists in the past and it is rare to discover new information in it.

The surprise of the past twenty years has been that unknown family trees continue to be discovered especially in the former Soviet Union since the fall of the Iron Curtain. It has become evident that important collections are in the possession of individuals or in libraries where they are now available to all researchers. The fruits of these discoveries are being published in periodicals and they can shed light on what were previously dead-ends or help clarify doubts. It is now possible to photocopy documents and thus our knowledge on the history of the Jewish people is enriched with evidence from these new documents or from rare community registers – Pinkesei Hakehillot.

Of the periodicals, I will cite three of the main ones: *Tzfunot*, *Nahalat Zvi* and *Yeshurun* and two of the secondary ones: *Beit Aharon VeYisrael* and *Or Yisrael*. *Tzfunot* first appearing in Bnei Brak in 5759 was published by researchers of Hungarian origin who produced nineteen issues during its existence. It served as the platform for Rabbi Shlomo England, the senior researcher of rabbinic genealogy. Lately he has had to reduce his activity in light of his appointment as the Admor of Radzin. The publication *Nahalat Zvi* also came out in Bnei Brak in 5754 produced by Rabbi Menahem Mendel Wischnitzer. By nature it is sympathetic to Hasidism and among its goals is the publication of unknown family trees. Fifteen issues were published until it ceased appearing in the past few years because of financial restraints. Here, too, an important researcher of family trees, Naftali Aaron Vakstein of Ashdod first began his activities. For the past year, he has written a bi-weekly column in the Friday edition of the newspaper Hamodia called *Vayityaldu* under the signature of N. Pele. In it he asks his readers questions and in the following article he passes on the answers he has received. Thus new information, which until now had been in the hands of private individuals is discovered and becomes general knowledge. This is the preferred method for those communities who will not use the Internet.

*Yeshurun* appears two or three times a year in the form of substantial volumes produced by a group of scholars in Eretz Yisrael and the United States. To date, nineteen volumes have been published. Although dedicated to the study of Halakha and Jewish expression, serious articles on genealogy have appeared. Among its authors is Dov Berish Weber, a

young scholar from Boro Park in Brooklyn, who possesses vast knowledge and has worked for many years together with Dr. Neil Rosenstein. Important genealogical material, but on a lesser level, is found in the publication *Beit Aharon VeYisrael* produced in Israel by the Karliner Hasidim. Since it first appeared as a bi-monthly in 5747 and published since then, more than one hundred fifty issues have appeared. Information can also be found in the quarterly *Or Yisrael*, published since 5756 by the Overlander family in Monsey, New York. Appearing without a break since then, fifty issues have been produced. This periodical basically deals with issues dealing with the actuality of Jewish law and Jewish customs but does deal with family trees and pedigrees.

The conclusion that can be drawn from all that has been stated is that one must not despair when a dead end is reached. There is always hope that a previously unknown family tree will be discovered.

*Rabbi Meir Wunder, born in Neshet near Haifa, studied at the Panevezys Kolel in Bnei Brak is both an ordained rabbi and rabbinic attorney. He holds a teacher's diploma and an M.A. degree from the Hebrew University in library science. Over the years he headed various libraries in the country. His last position before retiring was as the head of the Department of Required Volumes at the Jewish and National Library. He is the author of the volumes 1-7 of The Encyclopedia of Galician Rabbis as well as other books and numerous articles. He edits periodicals and bibliographies in Judaica and medicine, leads group tours to Eastern Europe and is a member of the Names Committee of the City of Jerusalem.*

*The Israel Genealogical Society*

*is happy to announce that the articles emanating from lectures at the  
Third Annual IGS One Day Seminar on Jewish Genealogy –  
“The Wandering Jew: Jewish Migration Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries,”  
are now available online. You can download each in a pdf file at  
<http://www.isragen.org.il/NROS/YY2007/index.html>.  
The lectures are in the languages in which they were presented.*

**Annual Conference of the Horowitz Family Research Foundation  
Beit Dizengoff, Tel Aviv, 25 Kislev 5768 – 5 December 2007**

*Gabriel Horowitz*

Translated from the Hebrew

**The Horowitz Family**

The Halevi family lived in the Catalonian city of Girona located in northeast Spain.

The oppression of and limitations on Jews began in Catalonia about one hundred years before the Expulsion from Spain. At some point in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, some decades before the Expulsion in 1492, the family decided to leave Catalonia and try its luck in Prague, which although not yet ruled by the Hapsburgs was already under their influence.

The family left Girona and while on its way a number of family members from the Provence joined them. When they reached the outskirts of Prague, they were not permitted to enter the city. One must remember that every few years, the Jews were expelled from Prague and after a large ransom was paid readmitted with the passage of some time. With funds they brought with them, the family purchased an estate by the name of Horovice. Today a town of that same name is located some forty kilometers southwest of Prague. Eventually, the family moved to Prague where the members of the Jewish community called them Halevi-Horowitz. A document dating from 1492, the year of the Expulsion from Spain, testifies to the family's presence in Prague.

