

Facets of my Family History

Part 2. Chapters 13 - 20

Edward Gelles



Edward Gelles (in 1959)
his father Dr. David Gelles (in 1927)
and his mother Regina Gelles nee Griffel with his brother Ludwig (in 1920's)



Edward Gelles (2011)

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Papers of Edward Gelles

Chapters 13 - 20

Edward Gelles, *An Ancient Lineage* (2006), section iv, My Mother's Family

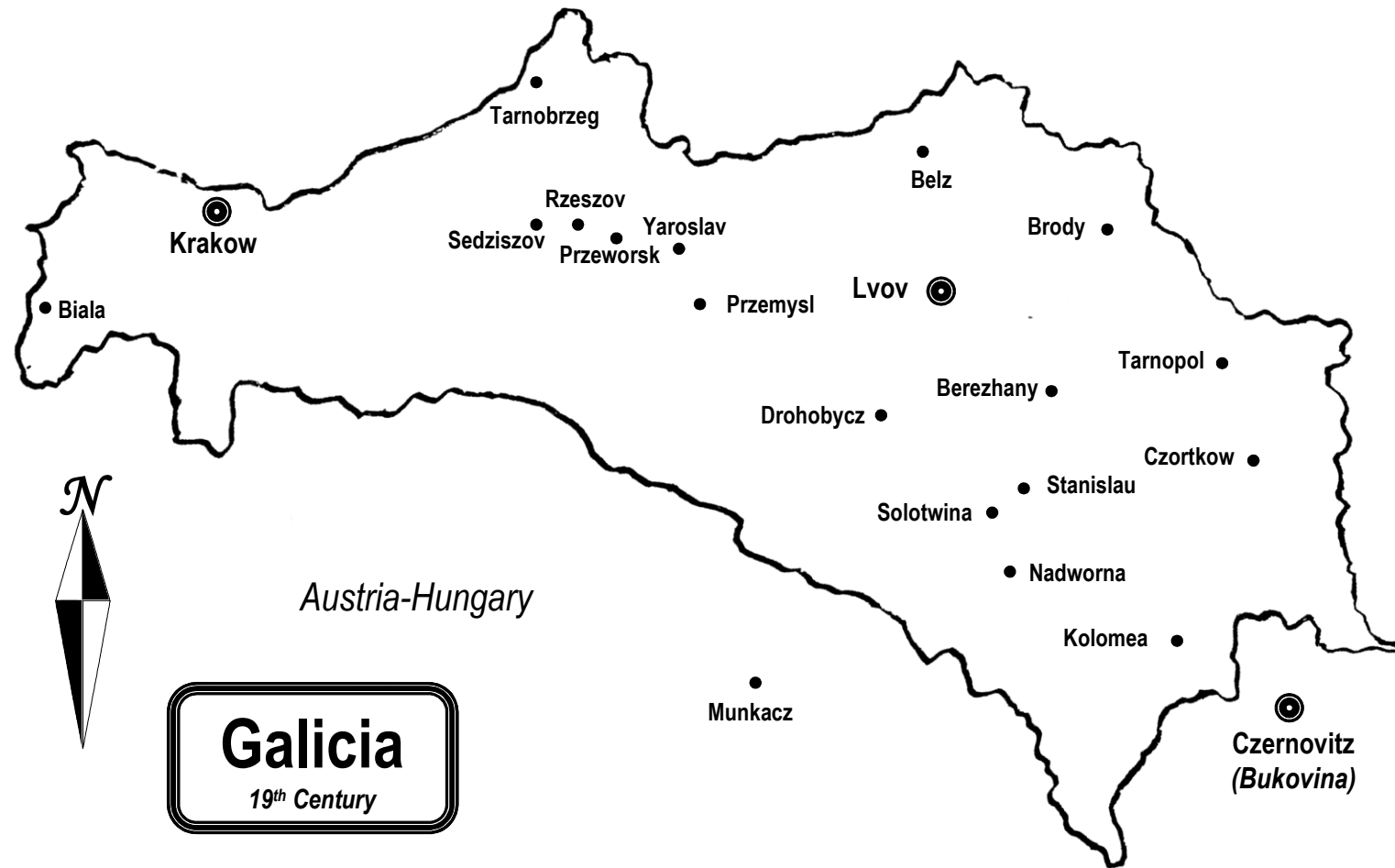
My maternal great-grandfather Eliezer Griffel was the patriarch of a large tribe in Austrian Galicia. He was an entrepreneur who owned oil deposits and forests and ran a substantial timber export business. As head of the Jewish community of Nadworna he gave employment to many in the community as well as to his extended family, and his business empire stretched far beyond the province.

He and his wife Sarah Chajes of Kolomea had 10 children. Their eldest son, my grandfather David Mendel Griffel married Chawa Wahl of Tarnobrzeg. My grandmother's and great grandmother's families are discussed in earlier and following chapters.

The Griffels came from Lvov, the principal city of eastern Galicia, and two small towns lying to the south of this city, namely Stanislau, where Jews had lived since the Potocki grant of 1662, and Nadworna, which diminished in relative importance during the period of Austrian rule. Nadworna was an early stronghold of the (ultra-orthodox) Chasidic movement, but from the middle of the 19th century the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) and later the Zionist movement made their impact on these communities.

The First World War saw Russian occupation of the region, followed by the authority of a temporary West Ukrainian republic, before the area became part of Poland from 1919 to 1939. In the interwar period the economic situation for the Jews was improving, there was a thriving cultural life, and the continued hold of the ancient faith was evidenced by the existence of 55 synagogues and prayer houses in Stanislau. This little world came to an end in 1939. The area passed under Soviet control. Some Jews managed to flee in time, others were taken away to Russia, and the rest had a brief respite until Hitler's 1941 attack. The towns were occupied by Hungarian troops, the Ukrainians were responsible for massacres, and shortly thereafter came German occupation and the mass murders which are on record. Today there are a mere handful of Jews in Nadworna and Stanislau, which now lie, with changed names, within the Ukrainian republic.

Poland, divided between the Russian and German Empires



Reb Eliezer Griffel, known as Zeida (meaning“grandpa”), was the son of David Mendel and Taube Griffel of Nadworna, where he was born in 1850. According to good authority, he had in his house an ornate tablet inscribed with gold lettering, which set out the family descent from David Halevi Segal (1586-1667), the Chief Rabbi of Lvov (1) who was known as the *Taz* after his classical commentary entitled the *Turei Zahav*. He was the son-in-law of Chief Rabbi Joel Sirkes of Cracow (1561-1640), who was called Sirkes after his mother Sirka Jaffe and was also referred to as the *Bach* (a Hebrew acronym of his book the *Bayit Hadash*).

To be called after the name of one’s major work was a distinction attained by only a few of the most important rabbis - on the paternal side of my ancestry these included Chief Rabbis Mordecai Jaffe of Prague, Grodno and Posen (1530-1612)\, author of the *Levushim* (Rabbinical Robes of Learning), who was known as the *Levush*, and Nathan Nata Shapiro of Cracow (1585-1633), who was called *Megale Amukot* (Revealed Depths) after the title of his book.

Returning to my Griffel family, as head of the Jewish community Zeida Griffel played a leading role in his town’s economic and social life. He gave his religious allegiance to the rabbis of the Hager Chasidic dynasty. The Nadworna Memorial Book relates that he and his sons and sons-in-law prayed regularly in the synagogue of the Rabbi of near-by Ottynia (2). There was at least one marriage connecting these two families (3). The family tree of the Hagers shows their descent from the *Taz*. Incidentally, the Hagers also had connections by marriage with another great Chasidic dynasty, the Friedmans of Ruzhyn, and indeed with the family of R. Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz (4).

Forebears of the Griffels in the 18th century include a Rav Leiser Neches of Lemberg and Rav Jacob Leib of the same city. The family in all its diverse branches developed in Nadworna, Stanislau, Lvov, Cracow, Vienna, and elsewhere. Many Griffels moved from Nadworna to Stanislau as the 19th century progressed, Their presence in Lvov and Cracow is shown on the Internet. Vital records of Griffels in Vienna are kept by the Jewish Community office in that city (5).

The children of Zeida Griffel and Sarah Matel Chayes are listed in appended tables. After Eliezer, perhaps the outstanding Griffel of his immediate family

was his grandson, Dr. Jacob Griffel (6). The family name survived from the mid 19th century to the present day, despite the devastation and anguish of the holocaust in which many, including my own grandparents, perished.

From Reb Zeida's cousin, Meir Leib Griffel (b.1828 ?), there is descent via his daughters to the Zauderer and Hirsch families, while his sisters Lea (1844-1915) and Frieda married Mordechai Wiesner and Fishel Ephraim Wiesel (Weisel). Louis Wiesner's daughter Rosa Wiesner married Samuel Kossoff.

Louis Wiesner's sister Rachel and Shlomo Schieber were the parents of Sarah, whose husband David was the son of Chaim Yoshua Rose of Stanislau. The latter took the name of Griffel on marrying Gittel Griffel of Nadworna. This David Rose or Griffel worked for my great-uncle Isaac Chaim Griffel. In 1940 David Rose and Sarah with their boy Max were taken to Siberia. Max was pressed into service with the Red Army and was decorated by the Russians. After the war he studied medicine in Munich, married a Scottish lady, Margaret Urquhart, and settled in New Jersey, where he practiced as a physician and brought up his family. I have spoken to him on the telephone about his experiences.

Some details obtained from Dr. David S. Goldstein (7) tally remarkably well with the rough notes prepared by my late cousin Shmuel Shmelke Griffel, who was one of the ten children of Isaac Chaim Griffel (8). His Second World War experiences contrast with those of Dr. Max Griffel. Shmuel ended up in a Russian Gulag, from which he was ultimately rescued by his brother Jacob.

More information on the Nadworna branch of the Griffels is to be found in some of my other articles (9). They deal with the three Wahl girls Blume, Rachel, and Chawa, who married into the Loew, Taube, and Griffel families, with inter-marriages linking the towns of Nadworna and Stanislau in eastern Galicia with Tarnobrzeg and Cracow in the west of the province, and so on.

To mention just a few more of the many Griffel descendants, I have discussed the pedigree of Dr. Steven Lamm, who is a grandson of my great-aunt Zissel Griffel.

Chaya Griffel was another great-aunt of mine. She and Shlomo Gruenfeld produced a son, Samuel. The latter and Sitka Hager had a boy named Yehuda,

who adopted a Hebrew version of the surname. This Dr. Yehuda Nir became a prominent psychiatrist in America. His pedigree is shown in the appended charts. His autobiography, *The Lost Childhood*, contains references to the Hager family connection. To this same chart I have recently added my distinguished 2nd cousins, Clara Blau Heyn and her brother Joshua Blau, children of Sima Griffel Blau and grand children of Chaya Griffel.

Once this ancient Griffel family was united in their ultra-orthodox faith. Now they are scattered all over the world, but at least one branch clings to their Chasidic past. I refer to some of Isaac Chaim's sons, notably Jacob and Shmuel Shmelke Griffel. Their brother, Yehoshua Heshel (Henry) Griffel was also intellectually distinguished. He obtained degrees in law and political science from the University of Cracow, his interests being in constitutional law and jurisprudence. In addition he gained his rabbinical qualification or "Smicha". After he brought his family to America in 1946, he took a position as a Conservative Rabbi. From his very orthodox beginnings he became a leading light of ecumenism. For many years he served as President of the New Jersey Interfaith Clergy Council. His son Andrew Griffel, whose charitable work I mentioned in a previous article, took after him in holding to the major tenets of Judaism, acquaintance with the classical Judaic texts, belief in the spiritual strength to be gained from the Jewish religion and the history of the Jewish people, and the duty to help others including those from different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The family of my grandparents

The descendants of my own grandparents, David Mendel Griffel of Nadworna and Chawa Wahl of Tarnobrzeg, came under the influence of Viennese culture at the outbreak of the First World War. My mother Regina and her brothers Zygmunt and Edward were already fairly assimilated and they were at an impressionable age. They continued to have much closer ties with their maternal cousins of the Loew and Taube families, and with Zygmunt's in-laws, the Wohls of Cracow, than with the other Griffels. My favourite uncle Edward, after whom I was named, was a cosmopolitan globetrotter. When he married much later in life, it was to a lady connected with the Chasidic Friedman dynasty, but by that time we had been separated by the vicissitudes of war and ill fortune. My first cousin Eric Griffel, the only son of Zygmunt and Maryla

Griffel, retired from a senior position in the U.S. Foreign Service and then owned a bookshop in Concord, New Hampshire, before moving to Washington, D.C. Another first cousin, the only son of Edward and Susan Griffel, studied at M.I.T. and became a successful entrepreneur in computer software.

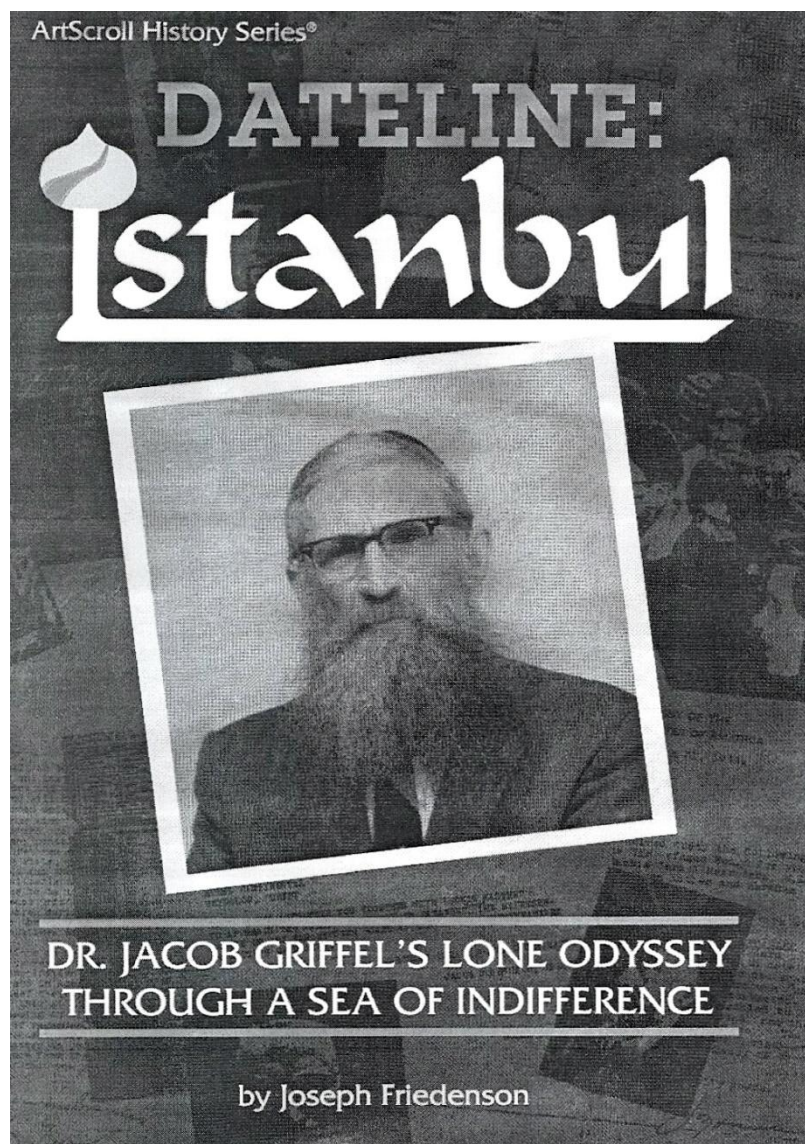
References

- (1) Boruch Griffel, Jerusalem (Son of Shmuel Shmelke Griffel), private communication
- (2) Nadworna Memorial Book, Landsmannschaft of Nadworna in Israel and the United States, 1975, p. 26
- (3) Dr. Yehuda Nir, The Lost Childhood, publ. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovic, New York, 1989
- (4) Dr. N.M. Gelber, The Vishnitz Zaddikim-Dynasty, article in Hugo Gold's Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina, Olamenu, Tel Aviv 1958, pp 89-90
- (5) Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Wien 1010, Seitenstettengasse 4
Jacob Griffel (Buczacz 1863-Vienna 1926) and his wife Chaye Etel Zierler (Stanislau 1869-Vienna 1930) had a son Joseph Griffel (1907-89). The latter and his wife Klara Fischer (Poland 1908- ? 1964) were the parents of Leonard Michael Griffel and Jack Griffel (Vienna 1938-) who married Marsha Zakheim (New York 1942-).
- (6) Edward Gelles, Jacob Griffel's Rescue Missions (unpublished article) see also David Kranzler, Thy Brother's Blood (Mesorah 1987) and (with Eliezer Gewuerz), To Save a World (CIS 1991) and Joseph Friedenson, Dateline Istanbul (Mesorah 1993
- (7) Dr. David S. Goldstein, Baltimore, Maryland (cousin of Dr. Max Griffel), private communication.
- (8) Shmuel Shmelke Griffel (son of Isaac Chaim Griffel), private notes
- (9) Edward Gelles, My Mother's People, Sharsheret Hadorot, Vol. 16, no. 4 October 2002

Ancestral connections of the Hager family

R' Jacob Kopel ben Nehemia Feiwel of Kolomea was a pupil of the founder of the Chasidic movement, the Baal Schem Tov. The mother of Kopel's wife Chaya was a descendant of R' David Halevi Segal of Lvov. R' Kopel's second

son, R'Menachem Mendel (1768-1826) founded the **Kossow** dynasty. He was succeeded by his son R' Chaim (1795-1854), who married Zipora, a granddaughter of R' Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz. Their eldest son took over the Kossower dynasty while their youngest son, R' Menachem Mendel Hager married Miriam, daughter of the Ruzhyner Zaddik, and started the **Vishnitz** dynasty. He died in 1885. His son R' Baruch (1845-1893) had many children. The latter's second son R' Chaim Hager settled in **Ottynia**. He spent the years of the First World War in Vienna and moved to Stanislawow in 1919 where he died in 1932 (Gelber, *loc. cit*).



