

Gelles, Friedman, Horowitz, and Benveniste

Edward Gelles

Introduction

My grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles was a close adherent of Grand Rabbi Israel Friedman of Czortkow, who was a scion of a leading Chasidic family in eastern Europe. Both lived for some years in Vienna and died there within a year of each other. My grandfather is buried next to Rabbi Friedman, the latter's wife, and one of their sons. My father told me that our respective families were related, but no further details were forthcoming. More than sixty years later I met Rabbi Israel Friedman's eponymous great-grandson who is Rabbi of a "Czortkow" Chasidic community in Manchester and asked him to take some DNA tests. Matching DNA segments enabled me to infer a relationship based on common Horowitz and Katzenellenbogen ancestors. Some of the connections are shown in the preceding charts on my web site. The application of DNA tests (described in my book *The Jewish Journey*, chapter 21), is continuing to clarify a number of my Gelles connections.

Horowitz and Epstein origins

Horowitz and Epstein families, who took their names from the towns of Horovice near Prague in Bohemia and Eppstein in Germany, flourished in central and eastern Europe in recent centuries but are believed to go back to the Benveniste and Shem Tov Halevi who were in medieval Spain about a thousand years ago. The supposed links can be seen on the appended chart which also shows connections of Benveniste to Kalonymos, Saltiel (Shealtiel) and others (see *The Jewish Journey*, chapter 2).

The “Family Finder” autosomal DNA tests, provided by FamilyTree DNA, show that sometimes DNA segments, shared by me or my closer cousins with Horowitz and/or Epstein probands, are also shared, in all or in part, with some Benveniste and Saltiel.

Autosomal DNA matches from FamilyTree DNA data base

Total shared DNA (cM) Longest shared No. of shared segments
segments (cM)

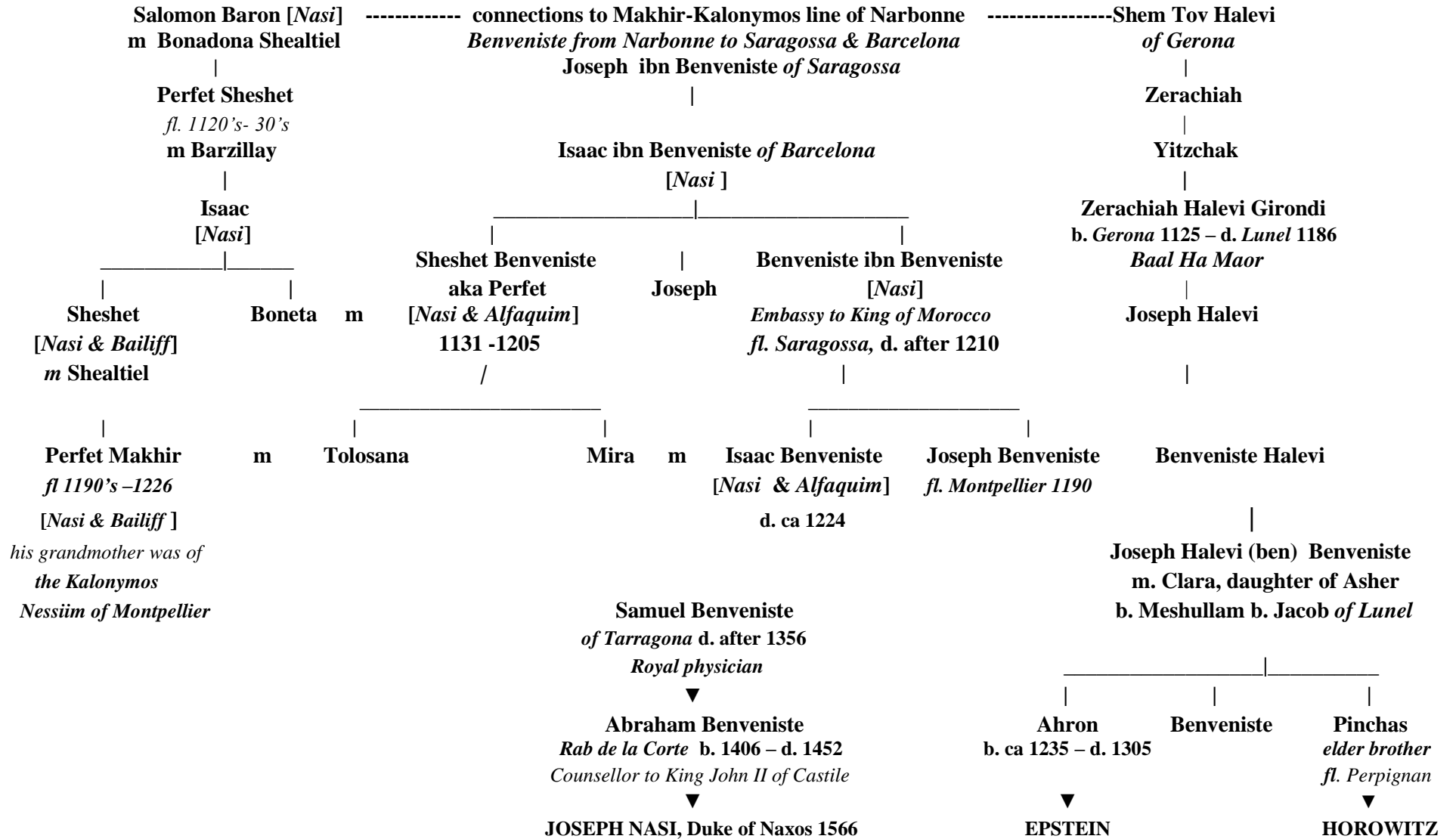
Edward Gelles with			
Miles Saltiel	60	9	14
Naftali Horowitz	87	8	24
Israel Friedman	96	9	28
B. Kohnstamm Piven	96	8	24
BatSheva Epstein Dembo	129	10	28
Stuart Rothenberg with			
Arthur Benveniste	46	15	13
Miles Saltiel	77	9	20
Marjorie Murray	125	13	30
B. Kohnstamm Piven	120	13	32
Harvey Horowitz	85	10	24
Susan L Weinstein with			
Arthur Benveniste	49	8	15
Philippe Saltiel	78	17	19
Stuart Rothenberg	106	15	24
Naftali Horowitz	97	9	25
BatShev Epstein Dembo	95	13	26
Israel Friedman with			
Philippe Saltiel	80	11	21
Edward Gelles	96	9	28
B. Kohnstamm Piven	93	8	22
Carol Joan Baird	127	8	37
Marcelo Benveniste	28	12	8