Over the years the family spread throughout eastern and central Europe and with time throughout the world. The family produced three hundred rabbis and leaders of communities. The most noted of them were R' Isaiah Horowitz, the author of the monumental book *Shnei Luchos Habrit* [Two Tablets of the Covenant]. He is better known by the acronym – SH'LAH, taken from the title of his book. He settled in Eretz Yisrael in 1621.

**The Horowitz Family Research Foundation**

The organization was founded on Hanukkah 1991. This is the sixteenth year of its

existence and this is its 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference. The organization came about through the impetus of Beit Hatefutzot where it held its activities in its first years. Activities have taken place during the past years at Beit Hatanakh, Beit Dizengoff, Sderot Rothschild 16, Tel Aviv. The library and archive of the organization are located there and that is where its board meetings, conferences and seminars take place.

**Hanukkah 5768 – The 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference**

The Conference was dedicated to observing the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the decision of the United Nations on the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael and the implementation of that decision by fighting the War of Independence. Members of the Horowitz family contributed in both the diplomatic and military aspects of the struggle. Out of the desire to recognize the support of the Czechoslovakian government in Israel's struggle for independence a lecture was devoted to the 1929 visit of the founder of Czechoslovakia, Tomas Masaryk to Eretz Yisrael.

**The Diplomatic Struggle**

David (Dolek) Horowitz who was a member of the political delegation of the Jewish Agency to the United Nations along with Moshe Sharett and others and later served as the head of the Bank of Israel. David Horowitz himself chronicled these events of his life and the life of the country in his book *In the House of Events* [Hebrew]. At the Conference, Dr. Neri Horowitz, a grandson, spoke on this activity.

The lecturer spread before us the exhausting and difficult diplomatic struggle, first by using both direct and indirect influence on the members of the United Nations Committee for Eretz Yisrael, the committee that recommended the partition of Eretz Yisrael into a Jewish and an Arab state and at the same time working with the United

Nations delegations to get them to vote in favor of partition. It becomes clear that the members of the Jewish Agency delegation worked out every detail leaving nothing to chance. They gathered information on the delegates of each nation, as well as on the foreign offices of that country. They utilized an extensive network of knowledge to influence officials and representatives in addition to the public opinion of the various countries. David Horowitz, one of the leaders of Hashomer Hatzair and later of the Labor Party (Mapai) and a leader of the Trumpeldor work crews, was a highly intelligent man. His fluency and ability to speak several languages contributed a great deal to this political effort.

### **The Military Struggle**

It is not known how many members of the Horowitz family fought in the War of Independence but it is known that eight fell. One of them, Zerubavel Horwitz was posthumously awarded a decoration for bravery. Only twelve fighters received this award. The author of these lines spoke on these eight. Following is an excerpt from the story of Zerubavel Horwitz.

Zerubavel Horwitz served both in the Palmach and the Jewish Brigade and was a commander in the convoy's escort group that broke the siege on Jerusalem. On Shabbat 27 March 1948, a convoy of trucks accompanied by armored vehicles, which were ordinary cars that were strengthened with additional metal sheets, succeeded in reaching Gush Etzion which had been under siege since the middle of January. The thirty-five fighters who were sent to reinforce them did not arrive as they all fell in battle on their way to the Gush.

In order to prevent the convoy from returning to Jerusalem the Arabs concentrated hundreds of armed fighters who set up seven roadblocks on the convoy's path. Zerubavel Horwitz's armored vehicle broke through six of them, but he was unable to break through the seventh, the most massive of them all, as his tires were punctured. Extraordinarily heavy fire was directed at the vehicle. Although there were both lightly and heavily injured soldiers, Zerubavel himself

was unscathed. The armored vehicle returned fire for about seven hours.

Some of the fighters who remained behind fled to a nearby Arab house at a place called Nebi Daniel between Bethlehem and Solomon's Pools. Zerubavel ordered the three lightly injured to abandon the armored vehicle in order to save themselves and he would cover their escape with constant fire. They did not want to leave him behind and asked "What about you?" Zerubavel replied that he did not want to abandon the severely injured who in any event could not escape. The three injured left the armored vehicle under the cover of night and Zerubavel covered them with fire. They managed to get to the house in Nebi Daniel and survived. A short while after they left the armored vehicle they heard a tremendous explosion: Zerubavel had blown himself up along with the seriously injured in order to save them from being mutilated by the Arabs. As was mentioned, he was posthumously awarded a decoration of bravery. He was twenty-five when he fell in battle.

About a month later, on 21 April 1948, Zvi Horowitz aged nineteen was killed at the attack on the police station at Nebi Yusha, now Metzudat Koah, in the Upper Galilee.

In the battle of Latrun in June 1948, Shmuel Horwitz was killed when he attempted to bring water to his comrades at the front.

In July 1948 in the battle for Jerusalem, seventeen-year old Nahum Horwitz was killed. He was a Holocaust survivor who arrived on the illegal immigrant ship *Hama'apil Ha'almoni* and was deported to Cyprus. He came on Aliya in May, volunteered for the IDF and after two months fell in battle.