**Dr Jacob Griffel (1900-1962) was my mother's first cousin
He saved many Jewish lives during WW2 working from his base in Istanbul**

Griffel of Nadworna
Children of Eliezer Griffel (1850-1918) and Sarah Matel Chajes (d. 1940)

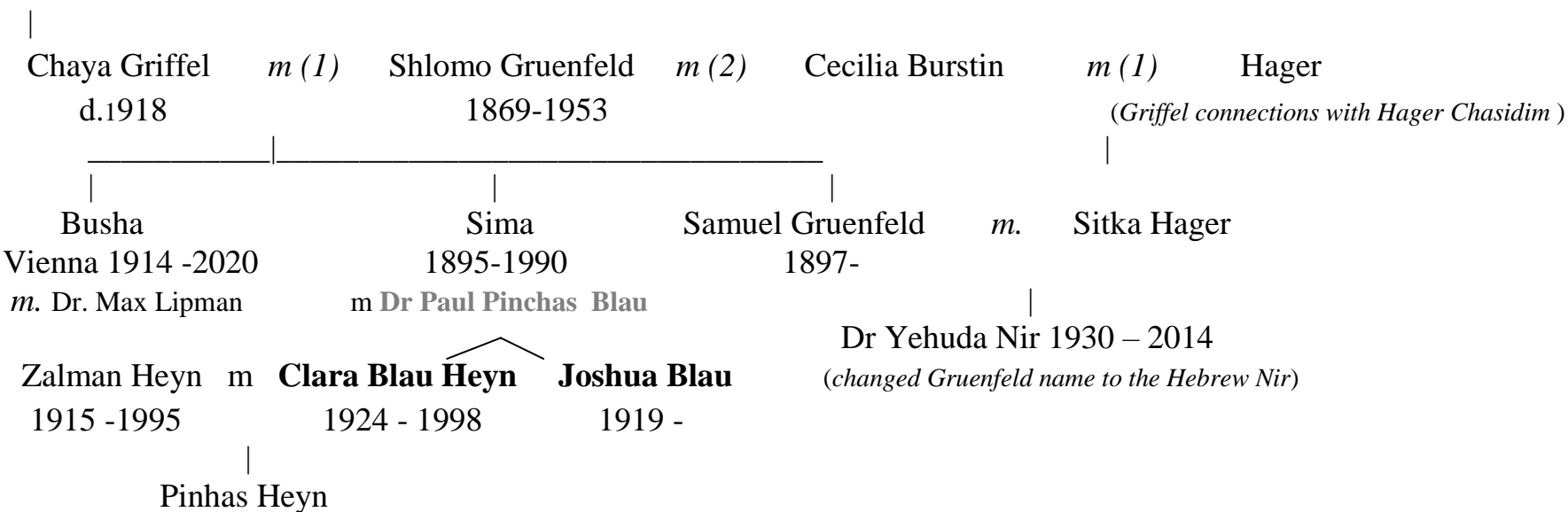
see Edward Gelles, “An Ancient Lineage“ (2006), section on “My mother’s Family”, chapters 12-17

- 1 David Mendel Griffel (1875-1941) *m.* Chawa Wahl (1877-1941)
Issue : my mother Regina (1900 – 1954)) and my uncles Zygmunt (1897-1951) and Edward (1904-1959)
- 2 Machla Griffel (b. 1876) *m.* Benzion Wilner
- 3 Zissel Griffel (b. 1878) *m.* Zygmunt (Shalom) Lamm
Issue : Dr Arnold Lamm, father of physician Dr Stephen Lamm (1948-)
- 4 Isaac Chaim Griffel (1880-1930) *m.* Judith Breit (d. 1938)
Issue : Dr Jacob Griffel (1900-1962) the eldest of ten children (Biography of Jacob Griffel : “ *Date line - Istanbul* “)
- 5 Shaya Griffel (b. 1883) *m.* Adela England
- 6 Leibish Griffel (b. 1885) *m.* Ziporah
- 7 Benjamin Griffel (b. 1887) *m.* Chana Kahan
- 8 Rivka Griffel (b. 1888) *m.* Berish Rapaport
- 9 Rachel Griffel (b. 1892) *m.* Bonya (Abraham) Ohrenstein
- 10 Chaya Griffel (d. 1918) *m.* Shlomo Gruenfeld (1869-1953)
Issue : Busha Lipman (1914 -2020)
Sima Blau (1895-1990), mother of Clara Blau Heyn (1924-1998) and Joshua Blau (1919 -)
Samuel Gruenfeld (1897 -) m Sitka Hager, parents of Dr Yehuda Nir (1930 - 2014)
(Autobiography of Yehuda Nir : “ *The Lost Childhood* “)

Descendants of Chaya Griffel, daughter of Eliezer Griffel and Sarah Matel Chajes

Eliezer Griffel (1850-1918)

m. Sarah Chayes (d. 1940)

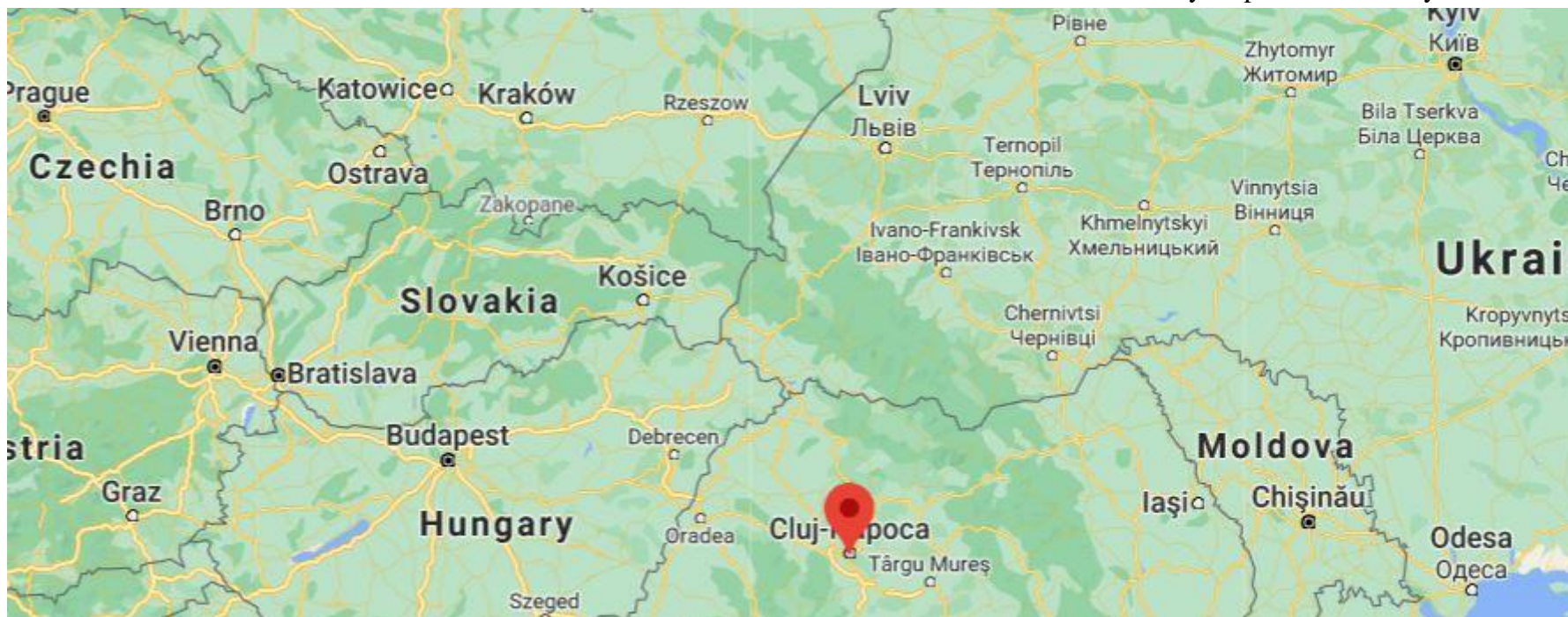


Yehuda Nir, Professor of Psychiatry at Cornell University and consultant in New York was the author of “The Lost Childhood “ (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich , 1989) describing his extraordinary years of survival under Nazi occupation in Poland.

My mother Regina Gelles nee Griffel was a first cousin of Busha and Sima Gruenfeld.
 Busha died at the age of 105

**Sima married Dr Paul-Pinchas Blau (1889-1948). of Cluj –Napoca (called Klausenburg in German).
The Blau family moved from Transylvania to Baden around 1928 and then to Vienna before going to Palestine in 1938.**

The appended map shows Cluj Napoca in present day Romania about 500 Km south of Lviv which is now in the Ukraine (formerly the Polish Lvov / Austrian Lemberg) and to the south-east of this city is Ivano Frankivsk formerly Stanislavow in Polish and Stanislau under Austrian rule. Nadworna and Kolomea not far to the south east from Stanislau are shown on my map of 19th century Galicia



Clara Blau and her brother Joshua Blau became Professors at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem

Clara was Professor of Botany and an academic administrator and her brother Joshua Blau is an internationally known Professor of Arab linguistics, a foreign member of the British Academy and recipient of other honours. He is now 100 years old.

Clara married Zalman Heyn, of an old rabbinic line, who was a composer as well as an Israeli public servant.

Autosomal DNA matches between Pinhas Heyn and Edward Gelles support his maternal Blau - Griffel connections.

The Chayes Family

Edward Gelles, *An Ancient Lineage* (2006) and *The Jewish Journey*, (2016)

An outline history of the ancient Chayes family follows them for over five hundred years from Portugal to Italy and Provence, thence to Prague, Poland, and Lithuania., to Brody in Galicia, to Livorno, Florence, and Trieste in Italy, to Vienna, and in more recent times back to western Europe, America and Israel. A long line of notable rabbis, including Chief Rabbis of Prague and Vienna, ennobled merchant bankers in Tuscany, and many doctors, scientists, professors of law and humanities, a modern composer, and a world class chess player bear their name. Their achievements and marriage connections show the Chayes to be one of the less well known but exceptionally talented and distinguished of the major rabbinic families.



Zwi Perez Chajes 1876 – 1927
Chief Rabbi of Vienna

A Fragment of the Family History

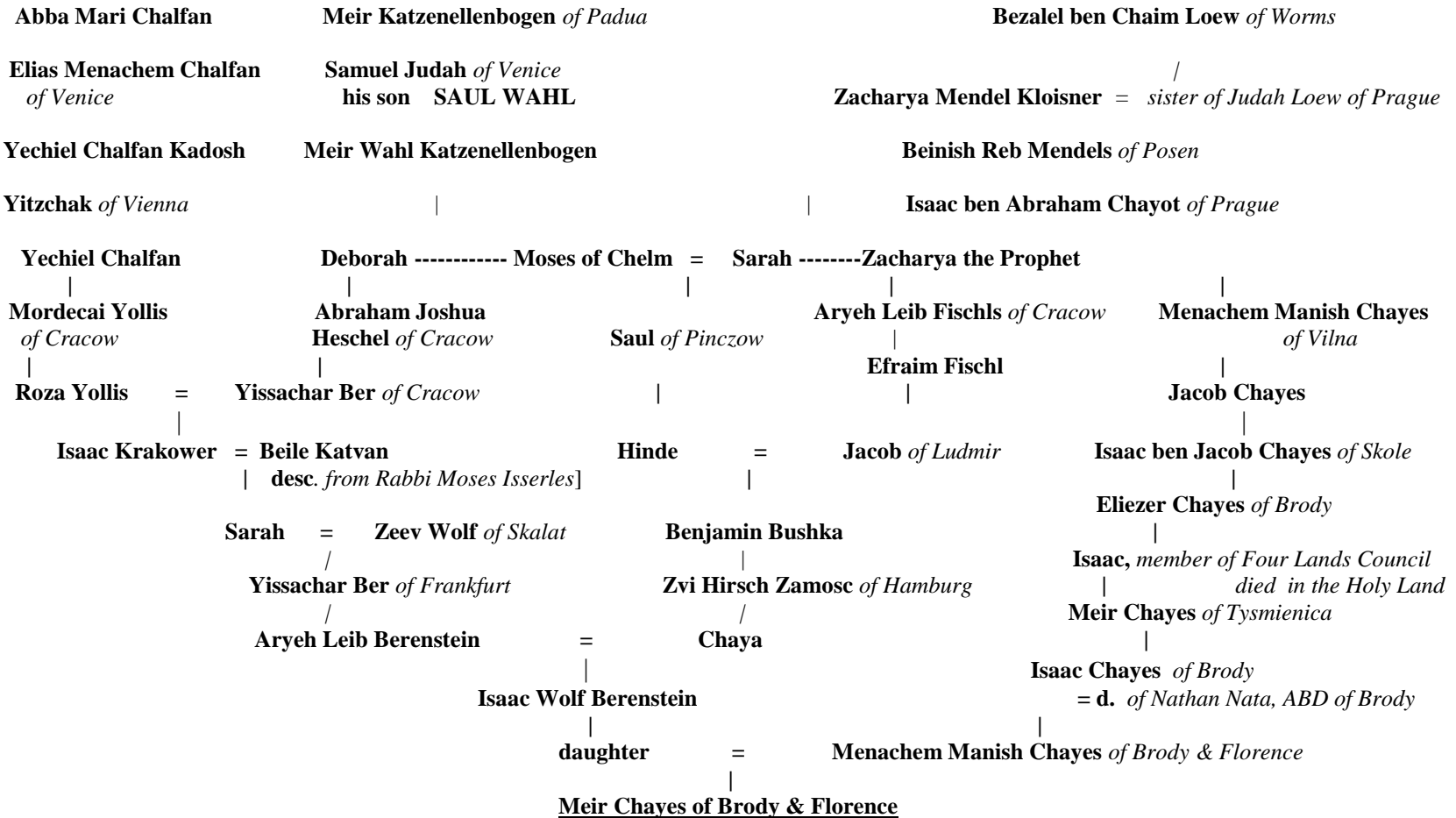
AD Chayes Line

- Isaac ben Abraham, ca. 1538–1610,
Chief Rabbi of Prague
- 1600 Menachem Manish, 1560–1636, Rabbi
of Vilna
- Jacob
- Isaac ben Jacob, ca 1660–1726, Rabbi
of Skole
- 1700 Eliezer, ABD of Nemirow and
Psheworsk, d.1767
- Isaac, member of Four Lands Council,
d. in the Holy Land
- Meyer, ABD of Tysmienica
- Isaac of Brody, d.1807 m. daughter of
Nathan Nata, ABD of Brody, d.1764
- Menachem Manish of Brody, Livorno
& Florence, d.1832
m. grand-daughter of Aryeh Leib
Berenstein, d. 1788 Chief Rabbi of
Galicia
- 1800 Meir, banker of Florence and Brody,
d.1854
m. Esther, desc of Issachar Ber of
Frankfurt
*Leone of Brody, b. 1794, settled in
Livorno*
Zvi Hirsch of Brody, 1805–55, Rabbi of
Zolkiew
Giacomo, son of Leone, d. 1869
Salomon of Brody, 1835–96 m.
Rebecca Shapiro
Adolfo of Livorno, d.1889
- 1900 Zvi Hirsch Perez of Brody, 1876–1927
Chief Rabbi of Vienna
*Count Guido de Chayes of Livorno,
d.1906*
Count Giorgio de Chayes, d.1913

Background

The Chayes family had ancient Sephardic origins in Portugal and Provence. They came to Bohemia in the fifteenth century, like others such as the related Altschulers. Isaac ben Abraham was a brother-in-law of Judah Loew of Prague, whose family hailed from Worms in Germany. Isaac Chayot, Judah Loew, and Mordecai Yaffe alternated in the post of Chief Rabbi of Prague. At this time Prague had a large Jewish community and was at the crossroads of migration from Germany and Italy to Poland and Lithuania. The resurgent Habsburg power was represented by Emperor Rudolf II who made his Court in Prague. In the sixteenth century Poland had flourished under the Jagiellonian kings. In 1569 the Union of Lublin joined the kingdom with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and shortly afterwards the state became an elective monarchy. Under the Swedish king Zygmunt III (Vasa) the Jews continued to flourish with a substantial measure of self-government (this was the period when Saul Wahl rose to importance in the Polish Commonwealth). Isaac Chayot's son went to Vilna, and his descendants established themselves at Brody in Galicia, which prospered for a century as 'a free city' and entrepot between the Austrian and Russian Empires. The Chayes, as they were now called, produced many scholars and rabbis. A marriage with the Berensteins, who were of the Katzenellenbogen clan, brought a branch of the family to Tuscany in the eighteenth century. They were successful merchants and bankers in a traditionally liberal atmosphere, which was maintained by the Habsburg successors to the Medici rulers and continued into the days of the Risorgimento and the Kingdom of a united Italy. Livorno like Brody was for long a 'free city' and an important entrepot. In the nineteenth century the family produced great Rabbis in Zvi Hirsch Chajes of Zolkiew and his grandson Hirsch Perez Chajes, who was Professor at Florence, Chief Rabbi of Trieste, and an outstanding Chief Rabbi and community leader in Vienna in the inter-war years.