We all have a genetic mixture with greater or lesser Sephardic, Ashkenazi, and indeed non-Jewish affinities. The relation of genetic admixtures to our millennial migrations are discussed and illustrated elsewhere on my web page.

Autosomal DNA come from both paternal and maternal sides of each proband. Dr Stuart Rothenberg and Susan L Weinstein are my paternal first and second cousins once removed.

I have one or perhaps two Horowitz great-grandparents, while Epsteins are among more distant forebears (Larry Epstein, for example, shown on an additional appended autosomal DNA chart, is my Y-DNA 62/67 marker match).

Benveniste *Nessiim* of Barcelona and Shem Tov Halevi of Gerona



Footnotes

The above chart focuses on Sheshet ben Isaac ben Joseph Benveniste, also called Perfet (Catalan for the Hebrew name Meshullam), his brother Benveniste ibn Benveniste and his nephew Isaac Benveniste. They were Jewish community leaders with the title of *Nasi* and also served Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona and succeeding Kings of Aragon in more than one capacity.

(*Alfaquim* = counsellor; *Bailiff* = financial administrator). Their connections to other leading Jewish families such as the Shealtiel and Barzillay are indicated on the chart.

(References: Elka Klein, *Jews, Christian Society, and Royal Power in Medieval Barcelona*, Univ. of Michigan Press, 2006; Moshe Shealtiel-Gracian, *Shaltiel*, Academy Chicago Publishers, 2005).






A later Benveniste line runs to the family of Joseph Nasi, whose economic and political services to the Ottoman Empire were recognized when he was made Duke of Naxos in 1566 (Cecil Roth, *The House of Nasi : Dona Gracia*, p 13, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1948).