On 3 November 1948 Joseph Horowitz was killed in the battle at the Iraq Suidan police station.

At the battle of Iraq el Manshiye officer Dov Horwitz lost his life on 28 December 1948.

On the same day another family member by the name of Shmuel Horwitz was killed in an aerial bombardment.

Arieh Horwitz, died at the age of forty-six in a hospital on 17 December from pneumonia that he contracted while serving at a command post of the home guard. He was the oldest member of the family who lost his life during the War of Independence.

### **The Visit of Tomas Masaryk**

Dr. Robert Rehak, attaché of the embassy of the Czech Republic in Israel extended greetings to the Conference in the name of the ambassador of the Czech Republic in Israel. His interesting lecture dealt with the visit of Tomas Masaryk (1850-1937), the founder of Czechoslovakia and its president to Eretz Yisrael in 1929.

Masaryk, the philosophy professor who became a president, supported Zionism from the time of the post-World War I conferences. He paid a private visit to Egypt and Eretz Yisrael. Traveling to various settlements, he mainly met with those who had come from Czechoslovakia. He spent a fair amount of time at the Kibbutzim Beit Alpha and Heftziba, which had been founded seven years before and consisted of only tents and huts. Although he was not accompanied

by a photographer, there are a few pictures extant from various places he visited. These are now in archives and private collections in the Czech Republic. Dr. Rehak spoke of his great efforts spent with the archives and private collectors that were eventually successful as he was able to compile an impressive collection of photographs that he showed us and which brought to life Dr. Masaryk's 1929 visit to Eretz Yisrael.

In addition film clips collected by Dani Ofir and which mainly dealt with interviews with the late David Horowitz along with the leadership of the bank were shown.

*Gabriel Horowitz, born in Czestochowa, Poland, was among the first child Holocaust survivors to arrive in Eretz Yisrael. He holds a BA in geography and international relations from the Hebrew University and a M.Sc. from the Technion in city and regional planning. For thirty-one years he headed Machon Avshalom for the study of Eretz Yisrael in Tel Aviv. He now volunteers with several foundations, among them the Horowitz Family Research Foundation of which he is a past chairman.*



A seminar on  
**SEPHARDIC GENEALOGY**  
in memory of Mrs. Mazal Linenberg-Navon,  
a founding member of the Israel Genealogical Society  
19 June 2008, 16 Sivan 2008  
at Beit Frankfurter, Derekh Bet Lehem 80  
Bak'a, Jerusalem  
Beginning at 13:30  
Admission: NIS 30 for IGS members, NIS 60 for others  
For further information, see  
[www.isragen.org.il/NROS/YY2008-Seph/index-shep2008.html](http://www.isragen.org.il/NROS/YY2008-Seph/index-shep2008.html)



## ***Research On-line***

**<http://www.shoahconnect.org>**

***Israel Pickholtz***

Last May, a new online tool was created to help researchers who have common interests to connect with one another through the Pages of Testimony at Yad Vashem. The site is at <http://www.shoahconnect.org>. It was developed by Logan Kleinwaks, whose previous contributions to genealogy include several optical character recognition projects. The idea behind shoahconnect.org is for you to attach your email address to a Page of Testimony that is connected to your research. In this way other researchers who are registered with shoahconnect.org and who have an interest in the same Page of Testimony can contact you. It is also possible to attach a note indicating an interest in a town and any other shoahconnect.org subscriber with an interest in that same town can contact you. The success of this project is contingent on a large number of subscribers and today, after a year, there are 496 subscribers, with subscriptions having slowed significantly at least since November. Subscription is free and it offers Hebrew, English, Spanish, Russian, Danish, Portuguese and Polish options, though the non-English languages appear on only some parts of the site.

After you subscribe, there are two one-time steps to perform. You download a Google Toolbar and then activate the shoahconnect icon. I had some trouble with that, but Logan walked me through it easily enough. From there it is simple. You find a Page of Testimony of interest, click on the special icon. You can add a note if you wish, for instance “Grandma Rose’s sister,” and that is it. The note can be attached, using Hebrew characters as well. As a side benefit, shoahconnect.org will tell you if you are already associated with that particular Page, a great help to those who visit Yad Vashem from time to time, but cannot remember which Pages are “new.”

You can also go into your account and have shoahconnect.org list all your associated Pages of Testimony, in alphabetical order either by name of victim or by your comment. You can also change the

comment from the account page. I used the comment feature to tell me which of my families a particular victim belong to and then I sorted them according to families. If there were the possibility for two comments per Page of Testimony, I would be able to get much more from this feature.

The figure below shows the first fourteen Pages of Testimony that appear in my own account. Note that the victims’ names have the given name first but the actual sorting is by surname. The Google Toolbar appears at the top and I have marked the special shoahconnect button with a large arrow.

There is one aspect to shoahconnect.org, which can only be accessed through a Firefox browser – which is easy enough to download, even for me. Firefox users benefit from color-coded visits to the Yad Vashem site, where the Pages of Testimony with which you have associated yourself with are highlighted in blue and Pages you have visited but are not associated with yours are highlighted in orange. The bugs I had encountered here at first seem to have worked themselves out.