Meir Chaves of Brody & Florence



**From
Elvio Giuditta
Araldica Ebraica in Italia**

CHAJES

**Arma - di rossi a tre fasce di nero caricate de sei stelle d'oro
poste 3-2 -1**

Famiglia di origine polacca trasferitasi a Livorno nel XIX secolo.
Guido Chajes, Console Onorario del Portogallo fu creato conte dal
Re Don Carlos nel 1904 per le sue benemerienze verso la Real Casa.
Il titolo fu confermato dal Re d'Italia nel 1927.

cf. Edward Gelles, "An Ancient Lineage" (London 2006), p.52
Letter of Confirmation from Portuguese National Archives
re Count Guido de Chayes (cr 17 March 1904)
Count Giorgio de Chayes (22 April 1909)
confirming title to son of the 1st Count

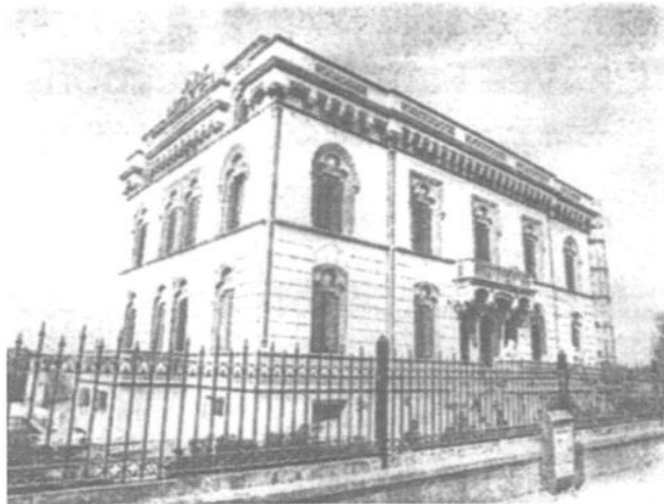
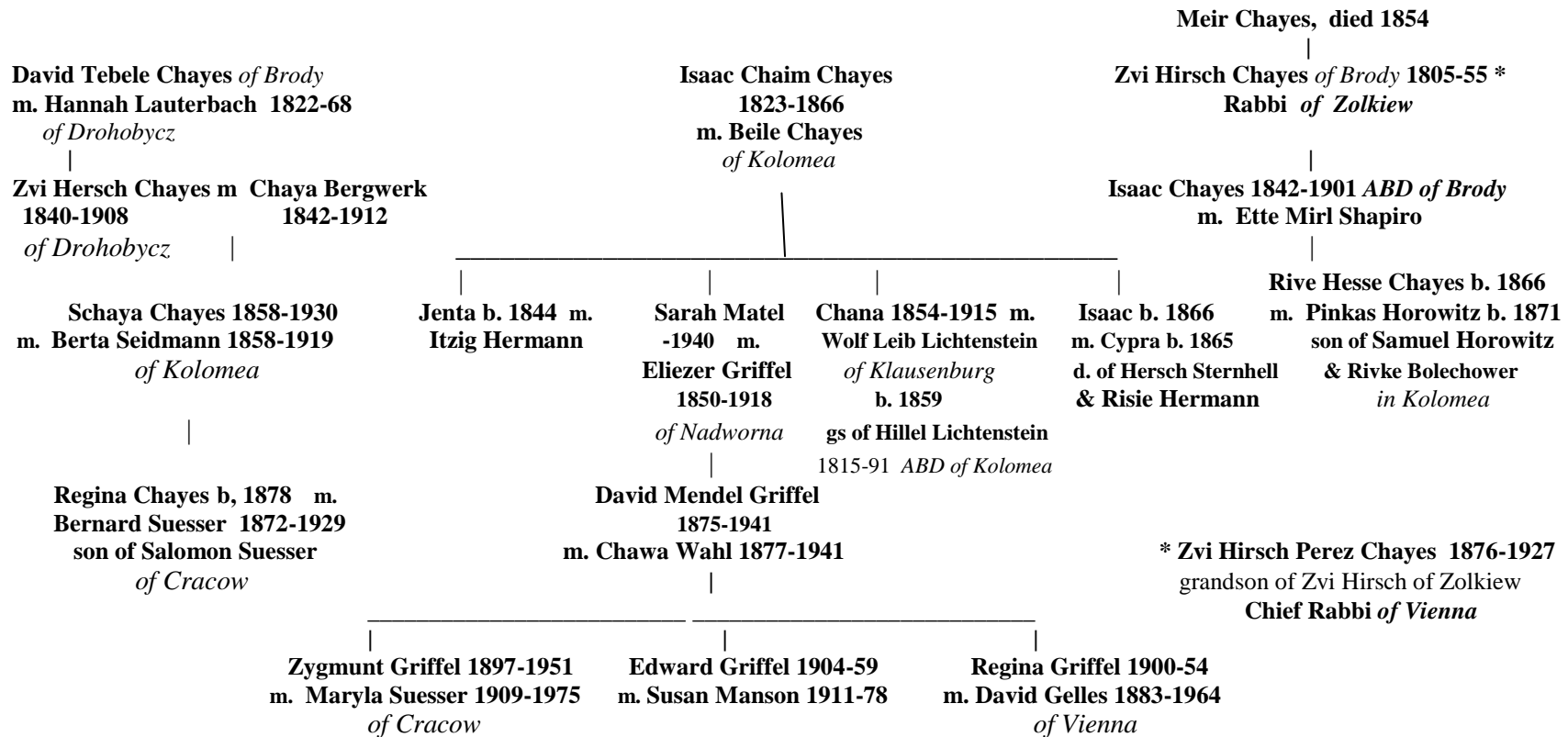


Figure 9
Villa Chayes in Livorno

Chayes Connections

The Chayes family spread from their base in Brody to other Galician towns and they also flourished in Tuscany. Meir Chayes was a merchant banker in Brody and Florence and one of his sons was the famous Rabbi Zvi Hirsch of Zolkiew. Numerous family members in Kolomea included my great-great-grandfather Isaac Chaim Chayes. The Drohobycz and Kolomea branches had connections including marriages with the Suesser family of Cracow.



15 Family Chess Notes

Oscar Chajes was born in Brody (Austrian Galicia) in 1873 and died in New York in 1928. His distinguished rabbinical family was descended from the 16th century Chief Rabbi of Prague, Isaac ben Abraham Chayes. Oscar was a cousin of my maternal great-grandmother, Sarah Matel Chajes of Kolomea. He became a Chess Master, ranked at one time as No.10 in the world. Details of his games can be found on *chessgames.com*. These include his defeat of world champion Jose Raul Capablanca, in 1916. Chajes (white) won in 66 moves with a French opening – McCutcheon / Duras variation (see my book, *An Ancient Lineage*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 2006, p.321).

My paternal uncle Dr. Max Gellis (1897-1973) was my father's younger brother. He held the degree of Dr Juris from Vienna University and practised as an advocate in that city (Edward Gelles, *An Ancient Lineage*, pp 190, 192-194). He wrote a definitive work on Austrian company law (*Kommentar zum GMBH Gesetz*, Linde Verlag, Vienna, 1965, which went to a 7th revised edition in 2009).

Max was a gifted amateur chess player. He spent the war years in Australia. In the late 1940's he went to New York to stay with his daughter and later returned to his practice in Vienna. During his years in Australia Max continued to play chess and some of his games are recorded in the literature, notably the game against Yerhoff in the 1947 Australia v. Canada Radio match won by Gellis with a Queen's pawn opening in 44 moves. A photograph of Gellis playing in this match comes from the Melbourne Herald, 14th June 1947. (*An Ancient Lineage*, loc.cit. p.193). A group photograph of Australian players including Dr Max Gellis from the 1946 Australia v France match is on the web site of the Melbourne Chess Club. The website of *chessgames.com* has details of six games played by my uncle.

My paternal great grandfather Zvi Aryeh Weinstein was Chief Rabbi of Solotwina in Galicia He died in 1884. His father was Rabbi Israel Jacob Weinstein of Solotwina whose line was believed to have connections in the neighbouring province of Bukowina, and points further east (*Meeting my Ancestors*, Shaker Publishing, 2011, chapter 7).

While the name of Weinstein was fairly widespread, it is a noteworthy curiosity in the context of the chess world and its connections that world champion Garry Kimovich Kasparov, born in Baku in 1963, started life as Harry Chaimovitch Weinstein. His father was Chaim Moiseyevich Weinstein and his Armenian mother was Klara Shagenovna Kasparyan aka Kasparova.

Jews and Armenians lived side by side in little *shtetls* of eastern Galicia for many generations. This area was in economic decline at the end of the 18th century when new opportunities beckoned first from Odessa on the Black Sea and later from Baku by the Caspian Sea

There have been Jewish communities in Azerbaijan since early times, but Ashkenazi Jews first settled in Baku around 1811 and substantial numbers came in the third quarter of the 19th century at the time of the city's economic upswing. There was considerable Jewish involvement in the development of the oil industry. This influx was not confined to Jews from the Russian Pale. With Kasparov's father, an engineer, and his grandfather Moses Rubinovich Weinstein, a distinguished musician, the family goes back in Baku for some generations.

Neither my Weinstains nor Kasparov's appear to have been traced back far enough but, given the known mobility of our families over the past centuries, it is conceivable that there is a distant genealogical connection.

Autosomal DNA tests show that I share DNA segments with Weinstains having known ancestry in Lithuania and also in Odessa in the Ukraine. The matches are sufficient to identify these Weinstains as distant cousins.

DNA tests on myself and my close cousins also indicate that we have some ancestral connections across Anatolia and the Caucasus all the way to the Caspian Sea

But no DNA test results are known to me for individual Weinstains of Baku. It would be very interesting to see results of "Family Finder" autosomal DNA tests for Garry Kasparov and his close family. Not only for family reasons, but comparisons might shed more light on Jewish and Armenian migrations in recent centuries.

References

Edward Gelles, *An Ancient Lineage*, p. 21, pp 196-198 and *Meeting my Ancestors*, loc. cit.

Wikipedia articles on *Garry Kasparov* and on *Jews in Azerbaijan*

Chessgames.com for details of 2,341 games played by Kasparov

(Incidentally, this website records Oscar Chayes with 228 games and Norman Weinstein - one of several noted players of that surname – with 126 games)

Daniel Johnson, *White King and Red Queen*, Atlantic Books, London 2007

Klara Kasparova (1937 – 2020) Obituaries of Garry Kasparov's mother in *The Times* 08. 01. 2021), and in the *New York Times*, and other journals



Oscar Chajes 1873 - 1928



Dr Max Gellis 1897 - 1973

Mendelssohn Family Connections

see Edward Gelles, *The Jewish Journey* (2016) chapter 15
and my essay “A Sprig of the Mendelssohn Family Tree “



Moses Mendelssohn (1729 -1786)

The German Enlightenment philosopher Moses Mendelssohn and I share an ancestry going back to the intermarriages of some leading rabbinic families since the 16th century. I refer to the Katzenellenbogen Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice and the Horowitz and Isserl of Prague whose descendants moved to Poland and beyond.

Rabbi Samuel Judah Katzenellenbogen of Venice and Abigail Jaffe were the parents of Saul Wahl whose fame rests on his semi-legendary career in Poland – Lithuania and on his distinguished progeny. Saul’s eldest son, Rabbi Meir Wahl of Brest married Hinde, the daughter of Pinchas Halevi Horowitz

Pinchas Horowitz, of ancient lineage, had moved from Prague to Cracow and in due course became President of the Four Lands Council, the effective Head of Polish Jewry. He married Miriam Isserles, the sister of Cracow’s Chief Rabbi Moses Isserles.