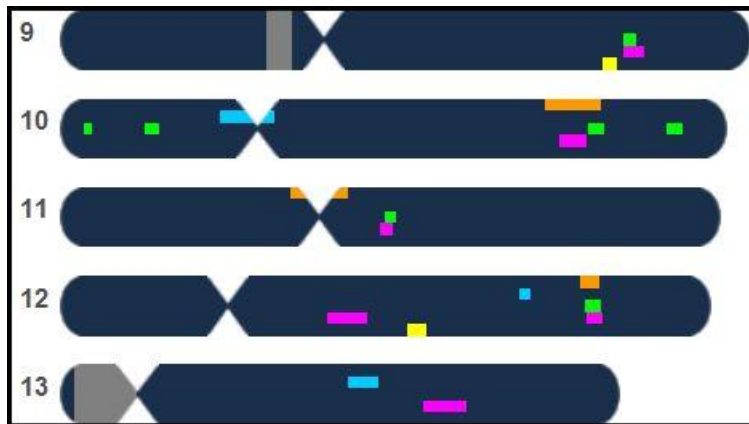
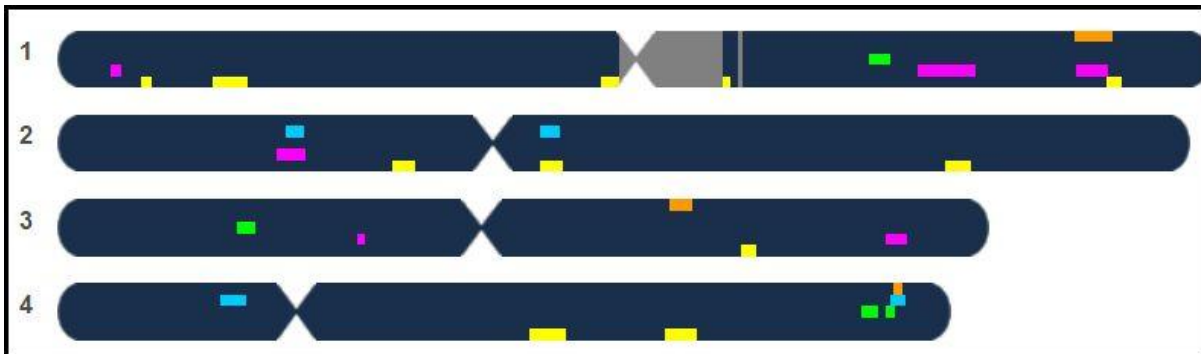
According to family traditions, the Epstein and Horowitz families descend respectively from Aharon and his elder brother Pinchas, the sons of Joseph Halevi (ben) Benveniste and his wife Clara, although some believe that a brother of Pinchas and Aharon, named Benveniste, was the progenitor of the Horowitz line (see Meir Wunder, *Meorei Galicia*, Vol. 6 : 450, Jerusalem 2005).

Rabbi Aharon de na Clara ben Yosef Halevi of Barcelona in his book *Bedek Habayit* gave his paternal pedigree as follows: *Aharon Halevi b. Yosef b. Benveniste b. Yosef b. Zerachiah b. Shem Tov*. Later scholars had *Zerachiah* as the son of *Yitzchak* son of *Zerachiah* (see Chayim Josef David Azulai, *Shem Hagedolim*, Jerusalem 1979, Vol.1 page 18; Itzhak Epstein, Epstein Research message 112 posted 31. 12.2002). So it appears that descent from *Zerachiah* ben *Yitzchak* Halevi Girondi to *Aharon* Halevi proceeded via *Zerachiah's* son *Joseph* to a *Benveniste* (grandfather of *Aharon* and *Pinchas* Halevi), and then to their father *Joseph* Halevi ben *Benveniste* (see also Henri Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, new edition, Philo Press, Amsterdam 1969 pp 330 et seq).

A *Joseph* Benveniste is believed to have been the brother of the *Nasi* *Isaac* Benveniste (see Jewish Encyclopedia article on Benveniste and Neil Rosenstein, Ashkenazi rabbinic families, RAV-SIG online journal). This *Isaac* Benveniste, a distinguished leader of Aragonese Jewry, died at a mature age circa 1224 and is identified as a son of *Benveniste ibn Benveniste* (Elka Klein, *loc cit*). *Aharon* Halevi was born around 1235 to 1240 (H, Gross, *loc cit*) and one of his teachers was his elder brother *Pinchas*. Their father *Joseph* might have been born round about 1195-1205 so he could not be a brother of the *Nasi* *Isaac* ben *Benveniste*. However, a *Joseph* Benveniste is recorded as living in Montpellier around 1190.