There is no “live” connection to Yad Vashem. That means that if the victim’s name is changed due, for instance, to a corrected misspelling, it will continue to show up in your account, as it was when you first found it. To fix this I you must delete the original page from your account and reenter the correct one. There were any number of bugs at first, but Logan has been very good about getting them fixed.

I find shoahconnect.org to be a useful tool and not only for its ability to make new contacts. Frankly, I think it will not attract the necessary number of active subscribers to make it really useful for that. I hope I am wrong. In the meantime, it has been a very valuable tool for helping me keep my families’ Pages of Testimony in order.

*Sharsheret Hadorot* will welcome volunteer reviewers to write this column in the future. We also welcome recommendations of online resources and tools for review.

# SHOAHCONNECT

## Account Settings

Your account is associated with the following Pages of Testimony:

As a relative of the victim:

Victim	Date You Last Made Contact**	Remove From Account?	Note	[Save after editing]
Anastasia	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Rita - #213	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Dvora	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Rosa / Eliezer - #135	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Gitel	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Eliezer - #312	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Mendel	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Eliezer - #313	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Metza	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Dina - #248	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Rakhel	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Mensch - #304	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Yaakov	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Rosa / Eliezer - #136	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Yisrael	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Kopel - #134 (Kuperszmid)	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Zirale	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Eliezer - #204	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Eliezer Arshtein	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Eliezer - #138	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Yaakov Bernshtein	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	Buczacz - #327	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Breindel Bierer	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	RavJG - Josef - #179	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Eiga Bierer	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	RavJG - Josef - #180	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
Lea Bierer	Never	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>	RavJG - Josef - #267	<input type="button" value="Save"/>



## Book Review

### *Mathilde Tagger*

Frezis, Raphael. *The Jewish Community of Volos, Greece*. Translated to Hebrew from Greek by Nathan Aaron Kabeli and Moshe Elie Faraggi. Beer Sheva, 2008. 139 p.

This book, which first appeared in Greek in 2002, is the only book dedicated entirely to the community of Volos, hence its importance.

After a short introduction describing the existence of the community that pre-dates the Common Era, the author moves to the modern period especially from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Frezis describes the Jewish quarter, its streets, the synagogue, the life of the community along with its leadership, cultural life, holiday customs and he lists many family names of local Jews. The Nazi conquest, the Holocaust and all its horrors did not bypass Volos. A full chapter details how a large number of local non-Jews rescued Jews. An uncommon item in the

realm of research is listing the rescuers with the names of the Jews they saved next to theirs. The author continues the community's story to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous photographs accompany the text. Unfortunately, they are of poor quality as they are taken from photocopies. There is also a list of births, marriages and deaths and at the end an onomastic analysis that groups the names according to clusters of association. One of the book's remarkable chapters traces the community as reported by the Greek Jewish press in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is an interesting way of presenting the historical events that affected the community.

The book contains two appendices:

1. A key to the names as they appear in the original that is presented in Latin letters.

2. A key with very detailed biographical notations on the people of Volos who lived between 1830 and 1920 as discovered by the author in the Volos Regional Archives. This is translated in its entirety into English, making it possible for English speakers to use this book as a primary source on the Volos community. A look at the second section shows that most of the local family names are the same as one finds in Salonica, the majority being of Sephardi origin: ABASTADO, ASSEO, CASTRO, FARAGGI, SAPORTAS and others. The second group contains names of Hebrew origin with a large number named COHEN and the LEVI name filling several columns. Many family names are Biblical such as DAVID, MENASHE, NAHUM, SAMUEL, SAUL, SOLOMON and others. The third part contains names of Greek origin such as DAFFA, DASKALAKIS, MAISSIS, MOURTZOUKOS, PELOSOF, TARABOULOUS and others. This indicates that there were Romaniote Jews in the community. Interestingly, a few Ashkenazi family names appear.

In conclusion and as an indication of our gratitude to the translators for their efforts until the final product was achieved, we share a few words about them.

Nathan Aaron Kabeli(s) was born in Volos in 1931. The Greek army and partisans, with whom his father had business dealings, found hiding places for the family in the mountains of Thessaly. The family returned to Volos after the war. After completing high school it was expected that he would study in a yeshiva and become a rabbi. Instead, he came on Aliya to Eretz Yisrael in 1949 where he worked as an accountant for Dead Sea Works until his retirement at the age of 65. He lives in a retirement home for Holocaust survivors, *Beit Yona*, in Beer Sheva.

Professor Moshe Elie Faraggi is a great-grandson of Elie Faraggi, one of the Volos community leaders in the 1860s who later moved to Monastir, now located in Macedonia, where his father and grandfathers were born. Born in Haifa in 1932, he is a professor of physical chemistry at Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva. Retiring in 1997, he continued teaching as a volunteer until 2006. In the past few years he began to take an interest in the history of Sephardi Jews who settled in the Balkans. He has published two papers on this topic, one on the activities of Elia Raphael Faraggi in Thessaly and the second on the Covo rabbinic family of Salonica to whom he is related through his grandmother.



