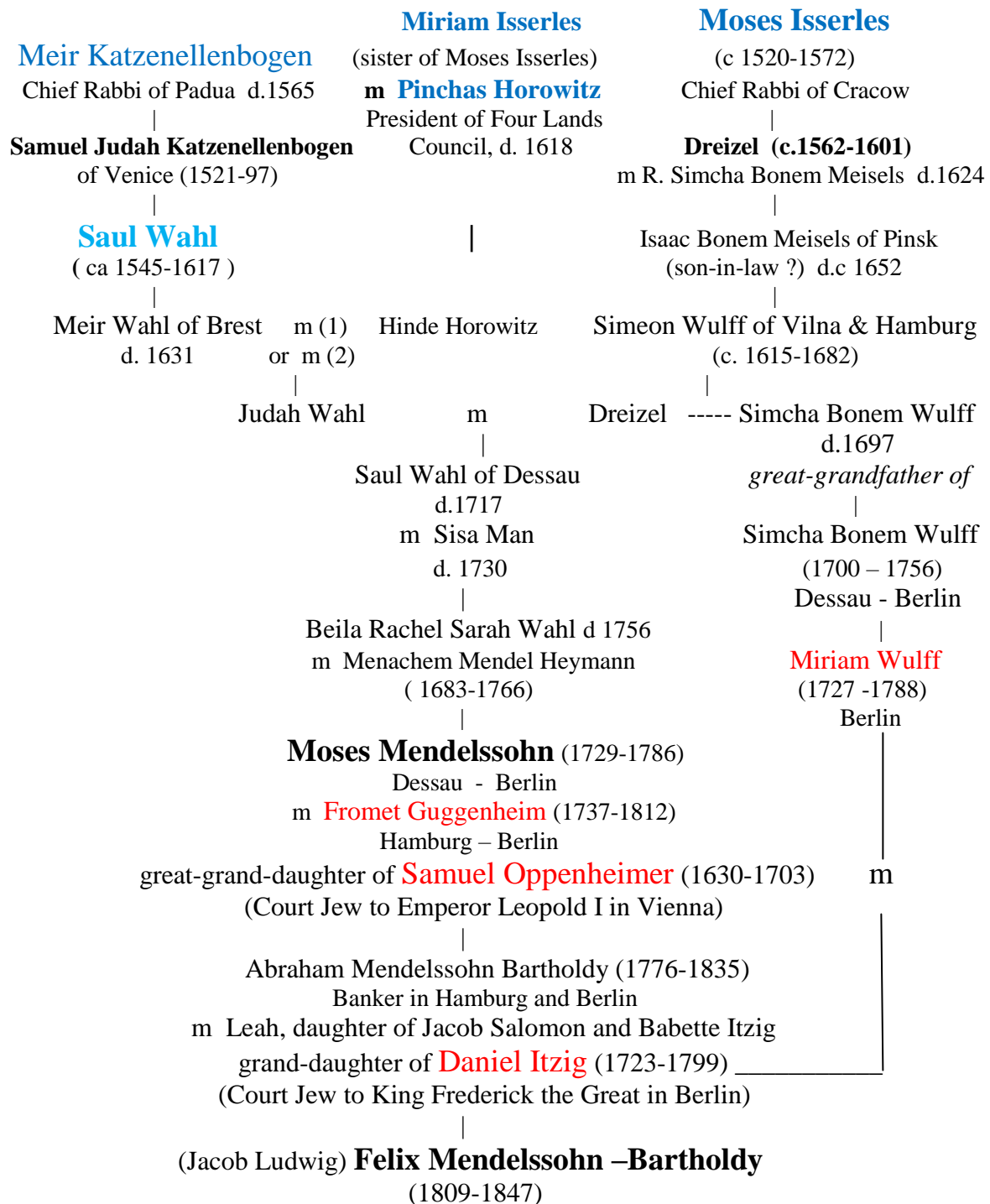


## Ancestry of Felix Mendelssohn and the ancestral background shared with Edward Gelles



## Footnotes

Felix Mendelssohn and Edward Gelles have considerable common ancestry, including Saul Wahl (Katzenellenbogen and Israel Isserl, the father of Moses and Miriam Isserles).

Felix Mendelssohn's ancestors also include Daniel (Jaffe) Itzig, Samuel Oppenheimer, Guggenheim, and others. Through Daniel Itzig's wife Miriam Wulff, Felix Mendelssohn is descended from Moses Isserles via Simcha Bonem Wulff as well as the latter's sister Dreizel Wulff.

Daniel Itzig's forebears were called Jaffe but Daniel adopted Itzig as his family name. He is believed to be descended from Mordecai Jaffe (1530- 1612), the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen (known as the "Levush" after the title of his magnum opus). Edward Gelles is also descended on his paternal side from Mordecai Jaffe (the Gelles name being a matronymic of Moses Menachem Mendel Levush, aka Moses Gelles of Brody, from his marriage to a daughter of Rabbi Shmuel Gelles).

In 16<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> century Prague Jaffe and Gelles were noted families and their names were also recorded in Grodno and Posen. In my first book, *An Ancient Lineage*, connections of my paternal Gelles line with Levush and Jaffe are discussed. My immediate family line came down from Lithuania to Brody in Galicia at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently came to Vienna.

As for Jaffe and Gelles in the province of Posen, I mention some early links to Krotoschin and Lissa. I noted that distant connections who came from these towns in later times included Rabbis Siegfried Gelles (1884-1947) and his son Rabbi Benjamin Gelles (1916-2000). The province underwent a number of frontier changes between Poland and Prussia, being incorporated by the latter in the days of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Polish partitions. (*An Ancient Lineage*, p.277, note 14).

The family of Daniel Itzig came to Berlin from this area, namely from Grätz or Grodzisk Wielkopolski, to give the town its German and Polish names. Daniel Itzig's father, Isaac Daniel Jaffe was born there in 1679 and died in Berlin in 1741.

Inter-marriages of the Mendelssohn and Itzig families and connections with some of the leading Ashkenazi Court Jews of their time are shown on a following chart ("Mendelssohn and connections to some Ashkenazi Court Jews").