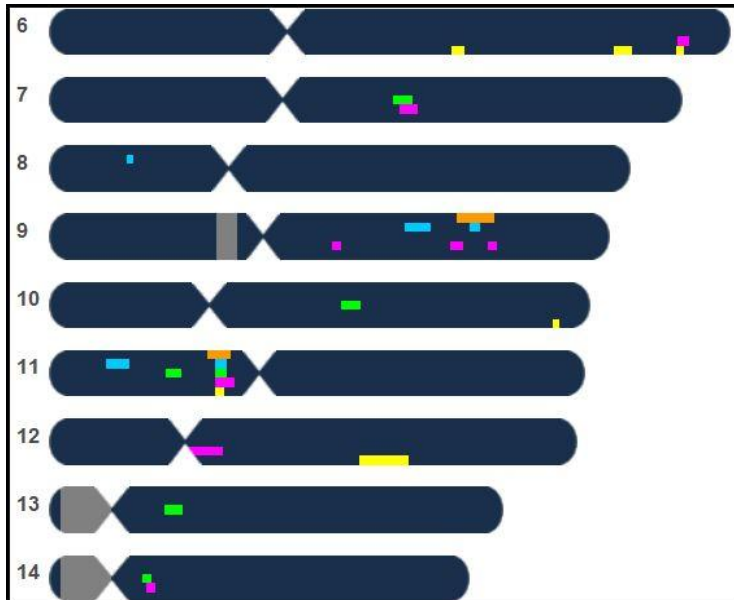
Autosomal DNA matches of Edward Gelles
 with the following probands on selected chromosomes
 (giving the number of shared segments)
 showing matches above 3 cM

Miles Saltiel (duplicate)	Shared Segments: 14	
Naftali Horowitz	Shared Segments: 24	
Israel Friedman	Shared Segments: 28	
Benjamin Kohnstamm Piven	Shared Segments: 24	
BatSheva Epstein Dembo	Shared Segments: 28	



Autosomal DNA matches of Dr Stuart Rothenberg
 with the following probands on selected chromosomes
 (giving total number of shared segments)
 matches above 3 cM

Arthur Benveniste Shared Segments: 13	
Miles Saltiel (duplicate) Shared Segments: 20	
Marjorie Murray Shared Segments: 30	
Benjamin Kohnstamm Piven Shared Segments: 32	
Harvey Horowitz Shared Segments: 24	

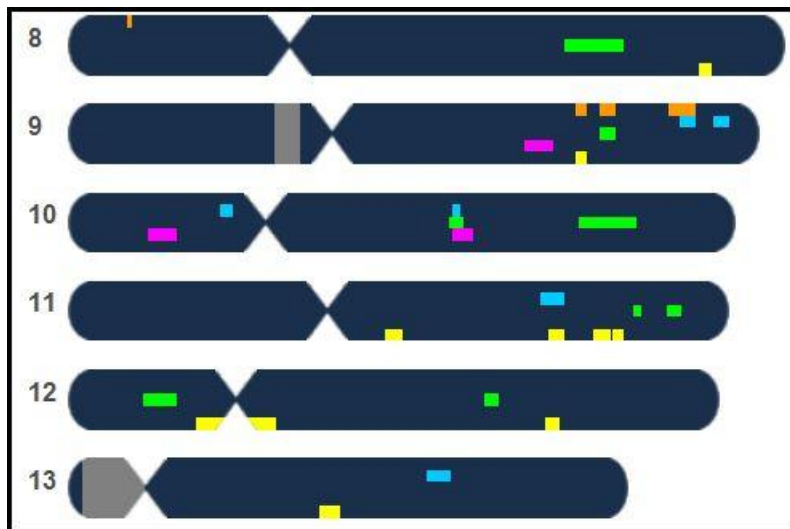


Autosomal DNA matches of Dr Stuart Rothenberg
 with Arthur Benveniste, Susan Lee Lipsitt, Alice Jaffe,
 Larry Epstein, and Steven M Horwitz
 matches above 3 cM