## *A Short Story*

### **Annulment of a Marriage by Refusal<sup>1</sup>**

*Yehuda Klausner*

Translated from the Hebrew

The tractate Yevamot of the Babylonian Talmud, chapter 13, page 107a, discusses the objection of a female minor against a marriage arranged for her by her mother or brother. Upon stating her refusal, the minor is freed from the arranged marriage and does not require a get [Jewish religious divorce]. Thus she is considered to be completely

single and is permitted to marry a Kohen, who is not permitted to marry a divorcee. The Mishnah states, “Beit Shammai [The School of Shammai] declares that this is limited to those who were engaged and Beit Hillel [The School of Hillel] says it applies to both those who are engaged and those who are already married. Beit Shammai states

1. Based on: Ya'akov Leib Shapira. *Old Families in Israel*. Published by the author, Tel Aviv, 5742 (1982). [Hebrew]; Meir Wunder: *Elef Margalot*. The Academy for the Preservation of the Heritage of Galician Jewry and the Margalot Family, London and Jerusalem, 5753 (1993). [Hebrew].

that [this right to annul] can only be done in the presence of the husband and not through her brother-in-law [in case of the existence of a Levirate requirement]; Beit Hillel states that she can annul the marriage before both. Beit Shammai says that the ritual must take place in the presence of the husband while the Beit Hillel states that it can be done if he is absent. Beit Shammai says that the ceremony must take place in the presence of the *Beit Din* [rabbinic court], Beit Hillel states that it can be done either before a *Beit Din* or in the absence of one.”

As expected, the law follows Beit Hillel. The Talmud determines that a girl is considered a minor until she reaches the age of twelve years plus one day. Even if she had given birth to a child during that time, she is still permitted to annul her marriage by refusal. Maimonides summarizes the law of refusal’ in his Mishne Torah.

The application of the ‘law of refusal’ was an actuality in ancient times, in the rabbinic period and even later when children were married off at an early age.

R’Asher Lemel the son of the martyr Yosef of Krakow d. 5292 (1532) was the first rabbi in Krakow about 5267 (1507) and served as the head of the rabbinic court and the yeshiva. He was also a Kabbalist and the author of the book *Emek Habrakha* [The Valley of Blessing]. He married the daughter of R’Moshe b’Efraim FISHEL, d. 5255 (1495) and was the brother-in-law of R’Ya’akov b’Joseph POLAK, 5220-5295 (1460-1535) who devised *shitat hahilukim*, a unique method of the study of the Talmud. R’Ya’akov Polak married Esther, another daughter of R’Moshe Fishel. R’Asher Lemel was also the father of Gedalia, the father of the MAHARAM of Lublin, R’Meir b’Gedalia, 5318-5367 (1558-1617). R’Moshe Fishel inherited all the businesses of his father R’Efraim ASHKENAZI FISHEL and was also a banker.

A fire broke out in Krakow in 5254 (1494) destroying many homes and the Jewish quarter was damaged. The townspeople, naturally, blamed the Jews for setting the fire. The mob pillaged Jewish stores and on the orders of King Jan Albert, the leaders of the Jewish community were arrested, among them the banker R’Moshe Fishel and his son-in-law R’Ya’akov Polak. Because of the

nonstop pressure of the residents and of the Cardinal Friedrich, the king’s brother, in 5255 (1495) the king ordered the expulsion of the Jews of Krakow. The Jews settled in nearby Kazimierz. Through the efforts of powers close to the king, the imprisoned Jews were freed but R’Moshe Fishel died during the expulsion. His widow, Rachel Rashka, continued operating her husband’s businesses serving as the court-banker for the queen mother Elizabeth. For this reason, she was permitted to remain in her house in order to better serve the royal family.

King Jan Albert (ruled 1492-1501) and also his successor Alexander Jagiello (ruled 1501-1506) owed her large sums of money. In 5258 (1498) the king granted the Fishel family the right to collect taxes from the Jews. In 5272 (1512) King Sigismund I, (ruled 1506-1548) appointed Efraim Frantzisek Fishel, the son of Moshe Fishel and Rachel Rashka, who was involved in banking and not in Torah study, as the chief and exclusive tax collector of all of Poland’s Jews. In 5292 (1532), after the death of R’Asher Lemel, the rabbi and physician Dr. Moshe Fishel the son of Efraim Frantzisek Fishel, who studied in Padua, was appointed rabbinic judge and head of the yeshiva of Krakow and surrounding areas.

Rachel Rashka, the court banker and mother-in-law of R’Ya’akov Polak, married off her minor daughter before she reached the age of twelve to a yeshiva student R’David ZIDNER. She later changed her mind and requested that her son-in-law divorce his wife. R’Ya’akov Polak, basing himself on the laws of refusal, recommended that his sister-in-law ‘reject’ her husband and thus be freed from him according to the laws of the Talmud.