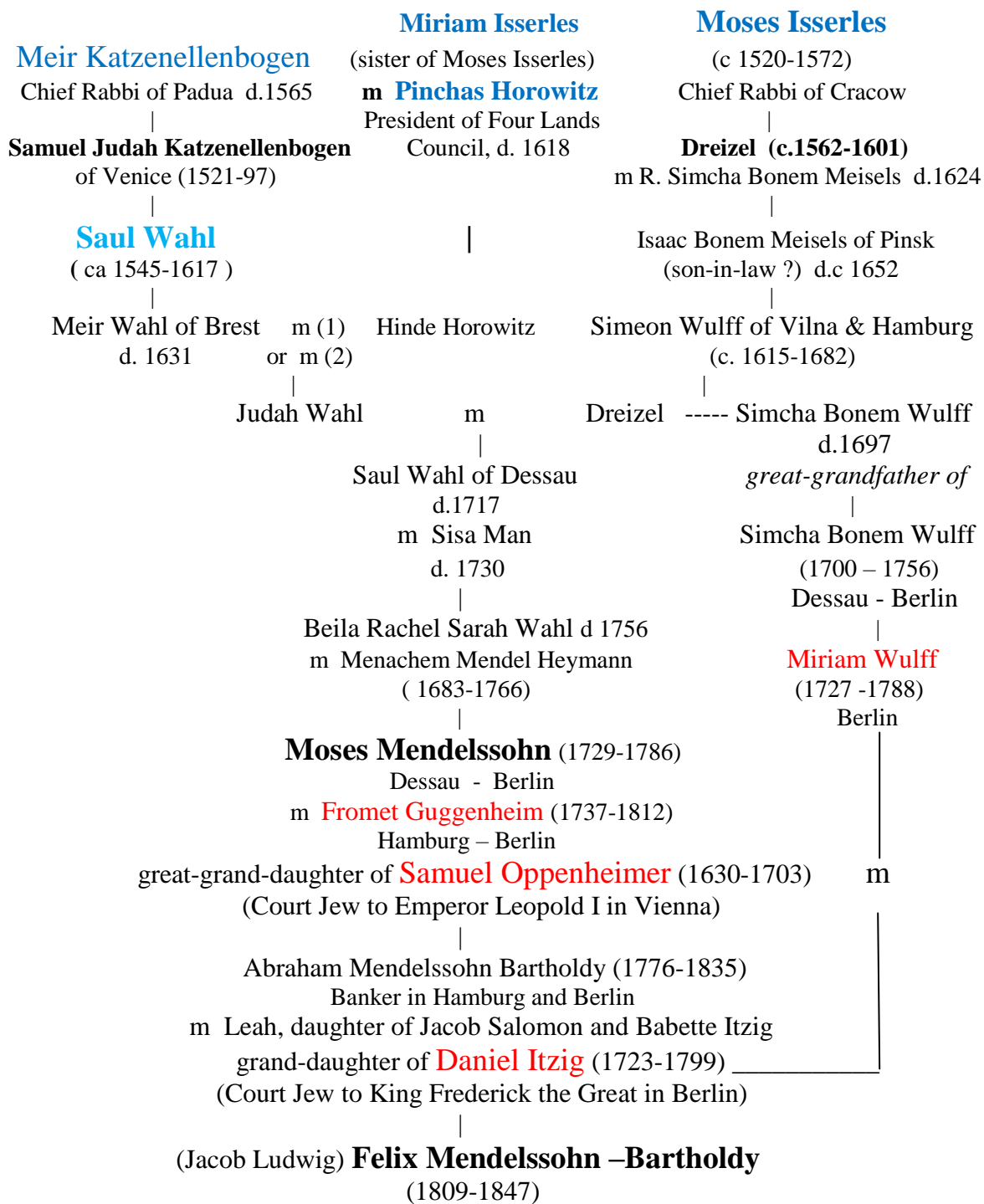


Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy
1809 - 1847

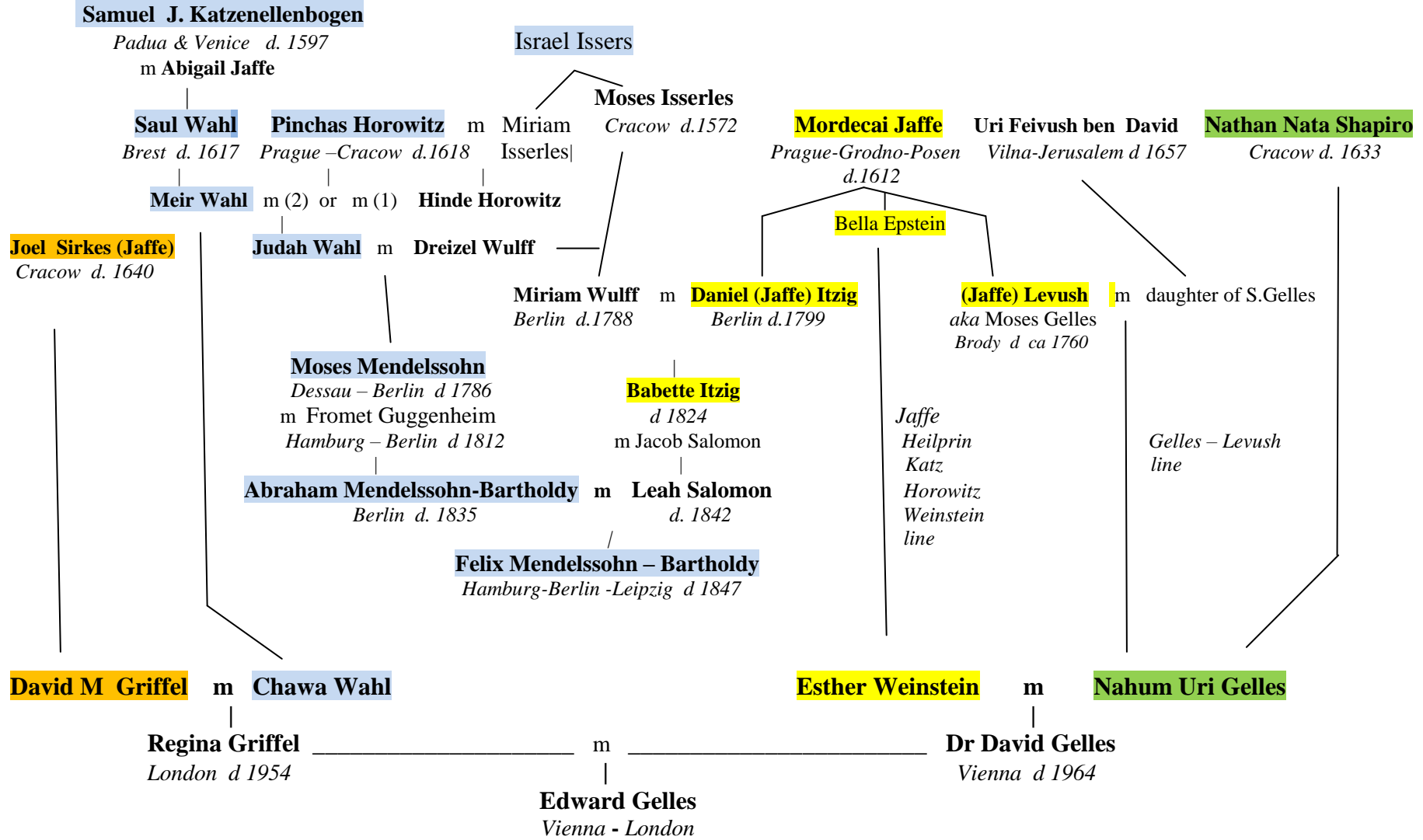
My ancestral background becomes closer with Moses Mendelssohn's son, the banker Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, who married Leah, the daughter of Jacob Salomon and Babette Itzig.

The Itzig family were descendants of my ancestor Mordecai Jaffe, the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodmo, and Posen who was known as the *Levush* after the title of his magnum opus. A Jaffe branch moved from the province of Posen to Berlin in the 18th century, adopting the name of Itzig as their family name and rising to wealth and influence as well connected Court Jews.

The children of Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Leah Salomon, including the composer Felix Mendelssohn and his talented sister Fanny, have the Itzig connection to Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe, as the appended charts indicate.



Ancestral Links of Edward Gelles and the Mendelssohns



Footnotes

Grandparents of Edward Gelles

Nahum Uri Gelles (1852-1934) Chief Rabbi of Solotwina, son of Rabbi David Isaac Gelles and Sarah (Horowitz) of Narayov
descendant of Gelles – Levush (Jaffe) line, of Nathan Nata Shapiro, Chief Rabbi of Cracow, and of many other rabbis

m

Esther Weinstein (1861-1907) daughter of Chief Rabbi Hirsch Leib Weinstein of Solotwina and Gittel Horowitz
descendant of Weinstein, Horowitz, Katz, Heilprin, Jaffe rabbinic lines, etc

David Mendel Griffel (1875-1941) son of Eliezer Griffel of Nadworna and Sarah Matel Chajes of Kolomea
descendant of David Halevi Segal, Chief Rabbi of Lvov and of Joel Sirkes, Chief Rabbi of Cracow
m
(who was a 2nd cousin of Mordecai Jaffe, Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen)

Chawa Wahl (1877-1941) daughter of Shulim Wahl and Sarah Safier of Tarnobrzeg
descendant of Saul Wahl (1545- 1617), son of Samuel Judah Katzenellenbogen, Chief Rabbi of Padua and Venice and his wife Abigail Jaffe

Some ancestors of Edward Gelles.

Some of the notables from the 16th and 17th centuries are shown on the above chart - Chief Rabbi Nathan Nata Shapiro of Cracow with whose ancient line my Gelles were linked for several centuries, the Katzenellenbogen Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice, and the Jaffe, pre-eminently Chief Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe of Prague, Grodno, and Posen, in whose footsteps some of the Gelles rabbis followed. Their journey took them from Prague to Grodno in Lithuania and then one branch went west to the province of Posen and on to Berlin while my immediate family line moved south to Galicia on their way to Vienna.

I am also a 10th generation descendant of Uri Feivush ben David, the Chief Rabbi of Vilna who ended his life as head of the Ashkenazi community in Jerusalem.

My forebears included many community leaders - some became Presidents of the “Council of the Four Lands”, for some generations the semi-autonomous governing body of Polish Jewry. Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe was a political leader as well as a scholar. Pinchas Halevi Ish Horowitz came to Cracow from Prague and married the sister of the Chief Rabbi Moses Isserles of Cracow. Horowitz descendants married those of Saul Wahl, who combined leadership of the Jewish community with a distinguished role in Polish affairs of state.

Coming into the 18th century, Samuel Oppenheimer and his relative Samson Wertheimer, important Court Jews of Habsburg Vienna, were in my Gelles ancestral background. Fromet Guggenheim, the wife of Moses Mendelssohn, was a great-granddaughter of Samuel Oppenheimer (1630 - 1703).

Ancestry of Moses Mendelssohn and his family

Edward Gelles and Moses Mendelssohn, the 18th century philosopher of the German Age of Enlightenment, had common ancestors including Saul Wahl, scion of the 16th century Katzenellenbogen rabbis of Padua and Venice, and Israel Issers the father of Moses Isserles, the Chief Rabbi of Cracow and of Miriam Isserles

Moses Mendelssohn’s issue included his son, the banker Abraham Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The latter’s marriage to Leah Salomon linked the Mendelssohn line to notable Court Jews of Berlin who were descended from Chief Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe of Prague but had adopted the family name of Itzig on moving from the province of Posen to Berlin. The Itzig line were thus Jaffe cousins of my paternal grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles, who was a descendant of the “Gelles – Levush” line from Moses Menachem Mendel Levush, known as Moses Gelles of the Brody Klaus after his marriage to a daughter of Rabbi S(hmuel) Gelles.

Another line of descent from Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe runs from his daughter Bella, who married the physician Michel Epstein (died 1632), to my paternal grandmother Esther Weinstein.

The composer Felix Mendelssohn – Bartholdy, grandson of Moses Mendelssohn and son of Abraham Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, acquired from his mother the Itzig Jaffe connection shown on the above chart.

Mendelssohn and some Ashkenazi Court Jews

Elias Gompertz of Cleves 1615-89 Glückel of Hameln 1646-1724 m Chaim of Hameln, died 1689
(Electors of Brandenburg)

Elias' son, Kosman _____ m _____ Zipporah

Berend Lehmann 1661-1730 Halberstadt
(Augustus II of Saxony & Poland)

sister of Chaim Hameln m
Leffman Behrends 1630-1714 daughter m Judah Loeb **ben Samson Wertheimer**
 Hanover *(Elector of Hanover)* *(whose son-in-law was Elias Benedict Gompertz)*

Samuel Oppenheimer 1630-1703
 Vienna *(Emperor Leopold I)*

Genedel m Rabbi David Oppenheim of Prague 1664-1736
(nephew of Samuel Oppenheimer)

Frummet Oppenheimer -----Simon Wolf Oppenheimer m Frade, grand daughter of **Leffman Behrends**
 m Josef Guggenheim

Samson Wertheimer 1658-1724 *(descendants related to those of Samuel Oppenheimer)*
 Vienna *(Emperors Leopold I & Joseph I)* *and other Court Jews)*

Abraham Guggenheim
 m Miriam Glückel Cleve

his daughter Chaya Rivka m Rabbi Issachar Berish Eskeles 1691-1753 -----

Fromet Guggenheim 1737-1812 m **Moses Mendelssohn** 1729-86
 Dessau - Berlin

Daniel Jaffe Itzig 1723-99 Berlin m Miriam Wulff 1727-88
(Frederick the Great & Frederick William II of Prussia)

Joseph 1770- 1848 – his son Alexander m

Miriam, daughter of Rebecca Seligmann, daughter of
 Bella Salomon 1749-1824 , daughter of Daniel Itzig

Nathan 1781-1852 m

Henrietta, daughter of Elias 1755-1818, son of Daniel Itzig

Abraham 1776 - 1835 m

Leah, daughter of Bella Salomon, daughter of Daniel Itzig

Felix Mendelssohn- Bartholdy
1809 - 1847

Cecily 1760-1836 , daughter of Daniel Itzig
 m Baron Bernhard von Eskeles 1753-1839
 Vienna *(Emperors Joseph II & Francis II)*

van Geldern of Düsseldorf and Heine of Bückeberg
 among old Court Jews of minor principalities (see following chart)

Fanny 1758-1818 , daughter of Daniel Itzig
 m Baron Nathan von Arnstein 1748-18

FOOTNOTES

The families of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn and of the Court Jew Daniel Itzig were brought together in 18th century Berlin through ancestral connections and numerous intermarriages, some of which are presented on the above and preceding charts. The distinguished Mendelssohn ancestry focuses attention on some of the most prominent Ashkenazi Court Jews, who played important roles in the 17th and 18th century economic and political history of central Europe.

Many of the Court Jews on the above chart were closely linked by marriages that allowed them to call on a wide network of contacts with local know-how and enabled them to raise substantial funds when required at short notice. The principal patrons of the several families are indicated on the chart in brackets. Thus, several generations of the Gompertz of Cleves were men of business for the rulers of Brandenburg and later Itzig were Court Jews to Kings of Prussia. Connected with Itzig by marriage and associated in their enterprises were Ephraim and Friedländer. Leffman Behrends served the Elector of Hanover while his relative Berend Lehman of Halberstadt was Court Jew to the rulers of Saxony, principally to Augustus the Strong of Saxony who was elected King of Poland.

Samuel Oppenheimer and Samson Wertheimer, whose families were related to each other, became highly important Court Jews in Imperial Vienna, where the descendants of their in-laws such as Eskeles and Arnstein later rose to prominence. “Arnstein & Eskeles” became a most important bank while Fanny, the daughter of Daniel Itzig, otherwise Baroness Fanny von Arnstein, became famous for her salon at the time of the Congress of Vienna. She helped to put the city at the centre of Europe’s cultural map.

The chart serves an indicative function as there are many more Court Jews of note who flourished in this period (such as van Geldern and Heine, distantly related to Leffman Behrends of Hanover and to me). The number of genealogical connections can be guessed from the size of some of these families. Glückel of Hameln, remembered for her Memoirs, had 12 children while Daniel Itzig and Miriam Wulff had 15 children.

Samuel Oppenheimer’s son Simon Wolf established a bank in Hanover, later run by his son Jacob Wolf Oppenheimer, where Mayer Amschel Rothschild was apprenticed around the middle of the 18th century. The political and economic changes of the Napoleonic era led to the rise of new banking families who could respond to the challenges of international finance in which the Rothschilds took an early leading role.

17 Gelles and Jaffe family migrations from 16th century Prague

Background Introduction

I have studied my ancestral background for the past 20 years. My work can be seen on the web site of Balliol College, Oxford (“Edward Gelles at Balliol College Archives & Manuscripts “). It includes references to numerous articles in specialist journals and to six books published between 2006 and 2016, my more recent work also being recorded on this web site.

My ancestral connections include historically significant figures from a score of the leading rabbinic families. On my father’s Gelles side these include the most important rabbis of the Jaffe and Shapiro lines and on my mother’s Griffel side a scion of the Katzenellenbogen rabbis of Padua and Venice called Saul Wahl, who rose to importance in 16th century Poland. Among other forebears are distinguished rabbis and scholars of the ancient Chayes family which left Portugal at the end of the 15th century. I also have connections, with the Horowitz, Isserles, Hillman, Halpern, HaKohen, Wertheimer, Oppenheim, Mendelsohn, and other families. I have studied the history and genealogy of these families and the complex tapestry of their pan-European migrations. Some of these lineages hark back to Rabbi Salomon ben Isaac of Troyes known as *Rashi* (1040-1105), Rabbi Solomon Luria of Lublin (1510-1574), and Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague known as the *Maharal* (ca.1520 -1609), these three rabbis being of widely accepted descent from biblical times

Onomastics of the Gelles name

The European migrations of the Jaffe name (Jafe, Yoffe, etc) are well known. The name of Hebrew origin meaning “beautiful” is recorded over a period in medieval Spain. Forebears of my ancestor Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe were in Italy, notably Bologna, before moving to Prague in the late 15th century.

The Gelles name (and variants with somewhat different spelling) found among Jews in central and eastern Europe in the past few centuries is believed to derive from the German medieval girl’s name Geyle, meaning the fair or fair haired, extended in the Yiddish dialect to refer to a person descended from someone

with fair or reddish hair. The more speculative onomastics of the name in earlier times is the subject of a separate essay.

My paternal Gelles – Jaffe line

I have traced my Gelles rabbinic line back to Brody in Galicia at the beginning of the 18th century. I am a 6th generation descendant of Moses Menachem Mendel Levush who married a daughter of a Rabbi S. Gelles and was thereafter referred to as Moses Gelles of the *Brody Klaus* (a member of that prestigious talmudical college). For the first three generations some of the issue of this marriage were known as Gelles and / or Levush. The line came down to my grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles (1852-1934). The latter's second son was my father, who forsook a rabbinic career for a secular education and became *Doctor Juris* of Vienna University, an advocate in that city, a leading Austrian Zionist and senior member of the Viennese Jewish community.

Before my forebears came to Brody they had followed in the footsteps of Mordecai Jaffe (1530-1612), the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen, who was known as the *Levush* after the title of his magnum opus *The Levushim*. The following map and tables show my Gelles line and its family links over a period of 400 years of migration from Prague to Grodno in Lithuania, and from Grodno in a southerly direction to Brody in Galicia, and then to Vienna.

Also shown is a separate branch of the Gelles family who migrated westwards from Grodno to the province of Posen and then on to Germany. At the same time a Jaffe branch moved in a similar general direction from Grodno to Graetz and then to Berlin where they flourished under the name of Itzig. This Itzig family and my Gelles line, both being descendants of the *Levush*, were thus distant cousins. The Itzig made connections with Mendelssohn in Berlin and Arnstein and Eskeles in Vienna

According to the data base of the Museum of the Jewish People, Beit Hatfutsot, in Tel Aviv, the official museum entry for the name GELLES states that “*distinguished 20th century bearers of the Jewish family name Gelles include the Polish-born British Rabbi Benjamin J Gelles and the Austrian attorney and consultant David Gelles* “.