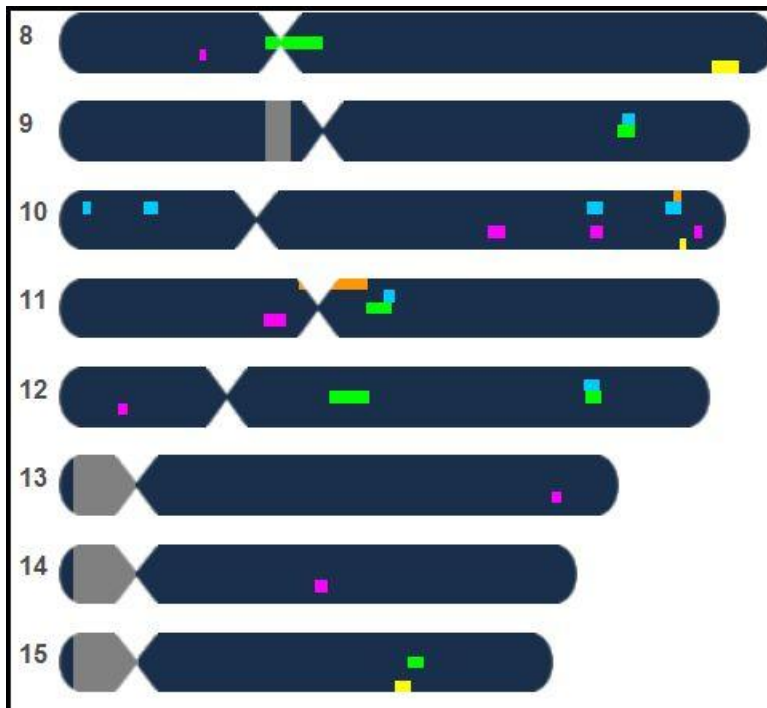
Autosomal DNA matches of Susan Lee Lipsitt (nee Weinstein)
 with the following probands on selected chromosomes
 (giving total number of shared segments)
 matches above 3 cM

Arthur Benveniste	Shared Segments: 15	
Philippe Saltiel	Shared Segments: 19	
Stuart Rothenberg	Shared Segments: 24	
Naftali Horowitz	Shared Segments: 25	
BatSheva Epstein Dembo	Shared Segments: 26	



Autosomal DNA matches of Israel Friedman
 with the following probands on selected chromosomes
 (giving total numbers of shared segments)
 matches above 3 cM

Philippe Saltiel Shared Segments: 21	
Edward Gelles Shared Segments: 28	
Benjamin Kohnstamm Piven Shared Segments: 22	
Carol Joan Baird Shared Segments: 37	
Marcelo Benveniste Shared Segments: 8	



Notes

Saltiel Ancient paternal Sephardic line (see **Benveniste** chart and references)

Miles Saltiel has DNA matches with “Benveniste” cousins Marjorie Murray and Jarrett Ross. The Family Finder records his matches with many probands having “Horowitz” and “Epstein” connections, no doubt mainly relating to his mother’s Ashkenazi (Wesker) ancestry.

Philippe Saltiel’s wife Béatrice has informed me that 19th / 20th century Saltiel – Benveniste marriages are recorded in Salonika where branches of these families came after expulsions from Spain many hundreds of years ago

Ancestors listed on FamilyTreeDNA site :

Arthur Benveniste

Recorded ancestors :

Benveniste (anywhere) Capeluto (Rhodes, Greece) Israel (Rhodes, Greece) Navarro (Rhodes, Greece) Russo (Rhodes, Greece) Russo (Izmir, Turkey)

Marcelo Benveniste

Recorded ancestors :

Paternal: David Benveniste, b. 1840 Maternal: Uriel Berro, d. 1871

Born in Argentina. Descendant of Sephardic Jews from Rhodes Island, (now) Greece, and descendant from Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. with ancestral surnames :

Aljadeff (Rhodes) Alhadeff Alhadeff (Rhodes) **Benveniste** Benveniste Benatar Berro Berro (Rhodes) Bardavid Hasson Israel Mass Menache Russo Tchukran Tarica

Marjorie Murray

Recorded ancestors :

Butzbach (Germany) Baum (Germany) **Benveniste** (Spain) Brilin (Germany) Calish (Prussia) **De Lunel** (Spain) Dinkelspiel (Germany) Dreyfus (Germany) **Eppstein** (Germany) Glaser (Lithuania) Gallinger (Germany) Gurevich (Russia) **HaLevi Horowitz (USA) Horwitz** (USA) Isaacs (Prussia) Jacobs (Prussia) Kantor (Lithuania) Levy (Russia) Magnus (England) Mazursky (Belarus) Neubrick (Prussia) Oppenheimer (Germany) Oppenheim (Germany) Segal (Germany) Weisfeld (Belarus) Wanano (Gibraltar)