Some fifty years previously, in the middle of the fourteenth century, R’Menahem of Mirsburg, in Saxony, one of the leading deciders [poskim] of Jewish law in Germany, and the author of the book *M’eil Tzedek* [Cloak of Righteousness], annulled the option of the ‘right of refusal.’ He only permitted the nullification of an arranged marriage for a minor by means of a religious divorce [get] and no longer by simply stating ‘I refuse.’ The rulings of R’Menahem were accepted by all the Ashkenazic Jewish communities, yet R’Ya’akov Polak did not hesitate to overlook the edict and permitted

his sister-in-law to nullify her marriage through the 'right of refusal.' The other rabbis of Ashkenaz came out against him, led by his former teacher R'Ya'akov b'Moses MARGOLIES of Luka-Nuremberg as well as R'Yehuda MINTZ of Padua, who actually excommunicated R'Yakov Polak until he returned his sister-in-law to her husband or until a proper religious divorce was issued. R'Yakov Polak was forced to leave Krakow,

returning to the city in 5369 (1509) on the basis of a special letter of protection that King Sigismund I granted him. However, he did not return to his former rabbinic position.

His mother-in-law, the wealthy Rachel the court-banker, established a large yeshiva for him that, because of the incredible depth of R'Jacob Polak's knowledge, soon became a center for Torah for all of Poland.

## Notes from the Library<sup>1</sup>

*Harriet Kasow*

### New Books

*Folklore Research Center Studies. Volume I*, edited by Dov Noy and Issachar Ben-Ami. Jerusalem. Magnes Press. 1970. 116 p.

**Subjects:** Judaism, Folklore.

**Location:** JERL, ULS. GEN 13-1.

Volume I of this periodically issued publication has a substantial English section. Two articles of interest include: "Reflexions sur l'onomastique judeo-nord africaine" by David Corcos and "From Shaikh to Mazkir: structural continuity and organizational change in the leadership of a Tripolitanian (Libya) Jewish Community" by Harvey Goldberg.

*Jews in Russian and Eastern Europe Summer 1 (52)*. Jerusalem, Hebrew University, The Leonard Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry, 2004. 253 p.

**Subjects:** Eastern Europe, Periodicals.

**Location:** JERL, ULS. PLA 390.

Some articles of interest to the Jewish genealogist include: "The post-Soviet Jewish Population in Russia and the world" by Mark Tolts and, "The transformation of the shtetl in the USSR in the 1930s" by Elina Chkolnikova.

Schwartz, Eliyahu Yekutiel. *My life's story 1915-2000; Biography of Lieutenant Colonel Eliyahu Yekutiel Schwartz z"l the son of Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Shwartz z"l and Rivka Schwartz, nee Klein z"l*, edited by David H. Wiener. Merion Station, PA, Eliyahu Yekutiel Schwartz Memorial Committee. 2005. 132 p., photos.

**Subjects:** Israel, Biography.

**Location:** JERL, ULI PLA 393.

Walch, Timothy. *Our Family, Our Town: Essays on Family and Local History Sources in the National Archives*. Washington, D.C., National Archives and Record Administration, 1987. 223p. Illus. index.

**Subjects:** United States, Archives.

**Location:** JERL. GEN 118.

This is an encompassing book on United States records. As this includes immigration and census records among others, it is most useful for those who have come from the United States or whose relatives went to the United States.

Zuntz, Jehuda. *Die Geschichte der Familie Zuntz, 1488-1998; gesammelt und bearbeitet*. Sde Eliyahu, 1998. 312 p., ill. Genealogical Tables, (German and Hebrew in parallel columns).

**Subjects:** Germany, Family History.

**Location:** JERL, ULI, FAM 167.

1. See the list of Hebrew books in the Hebrew section



## Abstracts of Articles from Foreign Journals

*Meriam Haringman, Coordinator*

### English-Language Journals (*Meriam Haringman*)

#### **Roots-Key, Volume 27 Number 3-4**

The Los Angeles Genealogical Society has done a great service to researchers by devoting an entire issue to the subject of the

shtetl. There are articles documenting ancestors, how to analyze the data and reconstruct the past as well as how best to draw on new material in Yizkor books, memoirs and town association publications. Perhaps most important, is how to preserve this information for the future. Sonia and

David Hoffman suggest researching one shtetl so all the former residents can pool their resources and see what links exist. They did just this with the town of Ariogala in Lithuania. Community records from Mattersdorf, Minsk, Viltona, Krotoszyn and Lodz are described together with the archives where they can be seen. There is also practical advice on how to create a shtetlpage, how to preserve names and places of the family and even how to prepare a slide show to exhibit your findings.

***Avotaynu*, Volume XXIII, Number 3, Fall 2007**

For those living in Israel perhaps one of the most relevant and useful articles is by Rose Feldman "Military Resources in Eretz Israel." She not only notes which types of records are available but furnishes a table of all the groups from Bar Giora in 1907 to the Israel Defense Forces in 1948. There were Jewish soldiers during the Turkish rule in World War I, during the British Mandate and of course during World War II. She analyzes the various groups and lists archives in Israel where material can be found.

Kahilile Mehr has opened the door for the uninitiated to archival Internet sites in Eastern Europe. In the past, researchers were dependent on local clerks or researchers to get to the archives themselves. Now many more listings have information online. These include Russia, Belarus, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Lithuania and Slovenia.