The latter is my father, Dr. David Itzig Gelles of Vienna whose descent in my Gelles - Jaffe ancestral line is detailed below, while the former, Rabbi Benjamin Gelles, is shown on appended chart and table as from a branch of my family that came from Lithuania to the province of Posen, later to Moench-Gladbach in Germany and thence to England.

Entries from the "Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933" Volume 1, page 217, published by K.G. Saur, 1980

Gelles, David, Dr. jur., Rechtsanwalt; geb. 24. Dez. 1883 Kudrynice/Galizien, gest. 20. Aug. 1964 Wien; jüd.; *V*: Nahum G., jüd.; *M*: Esther, geb. Weinstein, jüd.; ∞ 1921 Renee Grif-fel; *K*: Edward. *Weg*: 1938 GB, 1949 Österr.

Prom. Wien; 1919-38 RA in Wien; Präs. *Herzl-Klub* Wien, Vizepräs. isr. Kultusgde. Wien, Gr. u. Ehrenpräs. *Allg. Zionisten Österreichs*, Mitgl. ZA der Weltkonf. *Allg. Zionisten*. 1938 Emigr. GB, 1938-49 Rechtsberater für kontinentaleurop. Recht in London. 1949 Österr., 1949-64 RA in Wien; VorstMitgl. österr. Zionistenorganisationen.

Qu: Hand. Pers. - RFJI.

Gelles, Siegfried, Dr. phil., Rabbiner; geb. 30. Dez. 1884 Krotoschin/Posen, gest. 3. Sept. 1947 London; *V*: Benjamin G. (geb. Litauen), Dayan (ehrenamtl. relig. Richter), Schächter; *M*: Marie Peshe, geb. Tobianski (geb. Litauen); *G*: 2 S, um 1900 Auswand. GB; 1 S (gest. vor 1914 in Deutschland); 1 S u. 1 B (umgek. im Holocaust); 1 B Emigr. USA; ∞ 1915 Lydia Guttmann (geb. 1890 Namslau/Schlesien, gest. 1969), 1939 Emigr. GB mit Familie; *K*: → Benjamin Gelles; *StA*: deutsch. *Weg*: 1939 GB.

1905-13 Stud. Jüd.-Theol. Seminar Breslau, Rabbiner, 1908 Prom. Erlangen. 1913-21 Haupttrabbiner in Lissa/Posen, 1921-38 Rabbiner jüd. Gde. Mönchengladbach u. bis 1933 ReligLehrer an höheren Schulen. Mitgl. *B'nai B'rith*; Nov. 1938 zeitw. Haft. Febr. 1939 Emigr. GB, Unterstützung durch Verwandte u. *Chief Rabbi's Emergency Fund*, Geschäftsf. *Brit. Rabbis Assn.*; im 2. WK einige Mon. Internierung Isle of Man.

W: Die pantheistischen Gedanken in Leibniz' „Theodizee“ und Schleiermachers „Reden über die Religion“ (Diss.). 1908. *L*: Kisch, Breslauer Seminar. *Qu*: Arch. Pers. Publ. Z. - RFJI.

Gelles, Benjamin, Ph. D., Rabbiner; geb. 2. Nov. 1916 Lissa/Posen; *V*: → **Siegfried Gelles**; ∞ 1946 Annette Esther Broza (geb. 1926 London); *K*: Naomi Zmiri (geb. 1949 London), 1967 IL; Rena Hadary (geb. 1951 London), 1970 IL; Jonathan (geb. 1952 London), Wissenschaftler; David (geb. 1955), **in** höherer Talmud-Akad. tätig; *StA*: deutsch, 1948 brit. *Weg*: 1939 GB.

1926-35 Gymn. Mönchengladbach, 1935-38 Rabbinerseminar Berlin, Predigerdipl.; Febr. 1939 Emigr. GB mit Familie, zunächst beschränkte, später ständige Aufenthaltserlaubnis; Unterstützung durch Chief Rabbi's Religious Fund u. durch Verwandte; 1939-40 Liverpool Talmudical Coll.; Juni 1940 bis Jan. 1941 Internierung Isle of Man u. Huyton. 1941-42 Manchester Talmudical Coll., ab 1941 Univ. of Manchester, 1945 M.A.; 1944-46 Rabbiner Manchester Great Syn., ab 1947 Finchley Syn. London. 1949 Vertr. des Oberrabbiners im *Nat. Marriage Guidance Council*; Mitgl. Hauptgeschäftsvorst. *Mizrahi Org.* für GB u. Irland, 1952 Präs. *Finchley Mizrahi Org.*, 1958-71 stellv. Vors., 1971-77 Vors. *Jew. Marriage Educ. Council* London. 1974 Ph.D. Univ. London. Lebte 1977 in GB.

W: Peshat and Derash **in** the Exegesis of Rashi. Diss. phil. 1975; *Qu*: Fb. Hand. - RFJL.

From Krotoschin and Lissa in the province of Posen

Rabbis Siegfried Gelles and Benjamin Gelles and their families came to England via Germany shortly before the outbreak of the second world war.

		Benjamin Gelles	m	Marie Peshe Tobianski		
Lydia Guttman	m	Siegfried Gelles	-----	Johanna Gelles	m	Julius Kyanski
		1884 - 1947		1871-1940		1872-1954
		Benjamin J Gelles		Bernard Benjamin Gillis		
		Rabbi of Finchley, 1916-2000		Q.C., Circuit Judge, 1905 - 1996		

Benjamin Gelles (ca, 1845 -1904) came from Lithuania, possibly Kretinga. **Siegfried Gelles** was born in Krotoschin and became Chief Rabbi of Lissa and later Chief Rabbi of Moenchen-Gladbach.

His son **Benjamin J Gelles** was born in Lissa and studied in Manchester, where he was a rabbi before becoming Rabbi of Finchley. Both father and son were distinguished scholars whose writings on religious subjects are still quoted.

Johanna (Hannchen) Gelles was a daughter of Benyamin Gelles and Marie Tobianski, and a sister of Rabbi Siegfried Gelles. She married Julius (Cohen) Kyanski in Krotoschin in 1894.

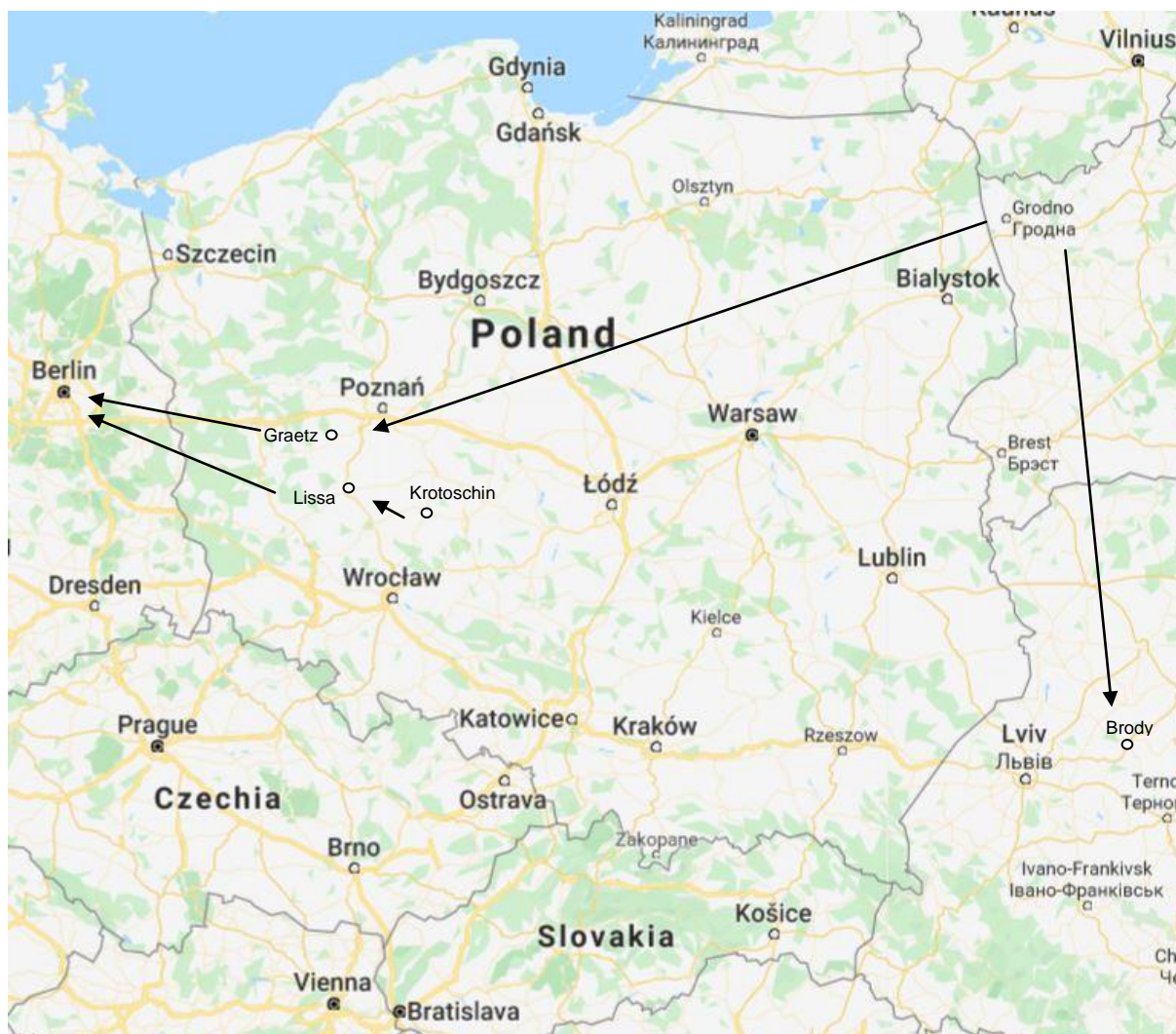
Julius Kyanski (who changed name from his paternal Cohen) was Hebrew teacher and Rabbi in Nottingham and Newcastle

The children of Julius Kyanski and Johanna Gelles included Bernard Benjamin Kyanski, known as **Bernard Gillis** -

He was a member of Lincoln's Inn, became a successful barrister and then a Judge, associated with several newsworthy cases. At one time he was Recorder of Bradford. He was active in Jewish community affairs and national politics – standing as Labour Party candidate in general elections,.

Contacts between the Jewish communities and indeed the Gelles family branches in the province of Posen and in Galicia continued throughout the 18th century. By the time some of our respective branches became refugees in England contacts had been lost. As I described in earlier essays, such as “ Dr. David Gelles, Advocate and Zionist” and “ Refugees in wartime London and Oxford” , my parents and most of their friends looked to the future as Zionists rather than dwelling on the past. When I finally began the serious study of my ancestral background it was too late to speak to Rabbi Benjamin Gelles but I did find his son Jonathan (Dr Jonathan S. Gelles) and we met for lunch several times. So a tenuous family contact was restored after many generations.

My ancestral family tree has many genealogical connections with chief rabbis of the Jaffe, Shapiro, Horowitz, Chayes, Wahl-Katzenellenbogen, and other families. The aforementioned Gelles branch who came to England from Germany cannot have shared in many of these connections and having parted ways many generations ago will not have a close genetic admixture with my immediate relatives, but academic interests and common traditions of the ancient Gelles rabbinic lineage may well have come down through the ages.



From the time of Mordecai Jaffe (1530-1612), Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen (Poznan), Jaffe and Gelles families migrated from **Prague to Grodno** and intermarried. At the end of the 17th century my Gelles – Jaffe family branch (who wrote their name as Gelles or sometimes Gellis) moved south from **Grodno to Brody** in Galicia (north-east of Lviv, formerly Lemberg). And later some of this branch came **to Vienna**. My grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles (1852-1934) was born in Galicia and died in Vienna. My father Dr David Itzig Gelles (1883-1964) was an advocate in that city, a Liberal Zionist, and a leading member of Vienna's Jewish community.

Another Gelles branch went west from **Grodno to Posen** and to near-by towns of **Lissa (Leszno)** and **Krotoschin ((Krotoscyn)**, while some Jaffe who had come from the same direction settled in the little town of **Graetz (Grodzisk)**. In the early 18th century Daniel Jaffe from **Graetz** went **on to Berlin**, adopting "Itzig" as his family name. In due course the Itzig became prominent Court Jews in Berlin, where they were connected by marriage with the Mendelssohn family.

Gelles from **Krotoschin and Lissa**, including Rabbis Siegfried Gelles (1884-1947) and Benjamin Gelles (1916 2000) also migrated westwards Germany. Later they sought refuge in England, where Benjamin Gelles became Rabbi of Finchley.

A third Gelles branch from **Grodno moved to Jerusalem** at the beginning of the 18th century.

Rabbi Abraham Israel Gellis (born 1951) is a 10th generation Haredi descendant of this family branch

Migration of rabbinic families in central and eastern Europe over the past few centuries.

Connections between Galicia (Brody), Lithuania (Vilna, Grodno) , Posen (Graetz, Lissa, Krotoschin), Silesia (Glogau), Austria (Eisenstadt)

Isaac Horowitz Chief Rabbi of Brody, Glogau, and Hamburg, d. 1767	Nathan Nata Shapiro Chief Rabbi of Cracow 1585-1633	Mordecai Jaffe (aka Levush) Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno & Posen d. 1612	Samson Wertheimer Court Jew of Habsburg Vienna, Rabbi of Eisenstadt , Chief Rabbi of Hungary & Moravia died 1724	Uri Feivush Chief Rabbi of Vilna & Nasi in Jerusalem d. 1657	
<i>line connected with Rabbi D.I. Gelles of Brody and his descendants</i>		Jaffe of Graetz (near Posen)	<i>Wertheimer descendants connected with Oppenheim, Mendelssohn, Itzig, Eskeles, Gelles, Loewenstein</i>	Meir of Horodycze	
	Lifsha Shapiro m. Israel Halpern of Krotoschin		Isaac of Siemiatycze	Gershon Vilner of Shklov	Uri Feivush of Vilna
Uri Feivuch of Glogau	?	Daniel Jaffe Itzig in Berlin d. 1799	Shmuel Gelles Rabbi of Siemiatycze	daughter married Nathan Nata of Grodno Chief Rabbi of Brody d. 1764	
(1) daughter ? (2) Sarah d. 1774 married →	Shmuel Helman (Hillman) Chief Rabbi of Kremsier Mannheim & Metz d.1764	s Mendel Moshe Mendel Levush →	daughter married Moshe M. Levush aka Moses Gelles of Brody d. ca 1760	daughter m Isaac Chayes of Brody d 1807	
Rabbi Uri Feivush of Lissa and other towns d. 1771	 Rabbi Moshe of Glogau		 Mordecai Gelles of Brody father or uncle of	her brother David Tebele Rabbi of Lissa d. 1792	
	daughter married Moses Gelles	----- →	Rabbi Moses Gelles of Glina and Brody		
	another daughter, Chana, married son of Asher Lemel, Chief Rabbi of Glogau and Eisenstadt , d. 1789	Descendant of Rabbi Isaac Horowitz →	Rabbi David Isaac Gelles Brody, d. 1868 married Sarah Horowitz		<i>a distant Gelles line in Posen coming from Lithuania</i>
	Ahron Ber Gelles 19 th century community leader in Eisenstadt		Nahum Uri Gelles Chief Rabbi of Solotwina 1852-1934		Rabbi Siegfried Gelles b. Krotoschin 1884
			Dr David I Gelles of Vienna 1883-1964		Rabbi Benjamin Gelles b. Lissa , 1916 1 st cousin of
			 Edward Gelles		Judge Bernard Gillis. 1905 - 96

GELLES – LEVUSH LINE

Edward Gelles
(b. 1927)

|

Dr. David Itzig Gelles (1883-1964)
advocate in Vienna
m Regina Griffel (a)

|

Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles (1852-1934)
Chief Rabbi of Solotwina nr Stanislau
m Esther Weinstein (b)

|

Rabbi David Isaac Gellis (ca 1790-1868)
of Glina and Brody
m Sarah (Horowitz) (c)

|

Rabbi Moses Gelles
m daughter of Rabbi Moshe of Glogau
the eldest son of Shmuel Helman
Chief Rabbi of Metz (d.1764) (d)

|

Mordecai Gelles of Brody
father or uncle of the above
and father of Rabbi Samuel Gelles (e)

|

Rabbi Moses Menachem Mendel Levush (f)
aka Moses Gelles, scholar of the Brody Klaus
(ca. 1700 -1760)
m daughter of Rabbi S(hmuel) Gelles (g)

[Levush most probably descendant of Chief Rabbi Mordecai Yaffe of Prague (1530 -1612) known as the Levush after the title of his magnum opus].