Benjamin Kohnstamm Piven

Recorded ancestors

Abrahams Abrahams (Rijssen, Netherlands) Blumenthal Blumenthal (Austria-Hungary) Bromet (Amsterdam, Netherlands) Daniel Daniel (Konstanz, Germany) Dreifus Dreifus (Aargau, Switzerland) Frieser Frieser (Bavaria, Germany) Frank Frank (Hesse, Germany) Guggenheim Guggenheim (Lengnau, Switzerland) Goudsmit Goldsmith Goldsmith / Goudsmit (Rijssen, Netherlands) Günzburg (Ulmo-Günzburg) (Frankfurt, Germany; Porto, Italy; Portugal) Greenbaum Greenbaum (Austria-Hungary) Ha-Kohen **Ha-Kohen (Spain; Verona, Italy; Amsterdam, Netherlands) Heavenrich Heavenrich (Germany) Honig Honig**

(Worms, Germany) Hertoghs (The Hague, Netherlands) Harlingen Harlingen (Harlingen, Netherlands) Jacobs Jacobs (Raalte, Netherlands) Kalonymos / Kalonymides (Lucca/Rome, Italy; Greece) Kohnstamm Kohnstamm (Niederwerrn, Germany) Loeb Loeb/ I Levie Loeb (Worms, Germany) Levinger Levinger (Lengnau, Switzerland) Lambert Lambert (Germany) May Mayer Piven Peck Peck (Austria-Hungary) Strauss Strauss (Germany) Salomons Salomons van Raalte Salomons (Leeuwarden, Netherlands) Scheuer Scheuer (Darmstadt/Hohen-Sülzen, Germany) Ulman Ulman (Austria-Hungary) van Raalte van Coevorden Van Raalte (Raalte, Netherlands) Von Coevorden (Coevorden, Netherlands; Lichtenfels, Germany) Weil Weil (Lengnau, Switzerland)

Yona Lewin Gover

Paternal:

Zerachya Surek Halevi b.C1750 Wegrow Poland

Maternal:

Michael Tenenbaum b1842 Radzymin d1912 Warsaw

Recorded ancestors

HOROWITZ (Prague) LEWIN (Wegrow, Wyszkw-Poland) LEVIN (Lithuania) TENENBAUM (Radzymin, Bialystok-Poland) BRODER (Wyszkw, Poland) CYBULARZ (Wegrow, Poland) HERC (Warsaw) HERTZ (Warsaw) DOMB (Osieck, Poland) DINSZTEIN (Lublin, Poland) **FRIEDMAN** (Bialystok) JANOWSKI (Zarik, Szczebrzeszyn, Poland) RABINOWICZ (HaYid HaKadosh) (Szydlowiec, Przysucha, Przedborz-Poland) HACOHEN (Szczebrzeszyn-Poland, Prague-Moravia, Worms-German) PRZETYCKI (Wyszkw, Poland) **YOMTOV (Provance, France) HALEVI (Girona, Tudela-Catalonia) BENVENISTE MENDES (Provance, France) SHEMTOV (Barcelona, Catalonia) KALONYMUS (Barcelona, Catalonia) LEWI (Horovice, Prague) TENENBOJM (Radzymin, Bialistok-Poland) LEVY (Catalonia)** RABINOWITZ (Przysucha, Poland)

n.b. Dienstein and Friedman, and HaCohen in Prague and Worms cf Gelles

Carol Joan Baird

Paternal:

Jakob Bachrach, b. abt. 1730, Hessen, Germany

Maternal:

Hirschel Wachsmann, b. 1783, Tost, Germany

only child of German Holocaust survivors - 1st one in my direct line to be born in the USA.

Recorded ancestors

Abraham/ Rabb Bachrach Bachrach (Germany) Beuthner Blumenthal Boehm Baird Bornlaender David David/ Rabb Davidsohn Davidsohn (Germany) Davidson Flatauer Frankenthal Frankenthal (Germany) Freund Goldschmidt Goldschmidt (Germany) Heilbron Heilborn (Poland) Hendel Isaac Isroel/ Rabb Jacob Josef Jechobeth Jettchen Katz Katz (Germany) Katz (Poland) **Kalonymos** Karliner Karliner (Poland) Loeb/ Rabb Leibuscher Lazarus Loewenstern Loewenstern (Germany) Moses Mildenberg (Germany) Meyer Markhoff Marcus Naftoli Nathan Neumann Plaut (Germany) Piorkofsky Perl Perl (Poland) Rothschild Rothschild (Germany) Spitzer Sofer/ Rabb Sachs Schott Stern Selig Simon Toczek unknown Wachsmann Waxman (Los Angeles, CA)

n.b much common Ashkenazi background

Conclusion

Autosomal DNA matches involving my Gelles cousins or Israel Friedman with Horowitz and/or Epstein, and with Benveniste and/or Saltiel are compatible with the traditional belief regarding the descent of the Levitic Horowitz and Epstein lines from Shem Tov Halevi and Benveniste of Spain and give some support to the overall view of my family background and of the Sephardic contribution to my genetic make-up.