An important and well-researched article on Jewish history in the former USSR is by Lilia Belousova who describes the sources found in the State Archives of Odessa. A version of her article appears on the Internet at:

<http://www.rtrfoundation.org/Odessa.html>

Stephen Morse explains and demonstrates how to use Deep Linking and Deeper Linking to get the most out of existing search applications. His basic premise is that many people do not get the most out of websites since they do not know how to explore the mass of information at the site.

Thomas Jones writes about the curriculum for college-level study of genealogy. There are many institutions of higher learning which give courses that enable the student to upgrade his genealogical research skills.

As noted previously in *Sharsheret Hadorot*, Mathilde Tagger has been awarded the 2007 IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award. Avotaynu interviews Mathilde and shows us a scholar who has devoted many years to the field of Sephardic Jews, an area that was not as developed as the Ashkenazic genealogy studies.

***Shemot –The Jewish Genealogical Journal of Great Britain*, Sept. 2007, Volume 15, No. 3**

Richard Cooper, visited the towns of Rzeszow, Tarnow, Lezajsk and Dombrova, which held clues for the Millet and Letzer families. Cooper gives the address and telephone numbers of local archives and also lists some twenty people, based on photos of the tombstones.

Probing family wills not only provides data on the distribution of property but helps flesh out family history. Hazel Dakers shows how she found a large amount of information on her Norden = Norton family.

In a similar vein Saul Issroff describes how a British serviceman, Aubrey Lionel Bernstein, who died in World War II was finally found in a cemetery in Iran.

Gary Snapper manages to put the pieces together for the family of his third-great-grandfather Rabbi Lewis Goldberg who lived in Nottingham from 1850-1858 and his wife Hannah Brasch. His search took him to Ballarat, Australia where a number of family members settled.

Georgina Marks went to the Le Marche area on the Adriatic coast of Italy to try and find her roots there. She came back with information on the communities of Senigallia, Urbino and Ascoli Piceno along with lovely photos and texts from the cemeteries.

***Stammbaum*, Issue 31, Summer 2007**

Trying to understand how Jews took their official names is nerve-wracking. Claus Hirsch explains that German Jews had six different ways to write their names. The writer gives concrete examples of all the possibilities.

Freddy Sapir travels around the world to look up his Kissinger relatives and then finds them in Tel Aviv. Henry Kissinger is on his family tree.

The tale of the German-Jewish soldiers in the American army, by Joshua Franklin, reveals the desire to take revenge against the country

that rejected them. In addition, these 9500 soldiers had to prove their patriotism to their adopted country.

The Goldmans of Burghersdorp, Germany went to South Africa in 1847. The article by Adam Yamey relates the story of the descendants both in South Africa and back again to Europe.

Ute Metternich has done a great service by describing the life of the community and of the individual Jewish families in the small town of Oberwinter in the Rhine Valley over a period of hundreds of years.

A review of the book tells about the participation of Jews in the Franco-Prussian. The book, written by Peter Simonstein Cullman, discusses the hesitancy of the Jewish leaders to have their members serve in the army.

#### **Dutch-Language Journals (Liba Maimon)**

##### **Misjpoge, 20<sup>th</sup> year, 2007, No. 4**

Harmen Snel writes about Alexander Abraham Stuttgard (1779-1851) as part of his series on schoolteachers in the public school system in Amsterdam in the year 1823 (13<sup>th</sup> installment).

Daniel Metz's "Big and Small Soccer Heroes" describes Jewish soccer clubs both in Amsterdam and the provinces as well as Jews in non-Jewish soccer clubs. Nowadays, the well-known Dutch soccer club Ajax is called the "Jodenclub" (Jewish club), not because of its players religious affiliation but rather the fact that many of its supporters are Jewish. In its 100 years of existence, only four Jewish players ever belonged to the first eleven. One of them, Edward (Eddy) Hamel died in Auschwitz in 1943. He also mentions Jewish sport journalists. One of them, Han Hollander, even covered the Olympic Games held in Berlin in 1936.

In official acts, Jews used their Dutch first names whereas they sometimes signed with their Jewish one. For example it appears that a letter of exchange signed by Soesman Ephraim, was in fact the same person as Joost Gerritse. For genealogical research, this phenomenon can lead to mistakes.

In July 2007 an agreement was reached between the Dutch Jewish Genealogical

Society and the Association for Dutch Genealogy in Israel – *Akevot* making the databases of each association accessible to the members of both societies.

The web site of the Archive of Antwerp, Belgium: [www.felixarchief.be](http://www.felixarchief.be) provides information about non-Belgians who lived in Antwerp until 1930.

#### **French-Language Journals (Mathilde Tagger)**

##### ***Revue du Cercle de Généalogie Juive*, No. 91, Juillet-Septembre 2007**

Paul Faustini describes the early settlement of Jews of Ennery in the province of Moselle from 1572 to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He uses contracts and other agreements, as well as tombstones, to trace the genealogy of the community.