- (a) Regina Griffel (1900-1954), daughter of David Mendel Griffel (1875-1941) and of Chawa Wahl (1877-1941), whose family were acknowledged descendants of Saul Wahl (1545-1617), scion of the Katzenellenbogen rabbis of Padua and Venice. Saul Wahl played a leading role in Polish affairs of state and according to legend became *Rex pro Tempore* during the interregnum that preceded the election of Sigismund III as Polish King in 1587 (but see re- interpretation in my published books).

Regina's grandfather Eliezer Griffel, head of the Nadworna community, married Sarah Matel Chayes, of the ancient Chayes family that included Isaac ben Abraham Chayes (1538-1617), Chief Rabbi of Prague, whose half sister was the first wife of the famous Rabbi Judah Loew (ca 1520-1609).

- (b) Esther Weinstein (1861-1907), daughter of Rabbi Hirsch Leib Weinstein of Solotwina and his wife Gittel. Circumstantial evidence suggests that Gittel was a daughter of Rabbi Yehuda Ahron Horowitz and his wife Miriam whose forebears were of an old Margolioth rabbinic line. Rabbi Hirsch Leib's father was Rabbi Israel Jacob Weinstein, who was a contemporary of Rabbi Yehuda Ahron Horowitz in Solotwina.
- (c) David Isaac Gellis appears to have married again later in life. He was in his sixties when my grandfather was born in 1852. It is plausible to connect Nahum Uri's mother Sarah to Rabbi Efraim Fischel Horowitz, a half-brother of Rabbi Yehuda Ahron Horowitz, whose father Rabbi Jacob Jokel Horowitz of Bolechow (1772 – 1832) was of the ancient line going back via Rabbi Isaac Horowitz of Hamburg (1715-1767) to the one time head of the Jewish communities in Poland, Pinchas Halevi Ish Horowitz (1535-1618).
The implications of these Horowitz connections would be that Nahum Uri Gelles and his wife Esther Weinstein were 2nd (half) cousins.
- (d) Rabbi Shmuel Helman (Hillman) of Metz, who was of pan-European significance, allied his daughters to a rabbi of the priestly Katz family, to Katzenellenbogen and Rapaport rabbis and to a son of Chief Rabbi David Mirels Fraenkel of Berlin (1707-1762). Helman was also related by blood and marriage to the eminent Chief Rabbi of Prague. Ezekiel Landau (1713-1793).
- (e) Mordecai Gelles of Brody, a son of Moses Gelles of the Brody Klaus, was the father of Rabbi Samuel Gelles (d.1811). The latter married Sarah Rachel Sheindel, the only daughter of the great Chasidic Rabbi Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz (1726-1791).
Issue of this Gelles – Shapiro marriage were known by the name of Polonsky from the area of Polonnoye (in present day Ukraine).
Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz was a direct descendant of the famous Rabbi of Cracow Nathan Nata Shapiro (1585-1633), whose line connects with the medieval Treves rabbis of France and goes back to the 11th century biblical scholar and commentator Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, known by the acronym of Rashi. The latter was widely believed to be of royal Davidic descent. My ancestral rabbinic families including the Treves, Luria, Shapiro, Loew, Katzenellenbogen, and Chajes claimed connections to Rashi.

- (f) The marriage of Menachem Mendel Levush aka Moses Gelles of Brody with a daughter of Rabbi S. Gelles produced issue that formed alliances with Ramraz, Margoshes, HaKohen, Fraenkel, and other rabbinic families as well as the afore-mentioned connections with the families of Rabbis Shmuel Helman of Metz and Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz. The use of both names Levush and Gelles continued for two or three generations after the above-mentioned Gelles– Levush marriage. Earlier Levush or Yaffe and Gelles had met and married in Grodno and other towns in Lithuania and their lines go back to 16th century Prague, where a scion of the ancient Katz (HaKohen) married a daughter of Judah Loew and Mirl Chayes-Altschuler, leading to marriages of their progeny with Horowitz, Chayes, Gelles, Helman and others.
- (g) The father-in-law of Menachem Mendel Levush recorded as Rabbi S. Gelles, was probably Rabbi Shmuel Gelles of Siemiatycze, who was a great-grandson of Chief Rabbi Uri Feivush of Vilna. In old age, Uri Feivush became head of the Ashkenazi community in Jerusalem with the title of *Nasi* (circa 1650), a title that had been borne in the preceding generation by Rabbi Isaiah Halevi Ish Horovitz of Prague, Frankfurt, and Safed (d.1627).

References

- Jaffe article in Jewish Encyclopedia (1904)

Beit Hatfutsot, Museum of the Jewish People, Tel Aviv, database

--- **Dr. David Itzig Gelles** (my father) see especially my books,

“An Ancient Lineage” (publ. 2006), Chapters 26 and 27

“Family Connections: Gelles-Shapiro-Friedman” (publ. 2009), Chapter 6 (pp 85 – 112).

--- **Rabbi Benjamin J Gelles** (Rabbi of Finchley) and others

“An Ancient Lineage”, Chapter 36, p. 277, note 14 and Chapter 38, pp 317- 318

“Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933”

(publ. K.G. Saur, 1980) has entries for Dr David Gelles and Rabbi Benjamin J Gelles

“Hofjuden und Kulturbuerger. Die Geschichte der Familie Itzig in Berlin”

by Thekla Keuck (publ. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Goettingen, 2011)

Files on < Edward Gelles at Balliol College Archives & Manuscripts >

Reflections on my ancestral background (A 1)

Connections between Brody in Galicia and towns in Lithuania, Silesia, and Posen (A 3)
(includes pedigree of my grandfather Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles)

Grodno in Lithuania and the migration of some Gelles and Jaffe families (A 6)
(includes reference to an old Gelles family branch who went from Grodno to Jerusalem)

Tracing my Gelles line back to Levush and Jaffe (A 20)
(discusses descent of some Levush from Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe of Prague)

Wahl and Jaffe to Gelles and Griffel (A 21)

Wahl and Shapiro ancestral connections (A 22)

etc

References to Judge Bernard Gillis

Bernard Benjamin Gillis (1905 - 1996) - Genealogy - Geni

www.geni.com › people › Bernard-Gillis

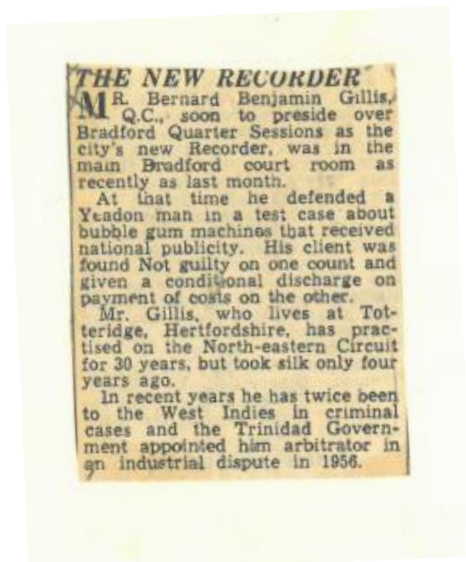
www.2harecourt.com › about-us

Chambers of Lord Justice Sebag Shaw and Judge Bernard Gillis QC.

(E.G. note : Lord Justice Sebag Shaw's father was Harry Sochaczewski called after the little town of that name in central Poland. Its Jewish community was annihilated in WW2)

Appointment of Bernard Gillis, Q.C. to be Recorder of Bradford

1958 newspaper cutting by Courtesy of Bradford Local Studies



Judge Bernard Gillis Q.C. who Is To Hear The Bloom Case.

Box 629 50710156 A.jpg. Stock Image by Associated Newspapers for editorial use, Oct 14, 1969.

The Guardian from London, Greater London, England

theguardian.newspapers.com › [newspage](#)

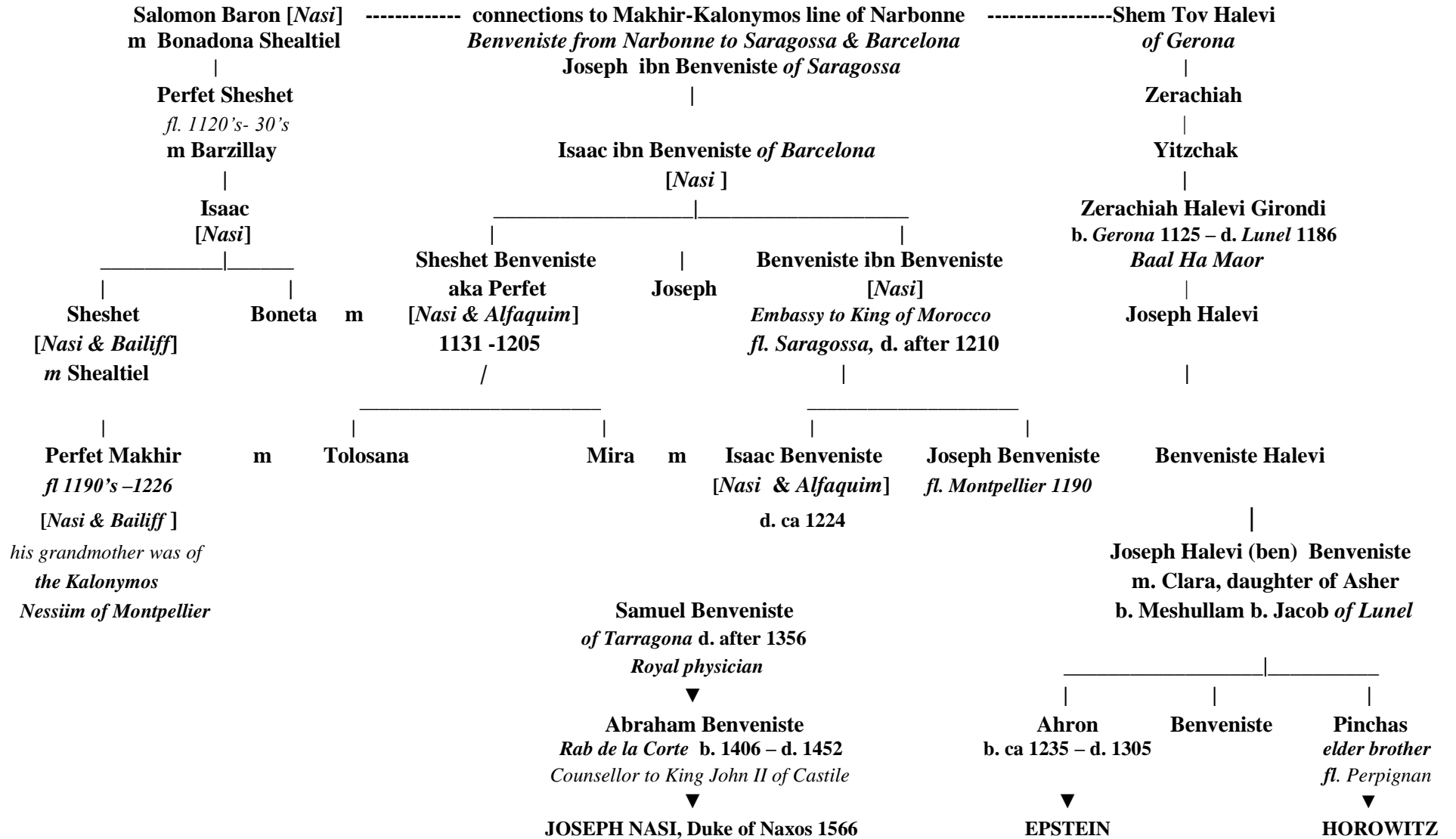
28 May 1996 - One rare oasis of moderation and mercy was the court of *Judge Bernard Gillis QC*, who has died aged 90.. "Bennie" Gillis was the son of a north .."

My immediate family background was in central and eastern Europe, but several of my ancestral lines can be traced back to the Iberian peninsula where they prospered for hundreds of years. However, even before the Inquisitions of the late 15th century Sephardic communities sometimes came under pressures leading to conversion and emigration. The latter mainly encompassed those who chose to abandon ancient homes rather than give up their religion, but many converts (called marranos and conversos) also followed them as time went by.

Their peregrinations took them in several directions, principally north to the Low Countries or east to the Ottoman Empire. In their new homes some reverted to their old religion. From the Low Countries they went to Britain and the New World or to Germany and beyond.

Jews who were welcomed by the Ottoman Sultans settled in different parts of eastern Europe that had fallen under Turkish rule. Among these were the Benveniste, of a family that had flourished in Barcelona and elsewhere in Spain and in Provence where they had manifold connections

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



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 : Shealtiel, 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.

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-

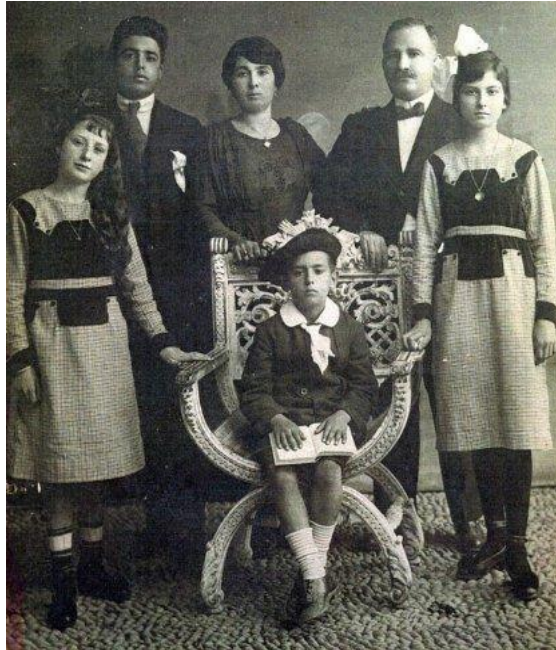
A branch of the Spanish Benveniste reached the island of Rhodes about 400 years ago and intermarried with families which had contributed to the ancient history of the Jews, whose “hither & thither” millennial odyssey took them from the Levant and Egypt and from the Anatolian coast to Cyprus and Rhodes, and thence to southern Italy, Sicily, North Africa, Spain, and back again.

There have been Jews on the island of Rhodes for more than two thousand years. Hellenised Jews came there in ancient times and many went on to Sicily and further west. They were under Byzantine rule for centuries. From the early 1300’s the Knights of the order of St John held the island, until it was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1522. A Jewish community flourished there until the second world war when it was decimated by the German occupiers.

Spanish Jews had come to the island from the late 13th century onwards, but this essay is mainly concerned with the major Sephardic influx following the Inquisition of 1492.

Accounts of the history of Rhodes and its Jewish community are available on the internet, and include articles on Avotaynu Online, on e-Sepharad, and on the web sites of the Rhodes Jewish Community, and of its Jewish Museum.

1923 - a Cohen family of Rhodes
Flor Tarica (center standing)



Family Photos – Rhodes Jewish Museum

The Israel family who came to Rhodes from Jerusalem and Alexandria contributed rabbis to the island for several centuries. At the end of the 17th century a daughter of Rabbi Moshe Itzhak Ben-Habib of Salonica married Moshe Israel, who became Chief Rabbi of Rhodes. Their son R. Elyahu Israel, who was born in Alexandria, followed his father in that post.

From Leon Taranto's "Extraordinary Israel family rabbinical lineage" reproduced on the web site of the Jewish Museum of Rhodes we have the following :

R. Moshe **Israel**, b.1670 in Jerusalem, d.1740 Alexandria, Chief Rabbi of Rhodes 1713 -1727 m. Hannah **Habib**, daughter of R. Moshe b. Itzhak Ben Habib, born ca. 1645 in Salonica, died in Jerusalem

R. Eliyahu **Israel**, b. 1710, d. 1784 Alexandria, Chief Rabbi of Alexandria, Cairo, and Rhodes 1769-1773, m. (2) Esther **Tarica** - from his first wife :

R. Moshe **Israel**, b. 1747 and d. 1782, from Jerusalem to Rhodes Chief Rabbi of Rhodes 1781-2 m. - **Farhi**

R. David **Israel**, b Rhodes, father of two Chief Rabbis of Rhodes -

(1) R. Michael Chaim Moshe **Israel**, who died 1881 in Jerusalem.

He married a daughter of Chief Rabbi Haim Yehuda **Israel**

(2) R. Rafael Itzhak **Israel**, born ca. 1811 in Rhodes and died ca. 1903 in Jerusalem

The above extract from the extensive family tree is relevant to the ancestry of **Elise Campbell** whose parents were Ralph L **Israel** (a great-grandson of the above-mentioned Rhodes Chief Rabbi Michael Chaim Moshe **Israel**) and Ouida Victoria **Cohen**. Elise's listed ancestral surnames include **Cohen**, Camhi, Cohn, **Farhi**, Gersosky, **Habib, Habib, Israel, Israel**, , Polivka, **Tarica**, and in-laws **Rousso, Hasson**. She is thus related to numerous Rhodesli families.

Benveniste of Rhodes

The names of Israel, Tarica, and Habib feature in the ancestral background of present day descendants of the ancient Benveniste family, who came to Rhodes from Spain following the great Iberian Inquisitions.