Appendix

The descent of Edward Gelles from Shem Tov Halevi and Benveniste
via Halevi Horowitz

(as published in my book *The Jewish Journey*, chapter 2, chart 2).

(The full name of these Horowitz is “Halevi Ish Horowitz” meaning
“the Levites, men of Horovice”).

n.b. a more detailed chart of “Gelles-Horowitz Connections” covering descent
from generations 24 to 29 is on my web page under “Some Family Charts”

Millennial Descent from Shem Tov Halevi of Gerona

The Shem Tov Halevi of Gerona and some other leading families including the Benveniste moved between Provence and Aragon. The Hebrew name Shem Tov and the Greek Kalonymos meant “of good name”. They were related to the Kalonymos *Nesim* of Narbonne.

- 1 Shem Tov Halevi of Gerona (a leading Talmudic scholar in Provence)
(the Ha-Yitzhari family claimed direct descent from Samuel the Prophet)
- 2 Zerachiah
- 3 Yitzchak (scholar in Provence)
- 4 Zerachiah Halevi Girondi 1125-1186 (author of *Ha-Maor* and other works)
- 5 Joseph Halevi
- 6 Benveniste Halevi
- 7 Joseph Halevi ben Benveniste m Clara bat Asher ben Meshullam ben Jacob of Lunel (reputedly of Davidic descent)
- 8 Pinchas Halevi - lived near Perpignan (elder brother of Aharon Halevi, 1235-1305, who gives his descent from Zerachiah Halevi in *Bedek Habayit*)
- 9 Yitzchak Halevi
- 10 Joseph Halevi
- 11-13 (?)**

From the Shem Tov Halevi of medieval Spain and Provence a sprig transplanted to Bohemia in the 15th century became the Horowitz family, taking their name from the town of Horovice near Prague where they settled before moving to Prague and beyond

- 14 Moshe Halevi
- 15 Isaiah ben Moshe Halevi Ish Horowitz ca.1440-1515 – in Prague 1480
- 16 Ahron Meshullam Zalman Horowitz 1470-1545 aka *Zalman Munka*
- 17 Israel Horowitz 1500-1572 of Prague
- 18 Pinchas Halevi Ish Horowitz Prague 1535 – Cracow 1618
President of the Council of the Four Lands - m sister of Rabbi Moses Isserles
- 19 Jacob Horowitz died in Vienna 1630
- 20 Joshua Horowitz ABD of Przemysl died 1661
- 21 Shmuel Schmelke Horowitz ABD of Tarnow died 1694 m granddaughter of Yehoshua Heschel Charif, Chief Rabbi of Cracow (author of *Meginei Shlomo*)
- 22 Meir Horowitz of Bolechow, Zloszow, and ABD of Tykocin died 1743
m daughter of Menachem Manish Katz , son of Isaiah Katz of Brody
(descendants of Judah Loew of Prague)
- 23 Jacob Jokel Horowitz ABD of Glogau and Brody died 1755
- 24 Isaac Horowitz ABD of Brody, Glogau, and Hamburg died 1767
- 25 Beile Horowitz m Menachem Mendel Rubin ABD of Lesniow etc died 1803
- 26 Jacob Jokel Horowitz ABD of Bolechow 1773 - 1832
- 27a Efraim Fischel Horowitz ABD of Munkacz died 1860
- 27b Yehuda Ahron Horowitz of Solotwina and ABD of Mihaileni
- 28a Sarah (?) m David Isaac Gellis ca 1790 – 1868
- 28b Gittel Horowitz m Hirsch Leib Weinstein ABD of Solotwina died 1884
- 29 Nahum Uri Gelles ABD of Solotwina died 1934 m Esther Weinstein died 1907
- 30 David Gelles of Vienna 1883-1964 m Regina Griffel 1900 - 1954
- 31 Edward Gelles 1927-