Jacques Taieb gives the demographic and anthropological history of Algiers from the 11th century to 1830 when the French took over. In 1391, Jews from Aragon and the island of Majorca had already arrived in Algiers. Two rabbis, Ishak BARCHECHET and Shimon ben Semah DURAN, brought the concept of chief rabbi from the old country.

John Berkowitz goes into the origin of Joseph GUGGENHEIM = Juggenheim family and how his family branched out from its original residence in Frankfurt AM from 1555.

##### ***Revue du Cercle de Généalogie Juive*, No. 92, Octobre-Décembre 2007**

Bernard Levy discusses a picture taken on April 17, 1912, in Le Vesinet, a suburb of Paris. Some sixty persons from prominent Jewish Parisian families had gathered there to watch the total eclipse of the sun. The author, who is one of their descendants, identifies them, shows how they are related and sketches their personal fates.

In the previous issue Françoise Job published an article about the surname WERTENS-CHLAG that was adopted by Jews from the Haut-Rhin Departement in fulfillment of the Napoleonic decree of July 20, 1808. Several readers were startled by the enigma the paper contained. Answers to their questions are published here.

Bernard Lyon-Caen analyzes the deed executed by two Jews from Metz, Isaac



OULIF and Nathan Olry CAHEN in the office #41 of the Royal Counselors, Notaries in Paris on August 10, 1722. One party acquires the other's half of a house, which they jointly owned in Metz. The author exploits the document from three points of view: early deeds such as these involving Jews in the Registers of the Parisian Notaries are rare; under what conditions did the Jews in Metz live and how does this deed fit into the history of the Jews from Metz?

Georges Graner reports on the November 2007 seminar organized in Marseilles by Daniele Fareau, the president of the Marseilles section of Cercle de Généalogie Juive. Three historians lectured on Jewish Presence from Antiquity to Present, Jews in Marseilles in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and The Role Jews Played in Marseilles during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The seminar also hosted genealogy workshops and provided visits to town and department archives.

Monique Levy and Jean-Philippe Chaumont have published the first volume of Dictionnaire biographique des rabbins/ ... en France et Algérie. Paris, Berg International ed., 2007. Volume 1 (French) [Biographical dictionary of Rabbis... in France and Algeria] covering 1807 to 1905. Monique Levy explains the purpose and use of the book.

Veronique Cahen published the computerization of the Ketuba (marriage contract) stubs at the Paris Consistoire from 1872 to 1884, to be followed by two additional volumes leading up to 1912.

#### **ETSI, Vol. 10, No. 38, September 2007**

This issue contains two articles dealing with the history of two communities in Morocco and a third article focusing on the history of a family whose origin was in Algeria and whose descendants settled in Eretz Yisrael where they were involved in many areas.

The Jews of Chauen in 1877 by Philippe Abensur.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Alliance Israélite Universelle served as a kind of intermediary for the communities of the Mediterranean basin when misfortune struck any of them. So it was in 1877 that Chauen and its surrounding communities came to the aid of Turkish Jews who suffered greatly because of the Russo-Turkish wars. Abensur found in

the Alliance Archives detailed lists of contributors from Chauen, Tetuan and Larache.

Symposium on the Jews of Fez that took place in Tel Aviv in July 2007 was reported on by Vidal Serfaty. The symposium was organized by Professor Joseph Shitrit of Haifa University in cooperation with the Organization of Former Fez Residents. It consisted of three parts – the history of the Jews of Fez before and after the Expulsion from Spain, the Fez community as a continuation of life in Spain and religious poetry in the Fez community.

#### **ETSI, Vol. 10, No. 39, December 2007**

This issue is devoted to The “Purim of Saragosa” that took place more than 600 years ago. There has been some question whether it refers to Zaragoza (Saragosa) in Spain or Syracuse in Sicily. Through genealogical research carried out in the Spanish Foreign Office, the author of the article, Maggy Saragossi, discovered a letter written in 1904 that states that Presiado Saragossi, the Spanish consul in the city of Gallipoli in Turkey was present at the celebration marking the miracle known as “The Purim of Saragosa” in which many Jewish residents of the city were saved on 2 February 1420 (18-19 Shevat 5180).

Laurence Abensur-Hazan's article deals with three Jewish families involved in the rug industry in Izmir, Turkey in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. She brings quotes from various travel books that praise the quality of Izmir carpets. When the Alliance Israélite Universelle planned to establish vocational workshops in Izmir, it also opened one that taught carpet weaving. In one operation the HABIF and POLAKO families were partners while the PONTREMOLI family owned the other. The author traces the origins of the Polako family relying on a 1797 document from the Habsburg consul in Venice. The Polako and Habif (a Turkish corruption of Habib) were also connected through marriage. The Pontremoli family was noted because of the three rabbis among its sons.

Concluding this issue is a bibliography of new articles on Sephardic family names. Thirteen publications with annotations are presented. It is unfortunate that the book by Professor Paul Sebag on Tunisian Jewish names (Paris, 2002) and the book by Barukh Pinto on Turkish Jewish names (Istanbul, 2004) were not included.