The appended charts of Marcelo Daniel Benveniste of Buenos Aires (born 1957) and Arthur Benveniste of Los Angeles (born 1934) show their connections to these and other old Sephardic families of Rhodes

For **Marcelo Benveniste** ancestors included Alhadeff, Berro, Bardavid, Israel, Benatar, Hasson, Russo, Tarica, Menashe, Capeluto, and in-laws Codron and Yaffe, Benhabib and Cohen.

For **Arthur Benveniste** ancestors included Russo, Capeluto, Israel, Tarica, Galante, Hasson, and in-laws Benatar, Amato, Notrica.

Sephardic families from the Iberian peninsula who found new homes in the Ottoman Empire generally preserved much of their genetic stock and Ladino culture. Centuries later many of these Jews, who left Rhodes before the German occupation in the second world war or who survived the Holocaust, went to the United States, primarily to Los Angeles and Seattle, and in South America to Buenos Aires, and other cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo.

On the other hand, their old Iberian cousins, who originally took the northern path to the Low Countries and then into central and eastern Europe, mixed with Ashkenazi families and in the course of time their descendants now show distinguishable lower degrees of Sephardic admixture.

Related Jewish families of Rhodes

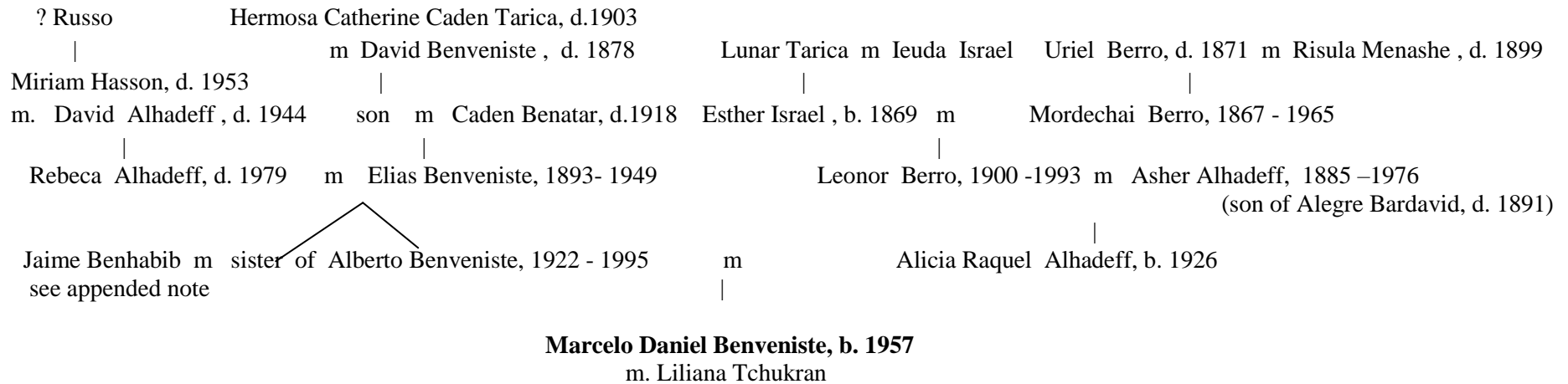
Referring to a family tree of Jews from the Island of Rhodes and Turkey by Victor Alkana & Petros Michailidis :

"in general the families are from Rhodes, Cos and the Turkish mainland near Izmir (Bodrum & Aydin appear now and then). Some spouses were obtained from Istanbul. The migrations vary. Many went to Seattle, WA & Los Angeles, CA. Some went to the Belgian Congo. Some went to South America" (Victor Alkana < valkana@ix.netcom.com >).

Highlighted names in the appended extract relate to ancestral connections of Marcelo and Arthur Benveniste, and include some relatives of Edward Gelles :

“Abolofia, Abrevaya, Absaradel, **Abulafia**, Acher, Alalouf, Alazraki, Alcana, Alderoqui, Alfici, Algazi, **Alhadeff**, Alkana, Alvo, **Amato**, Amedio/Amodeo, Angel, Anreader, Ardity, Arkless, Arnou, Arougheti, Avdalovo, Avzaradel, Azvaradel, Babani, Baigun, Balbach, Barbaimon, **Bardavid**, Barki, Barokas, Baron, **Behar**, Bejar, **Benatar**, Bendjuya, Benezra, **Benhabib**, Benoun, **Benveniste**, Benyacar, **Berro**, Bienn, Binoun, Biton/Beton, Buchuk, Cadranel, Cadrone, Calderon, Calvo, **Camhi**, **Capelluto**, Capeloto, Capelouto, **Capeluto**, Capilouto, Capuano, Caston, Cazes, Chalme, Chara, Chertkow, **Codron**, Coen, **Cohen**, Cordoba/Cordova, Crain, Curiel, Danon, Elias, Elkana, Eryol, **Eskenazi**, Esperanza, Fainstein, **Farji**, Fils, **Franco**, Galamidi, **Galante**/Galanti, Gateno, Genni, Girard, Glazer, Gluckman, Goldberg, Goldstein, Greenspan, Grife, Gross, Grossman, Guini, **Habib**, Hahn, Haki/Haky, **Halfon**, Hanan, Hart, **Hasson**, Hazan, Huerin, **Huniu**/Hunio, **Israel**, Jason, Jassen, Kaplan, Katz, Lanchano, Levi, Levin, Levy, Louza, Mainardis, Mandel, Marincik, Matorin, Maya, Mayesh, Meir, **Menache**, Mezistrano, Michaud, Mintzer, Miron, **Mizrahi**, Mosafir, Moscatel, Moscona, Munter, **Musafir**, Nahmias, Negrin, Nof, **Notrica**, Palombo, Peha, **Piha**, Pizante, Policar, Posner, Rackner, Ramsey, Rava, **Russo**, Salfati, Salmoni, Saul, Scapa, Shapiro, **Shemaria**, Solam, Soriano, Sourmany, Stern, Surmani, **Tarica**, Tastassa, Varon, Ventura, **Yaffe**, Yaras, Yohai, Zlotorynski and many others. “

Ancestry of Marcelo D. Benveniste



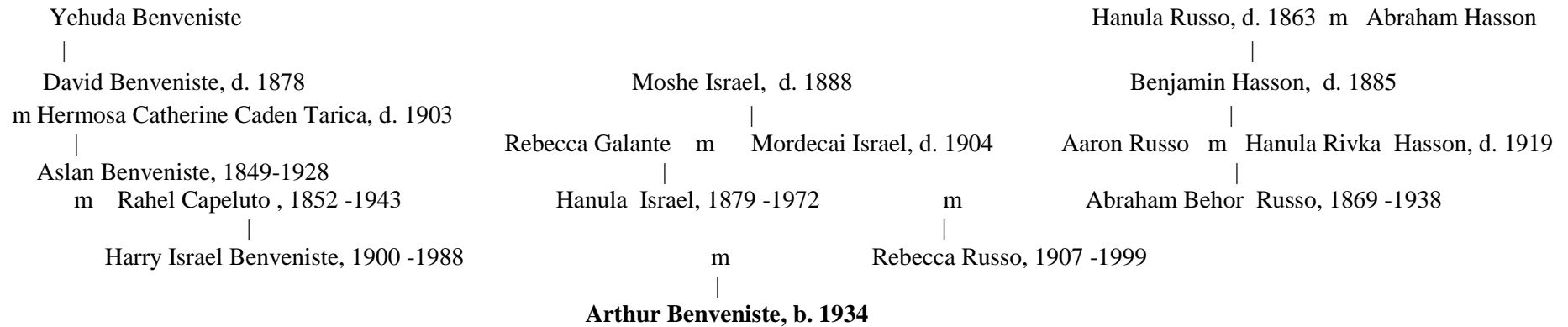
Notes

The siblings of Leonor (Luna) Berro included Rosa Berro (1895 – 1984) who married Moshe Capeluto (1886 - 1947) and Sarah Berro (1899 - 1985) the wife of Narcise Codron, whose daughter Rebecca Codron (1925 - 1994) married Salomon Yaffe (born 1914 in Turkey).

The sister of Alberto Benveniste and Jaime Benveniste married Jaime Benhabib (1912 – 1999, whose brother Miguel Benhabib (1911 - 1988) married Miriam Cohen (1924 - 2010). The two brothers were the sons of Gabriel Benhabib (1880 - 1956) whose wife was Esther Menashe (1887 - 1967).

The above ancestry chart drew on various sources – including Marcelo Benveniste’s scattered entries on several web sites,

Ancestry of Arthur Benveniste



Notes

The above chart draws on web site entries by Arthur Benveniste's sister, Jeanette Benveniste (born 1936), material on the web site of the Jewish Museum of Rhodes, tombstone inscriptions, and Census records. The issue of David Benveniste and Hermosa Catherine "Caden" Tarica were linked by marriages to Benatar, Capeluto, Hasson, Amato, and Notrica families.

Edward Gelles : Mitochondial-DNA matches FMS (Full Sequence)

Google map, Family Tree DNA (19 January 2019)

exact matches (shown in deep red) including Marcelo Benveniste whose ancestors in Rhodes originally came from Spain, and Raymond Russo from Monastir in Macedonia. Matches at genetic distance of 1, 2. and 3 are shown in orange, yellow, and green



1 Marcelo Benveniste

Y-DNA HAPLOGROUP J-M 267
mtDNA HAPLOGROUP K1a1b1a

Most Distant Ancestors Paternal: David **Benveniste**, b. 1840
Maternal: Uriel Berro, d. 1871

Born in Argentina. Descendant of Sephardic Jews from Rhodes (now) Greece, whose forebears left Spain in the era of the Inquisition

Ancestral Surnames: Aljadeff (Rhodes) Alhadeff Alhadeff (Rhodes), Benveniste, Benveniste, Benatar, Berro. Berro (Rhodes), Bardavid, Hasson, Israel, Menache, Russo, Tchukran, Tarica

2 Raymond Russo

Y-DNA HAPLOGROUP E-V13
mtDNA HAPLOGROUP K1a1b1a

Earliest Known Ancestors

Paternal: Bochor Russo, 1845?, Monastir (Bitola), Macedonia

Maternal: Isaac Alcosser, 1870?, Monastir (Bitola), Macedonia

Ancestral Surnames : Alcosser, Alcosser (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia) Bromberg, Cohen, Cohen or Kamchi, Cohen (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia), Frey. Ishach, Youshah. Ishach Ischach (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia). Katz, Kamchi Kamchi (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia), Levy, Potaschman, Russo (Z"L), Russo, Russo (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia). Torunczyk Torunczyk "Thorner", Yosha (Bitola (Monastir, Macedonia)

3 Dr Susanne Esserman

Earliest Known Ancestors : Paternal: Isserman
Maternal: **Benveniste**

Ancestral Surnames : Appel (Russia/Ossining NY), Bayden (Germany/Ossining NY), Breitzer (Kaluga, Russia), Cohen (Iberian peninsula) Cunja (Cohen) (Portugal/Azores), Djboh (Morocco) Desboches (later changed to Dayboch etc., Esserman (was changed from Isserman) (Australia/New Zealand/ South Africa/ Ireland), Furtado (Azores/ Iberian Peninsula) Frank-Levi (Europe/ Germany/England) Hart (Amsterdam Netherlands), Isserman (Kovno / Kaunas (Courland), Isserman (Latvia /Courland), Levy (Europe and later to the West Indies) Mendes (Iberian Peninsula) Pardo (Iberian Peninsula), Perlitzskyi (Bratslav and Odessa), de Sousa (Portugal), Schainholtz (Bratslav and Vinnitsa), Schwartz (Moscow /Kaluga), Stark (Latvia), da Silva (Portugal), Trustinetskyi (Bratslav / Odessa), Troystenetskyi (Ukraine), Volfenzon (Odessa) Wolff (surname changed from Trustinetskyi in New York), Wolfsohn (Odessa), Wolfensohn (Odessa / the Baltic area).

Mixed Ashkenazi – Sephardic background

Exact FMS mitochondrial match with Edward Gelles

Autosomal DNA matches with Edward Gelles 107 cM / 10 cM

Among my more important ancestral connections are those of my grandmothers. Esther Weinstein and Chawa Wahl were born in Galicia when the province was part of the Austrian Empire. Esrher was a daughter of Chief Rabbi Hirsch Leib Weinstein of Solotwina and Gittel Horowitz. Chawa was a daughter of Shulim Wahl and Sarah Safier of Tarnobrzeg.

My maternal Wahl line goes back to Saul Wahl, scion of the Katzenellenbogen from Hesse-Nassau who became Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice in the 16th century. I have written about Saul Wahl and his progeny in my earlier books.

I have devoted chapters 9 to 12 in the first part of the present work to my close Wahl cousins, and chapter 7 to an outline of my immediate Gelles–Weinstein connections. In the present chapter I introduce some distant Weinstein relatives and discuss the results of DNA tests that throw light on family connections, genetic admixture, and patterns of paast migrations.

Section A

Garry Kasparov

A most interesting Weinstein connection remains speculative but might well be confirmed by a few DNA tests. In my chapter 15 entitled “Some Family Chess Notes” I discuss my connection with ex- World Chess Champion Garry Kasparov, whose paternal Weinstein were in Baku in Azerbaijan for at least three generations, Baku being a destination for Jewish migration from eastern Galicia since the early 19th century. Garry Weinstein adopted his mother’s Armenian name of Kasparian. Jews and Armenians lived side by side for generations in some of our eastern *shtetls*. I might mention that some analyses of my autosomal DNA data (for example *Eurogenes K 36*) suggest that my genetic background has a small Armenian as well as a some Georgian Jewish admixture

Section B Close and distant Weinstein cousins

Distant Weinstein cousins who have contacted me recently include Richard Lipsman, his close relative David E Levine, and Ilana G Calderon. They have a common ancestor, \Rabbi Ahron Weinstein, who was known to me as a sibling of my great-grandfather Chief Rabbi Hirsch Leib Weinstein.

The Rabbis of Solotwina near Stanislau and small nearby owns are the subject of chapter 7 of my book *Meeting my Ancestors* (Shaker Publishing, 2011) where Rabbi Ahron is mentioned on page 62.

So-called “Family Finder“ autosomal DNA matches (Family Tree DNA of Houston, Texas) are shown below for Richard Lipsman and David Levine with me and my 1st cousin Elsa Gellis Schmaus.

Autosomal DNA matches - total matches and longest shared segment in cM

	Edward Gelles	Elsa Schmaus	Tad Taube	Richard Lipssman	David Levine
Edward Gelles		876 101	375 48	111 30	
Elsa Schmaus	876 101			142 12	140 15
Tad Taube	378 48				
Richard Lipsman	111 30	142 12			523 57
David Levine		140 15		523 57	

Section C Blacker (Blecher) family connections

Family migrations between Lithuania, Belarus, Galicia, and the Ukraine gave rise to common links with Blacker who were formerly called Blecher, a name suggesting occupational origins as “ tin smith “ or the like. Appended charts show descent of Eileen Blacker, a daughter of Benjamin Blacker and Victoria Weinstein, who has significant DNA matches with me and all my above-mentioned Weinstein cousins except for Richard Lipsman, whose Blacker connections come through his relatives Lawrence Horowitz and Dale Dubin who have Blacker mothers and came from a family nexus at Teofipol in the Ukraine.

Edward Gelles and Weinstein cousins with Blacker autosomal DNA matches
 Total matches and longest shared segment in cM

Edward Gelles and Weinstein cousins	Eileen Blacker	Other Blacker connections
Edward Gelles	94 11	
Elsa Schmaus 1st Gelles cousin	52 11	
Thaddeus N Taube 2nd Wahl cousin and distant Weinstein matches	117 11	L. Horowitz 98 15 son of Sima Blacker
Richard M Lipsman distant Weinstein cousin		L. Horowitz 88 11 son of Sima Blacker Dale Dubin 72 13 son of Martha Lillian Blacker
David E Levine distant Weinstein cousin	105 8	

FF



Eileen Blacker



Benjamin BLACKER
b. 1908



Abraham BLACKER
b. 1868



Isaac BLECHER
b. 1845



Stishe KADISH
b. 1845



Private



Private



Private



William WEINSTEIN
b. 1882



Private



Victoria WEINSTEIN
b. 1908



Fanny MEYEROWITZ
b. 1882

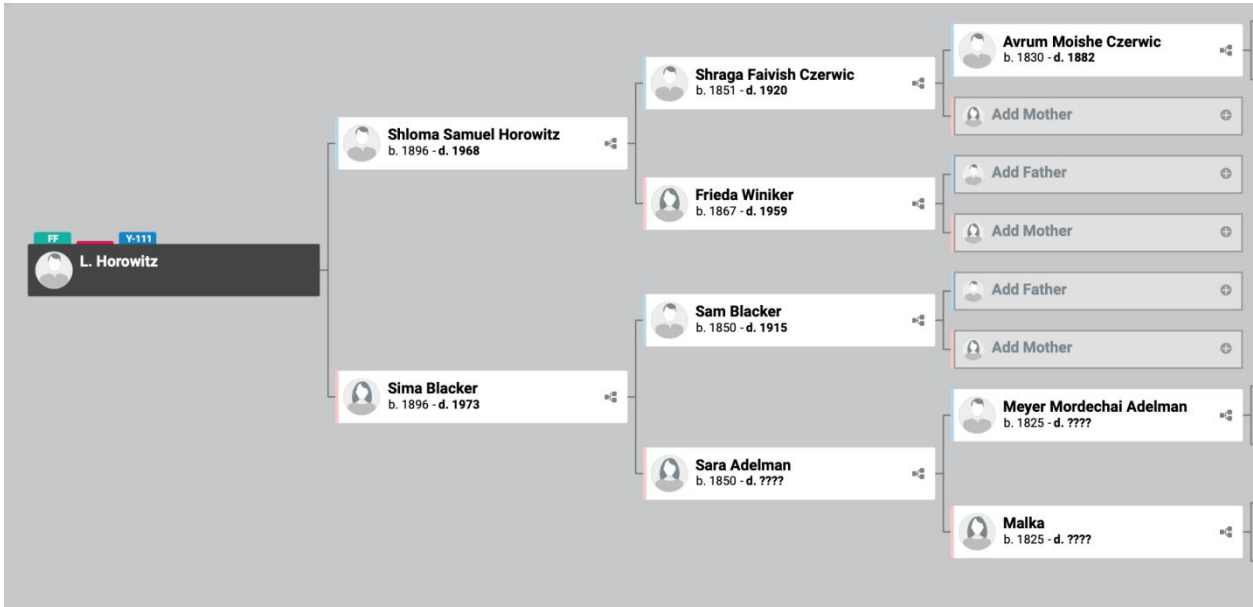


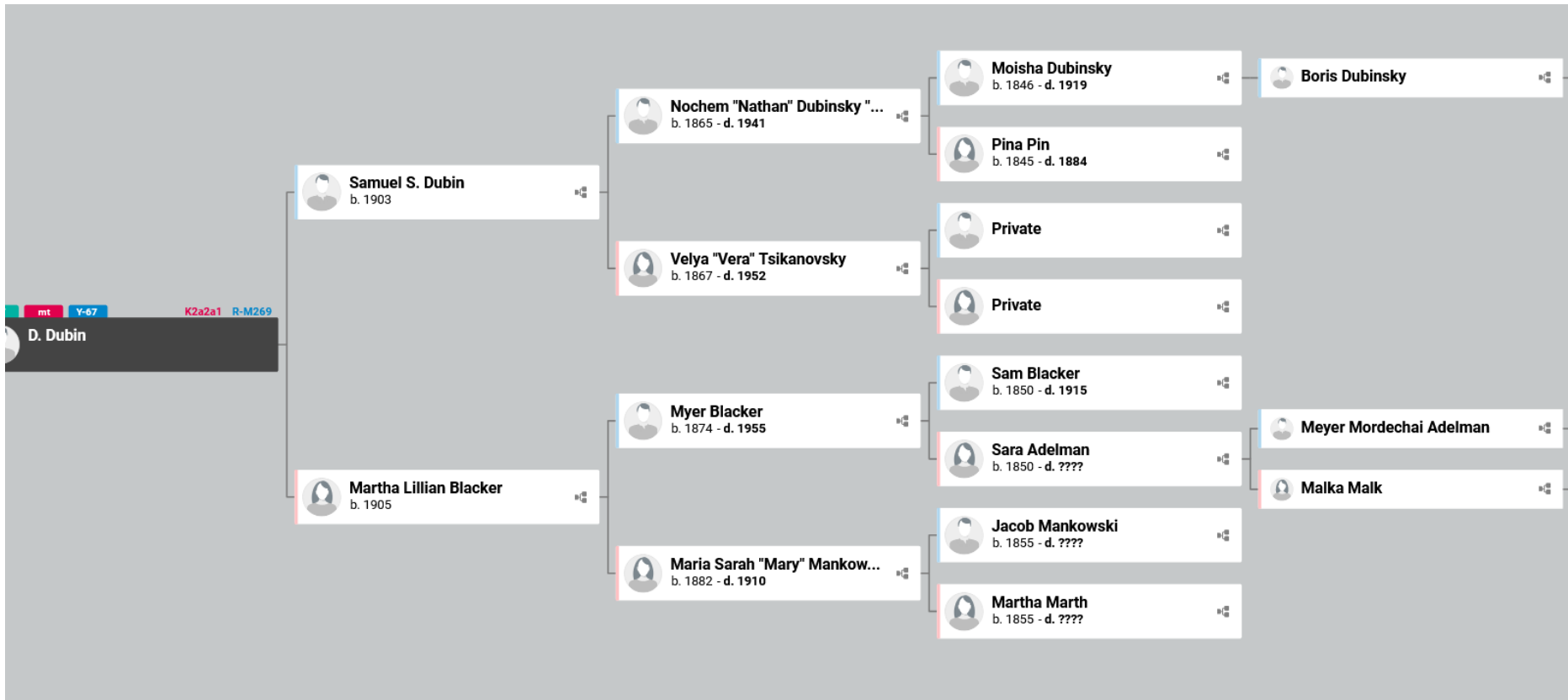
Private



Private







Section D Connections with Baghdad and the Far East

Some of my ancestors who set out from Spain and elsewhere found their way back to the ancient Jewish community of Baghdad which flourished for hundreds of years until it was finally dispersed in the mid-20th century. Migrations to and from Baghdad followed ancient trade routes to India and the Far East and westward to the end of the “Silk Road” at the Syrian city of Aleppo which lost its pre-eminent trading position after the construction of the Suez canal in the later 19th century.

Connections found via autosomal DNA matches with forebears in Baghdad included those of my close cousins and of distant Weinstens with the Gubbay family who were related to the Sassoon, the so-called “Rothschilds of the East”, whose path to great riches took some of them from Baghdad, to India, China, and ultimately to England. While the migrations of our Baghdad connections went in various directions as noted above, I have the benefit of the ancestral background provided by Samuel Tadeusz Lionel Hilsenrath, giving details of his descent from Gubbay of Baghdad and Sassoons in India.

Autosomal DNA matches : total matches & longest segment in cM (Family Tree DNA)

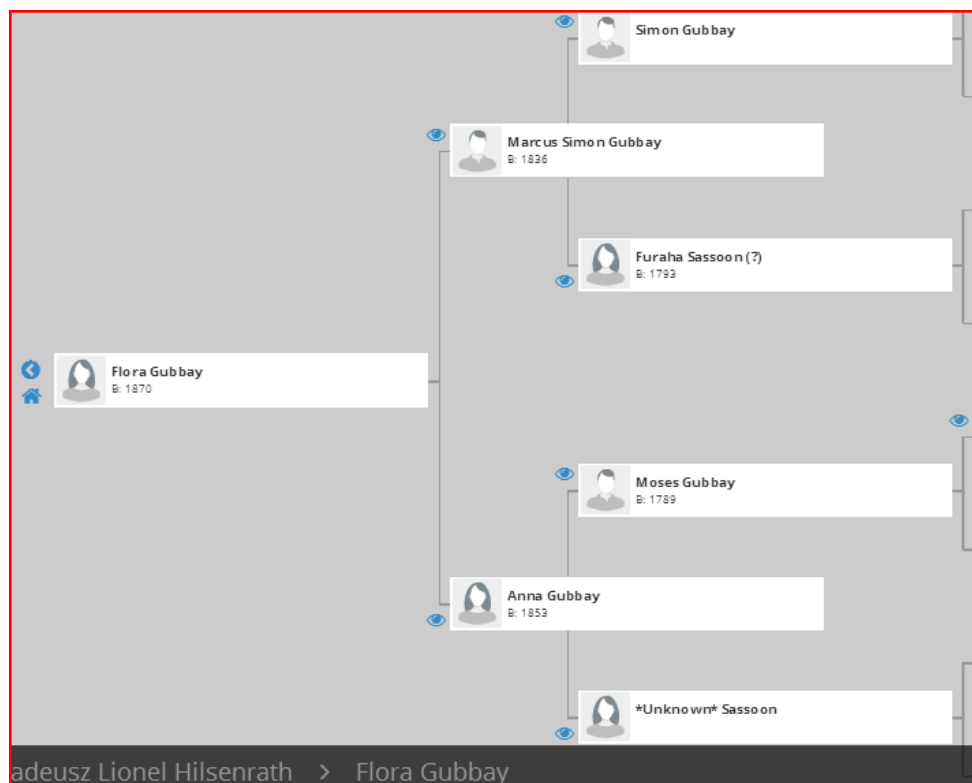
Pointers to distant migrations and Ashkenazi –Sephardic admixtures

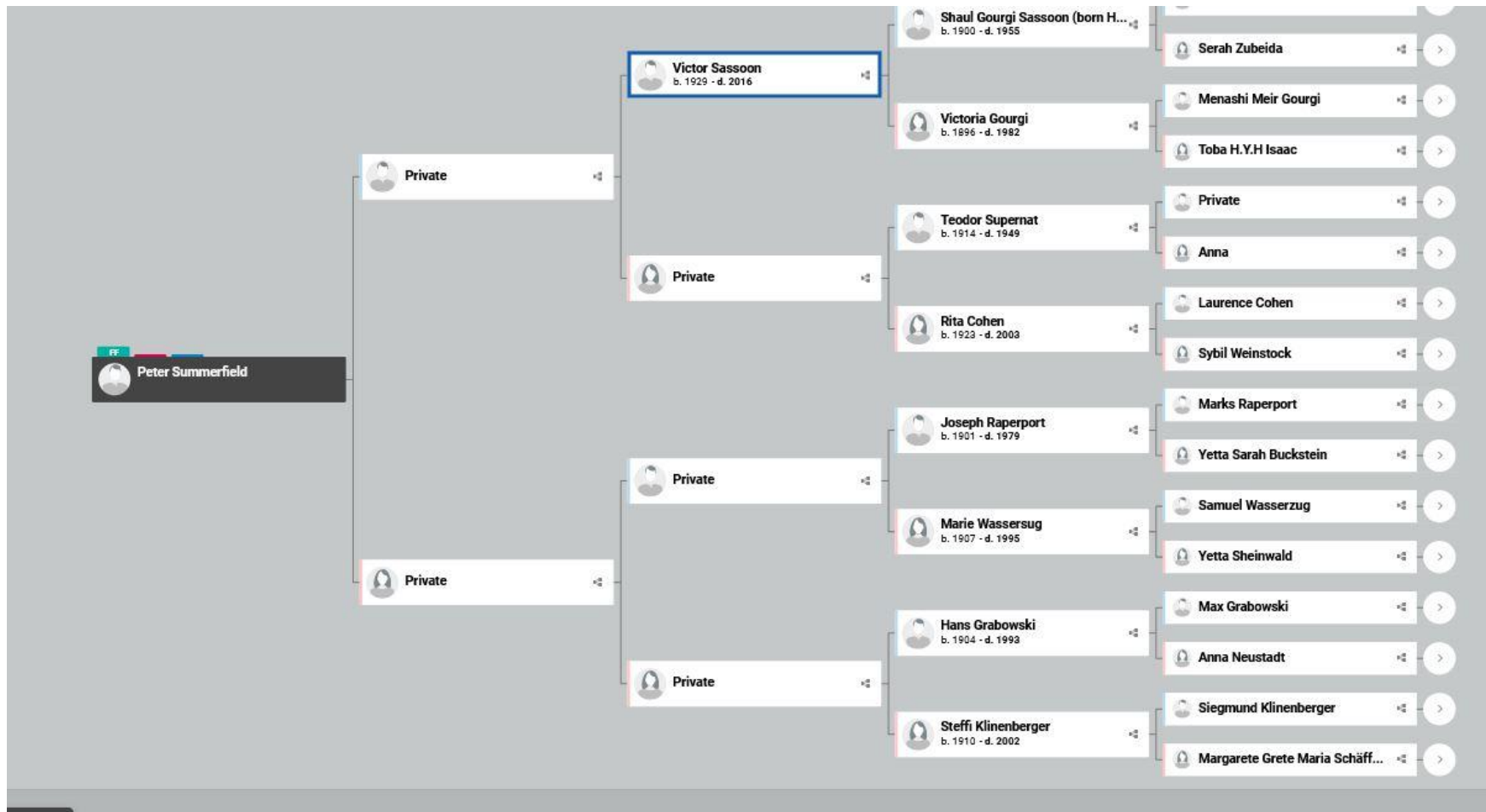
Edward Geleles And cousins	<u>Martin D Lee</u> Gubbay Baghdad	<u>S.T.L. Hilsenrath</u> Gubbay Sassoon Baghdad india	Peter Suummerfield Sassoo Khedouire Gourgi Menashe Iraq India Far East
Edward Gelles	90 14		49 9
Elsa Schmaus	100 12	72 13	105 16
Tad Taube	78 12	98 9	140 13
Richard M Lipsman	55 9	11`2 11	
Davud E Levine	95 12		

The autosomal DNA matches on the above chart point to connections with Gubbay of Baghdad and remote links to India and beyond and involving the Sassoon and others.

I have included my close cousin Tad Taube in the table. He is my 2nd Wahl cousin but also has a number of remote Weinstein links. His matches with S.T.L. Hilsenrath and Peter Summerfield suggest some interesting distant connections.

Giubbay and Sassoon ancestors of S.T.L. Hilsenrath





Partial chart of Peter Summerfield's ancestry

Section E Mitochondrial DNA matches

Mitochondrial DNA matches relate to the strict mother-daughter lines of probands and can sometimes complement the results of autosomal and other DNA tests.

Mitochondrial DNA matches of Edward Gelles and others of haplogroup K1a1b1a Maps of Full Mitochondrial Sequence DNA matches (from Family Tree DNA)

Exact matches- red. Distances of 1, 2, and 3 steps – orange, yellow, and green

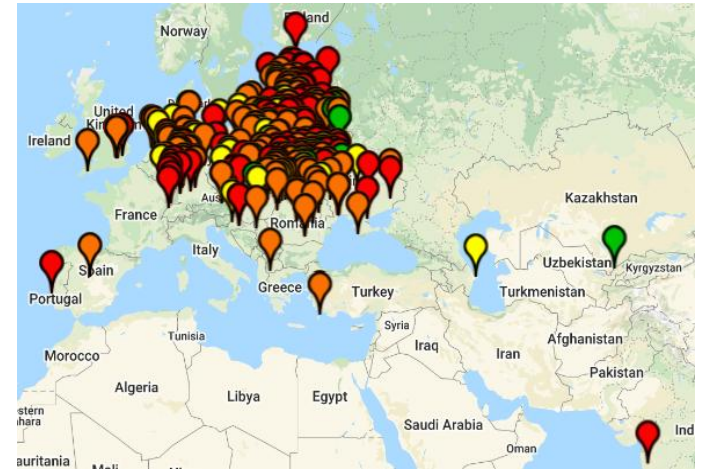
Edward Gelles



Samuel Tadeucz Lionel Hilsenrath



David E. Levine



Richard Lipsman

Edward Gelles, who has Sephardic roots in his ancestral background, shows **exact matches** with Dr Suzanne Esserman, whose maternal ancestors included Benveniste in Spain, Raymond Russo from Monastir (Montenegro), and Marcello Benveniste, whose forebears came to the island of Rhodes at the time of the Spanish inquisition.

Samuel Tadeusz Lionel Hilsenrath is at a distance of 1 step in matches with Edward Gelles and also **1 step** from Raymond Russo and Marcelo Benveniste

Samuel's paternal line was in eastern Galicia (now in the Ukraine). His maternal line goes back via Flora Gubbay in Baghdad and then to Sassoon in India (see Hilsenrath's appended chart).

David E Levine has matches at a distance of 2 steps from Edward Gelles, Suzanne Esserman, Raymond Russo, and Marcelo Benveniste while the mt-DNA test shows his maternal line 1 step from Samuel Hilsenrath's Indian ancestry.

Richard Lipsman has an exact match with Hilsenrath mt-DNA in India and has 1 step matches with Suzanne Esserman, Raymond Russo, and Marcelo Benveniste.

The preceding chapters 18 and 19 outline the history and genealogy of the Benveniste of Spain and of some of their descendant lines.

My exact Full Mitochondrial Sequence DNA matches with Suzanne Esserman and Marcello Benveniste shown in the above charts confirm my ancient Benveniste connections and throw light on the relationships of some distant cousins.

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