

Sacerdotal Connections

Edward Gelles

My family background includes many Cohanim and Levites. The name Cohen comes from the Hebrew HaKohen and the related name of Katz is an acronym of Kohen Zedek meaning “Righteous Priest” The Levitic names include Halevi and Halevi Segal.

In earlier times the Cohen were deemed to be direct descendants of Aaron the Priest, who was a brother of Moses the Law giver. The priests were assisted by Levites. From the Latin word for priest Cohen became known as Sacerdote in the languages of Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

My ancestral tree had a number of branches which contributed rabbis including Gelles, Shapiro, Jaffe, Horowitz, Halpern, Loew, Katzenellenbogen, Chayes, and many others. Some of these relatives were Levites - such as the Halevi Horowitz and the Segal Landau - while some Cohen or Katz and Halevi rabbis were linked by marriage to one or other of the afore-said branches.

My family has sometimes been described as *Ashkenazi* (German Jews). Several of the principal branches did indeed move largely eastward after a long sojourn in Germany. The family of Rabbi Jidah Loew of Prague came from Worms, and the Halpern from Heilbronn, The Katzenellenbogen Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice originated in Hesse-Nassau, while Speyer was the origin of the eponymous Shapiro who included the Chief Rabbis of Grodno and Krakow, thus keeping in mind our long lasting connection with Poland and Lithuania.

Our *Sephardic* roots go back to a period of ancestral movement between the Iberian peninsula and the several regions of southern France, followed by extended waves of migration. I look back to the Shem Tov Halevi and Benveniste of Catalonia, whence the Halevi Horowitz came to Bohemia, adopting their new name from the estate of Horovice near Prague (1,2).

That city was the most important staging point for many family branches on their long eastward migration across the continent – including my Chayes forebears from Portugal and the Jaffe from Spain.

The grand journey of the Chayes took some of them to Provence and then to Prague, whose Jewish community they served with distinction, going on to Lithuania, Galicia, to Italy – Livorno, Florence, Trieste, and then on to Chief Rabbinate of Vienna, and in the New World to a Chayes professor of law at Harvard, just to mention a few highlights (3).

Some Jaffe came to Italy from Spain and a branch went on from Bologna to Prague. Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe (1530-1612), the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen set the path for one line of his descendants who were called Levush after the title of his *magum opus* and after whom I might call my immediate paternal Gelles - Levush line (4). I am also descended from Jaffe on my mother's side from the Chief Rabbi of Krakow Joel Sirkes (1561-1640), named after his mother Sirka Jaffe. His daughter married David Halevi Segal, (1586-1667), the Chief Rabbi of Lvov. Joel Sirkes was a second cousin of Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe.

Looking at my life journey from Vienna to London and at the briefest of *tours d'horizon* of so many generations of ancestors, migrations from one end of Europe to the other, and intermarriages of leading rabbinical families, I can see my family history as the history of European Jewry in microcosm and the need to appreciate the latter in the context of a wider history. In these studies the application of genetic genealogy is becoming increasingly useful.

Of the numerous commercial companies that offer a range of DNA tests I have mainly used “Family Tree DNA” of Houston, Texas, primarily with their “Family Finder” autosomal DNA, X- and Y-DNA, and mitochondrial DNA tests. In the first instance I explored connections of my close and some not so close cousins (5).

One of my most distinguished cousins is Thaddeus Norman Taube, who came from Poland to California with his parents. Tad and I have several distant genealogical inks in addition to Katzenellenbogen descent. Our grandmothers Chawa and Rachel Wahl were sisters and our common Wahl line goes back to Saul Wahl, scion of the afore said Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice (6).

Exploring direct father-son lineage our Y-DNA tests show that my haplogroup is R -M124 while Tad belongs to a Cohanic haplogroup J-M267.

As I mentioned before, my paternal line goes back to a Levush of Jaffe descent who was a scholar of the Brody Klaus and was known as Moses Gelles

following his marriage to a Gelles rabbi's daughter. So my direct father-son line became a Jaffe line at that point

As for Tad Taube's Cohanic Y-DNA haplogroup it comes from the marriage of a Cohen to a lady of Katzenellenbogen descent leading to Tad's immediate Taube forebears (7).

This haplogroup of Cohanic descent also pertains to George Sacerdote, a second generation Italian American author who has described his family history in Piedmont, Savoy since the time of the Renaissance. (8). Some of these Sacerdote go back to a time when they were called Cohen and even "of the ribe of Aaron. Fom Spain they came finally to the Duchy of Savoy to towns in the vicinity of Turin. They prospered in commerce and merchant banking and also showed dstinction in medicine and other academic pursuits,

George S Sacerdote

Ancesry and DNA matches with Edward Gelles and his close cousins

J-M267

Y-DNA HAPLOGROUP

N/A

Earliest Known Ancestors

Paternal:

Joseph Vidal de Sacerdoti, ~1425-~1490

Maternal:

Penelope Mirotti, ~1860-1948

Ancestral Surnames

Cordoba Spain de Sacerdotibus (Alessandria Italy) de Carvajal (Cordoba Spain)

Debenedetti (Alessandria Italy) Levi (Nizza Monferrato, Italy)

Montefiore (Pisa/Livorno Italy) Montalcini (Asti Italy)

Oreface (Livorno Italy) Segre (Turin Italy)

Y-DNA (father – to –son) COHEN Haplogroup J –M 267

George Sacerdote and Tad Taube - Y-DNA 67 marker tests match 61 / 67

Autosomal DNA matches – total matches and longest matching segment in cM

George Sacerdote with Edward Gelles	67 / 13
with Elsa Schmaus (Gelles 1 st cousin)	77 / 12
with Tad Taube ((2 nd cousin of Edward Gelles)	93 / 24

Furthermore, with relevance to George Sacerdote's lineage traced to Carvajal of Cordoba, I append some of our autosomal DNA matches with probands recording the Carvajal name among their ancestors.

DNA matches with CARVAJAL descendants

(with notes of other Spanish shared surnames)

Edward Gelles

(Abarbanel)

George Sacerdote	67 cM / 13 cM	
A. Cousin	67 cM / 17 cM	(Abarabanel)
Suzanne Esserman	107 cM / 10 cM	(Benveniste, Abulafia)

Elsa Schmaus

(Abarbanel)

Gorge Sacerdote	77 cM / 12 cM	
A. Cousin	68 cM / 8 cM	(barabanel)
Suzanne Esserman	96 cM / 9 cM	(Benveniste, Abulafia)
Jorge A Saenz	25 cM / 13 cM	

Tad Taube

(Abarbanel)

George Sacerdote	93 cM / 24 cM	
Suzanne Esserman	84 cM / 8 cM	(Bennveniste, , Abulafia)
Valerie Basset	47 cM / 8 cM	
Carlos G Rodriguez	30 cM / 8 cM	
Alejandro Lopez	29 cM / 10 cM	(Gil)
Albert Estrade	21 cM ./ 8 cM	(de Mendoza)

My close cousin Tad Taube and I share DNA matches with George Sacerdote and some Cohanic and Levitic connections. We also have connections with related probands whose ancestry goes back to the Iberian peninsula and some of these probands share significant DNA matches with each other.

References

Papers of Edward Gelles on the web site of Balliol College, Oxford
Manuscripts & Archives
Published books and articles and files of recent work

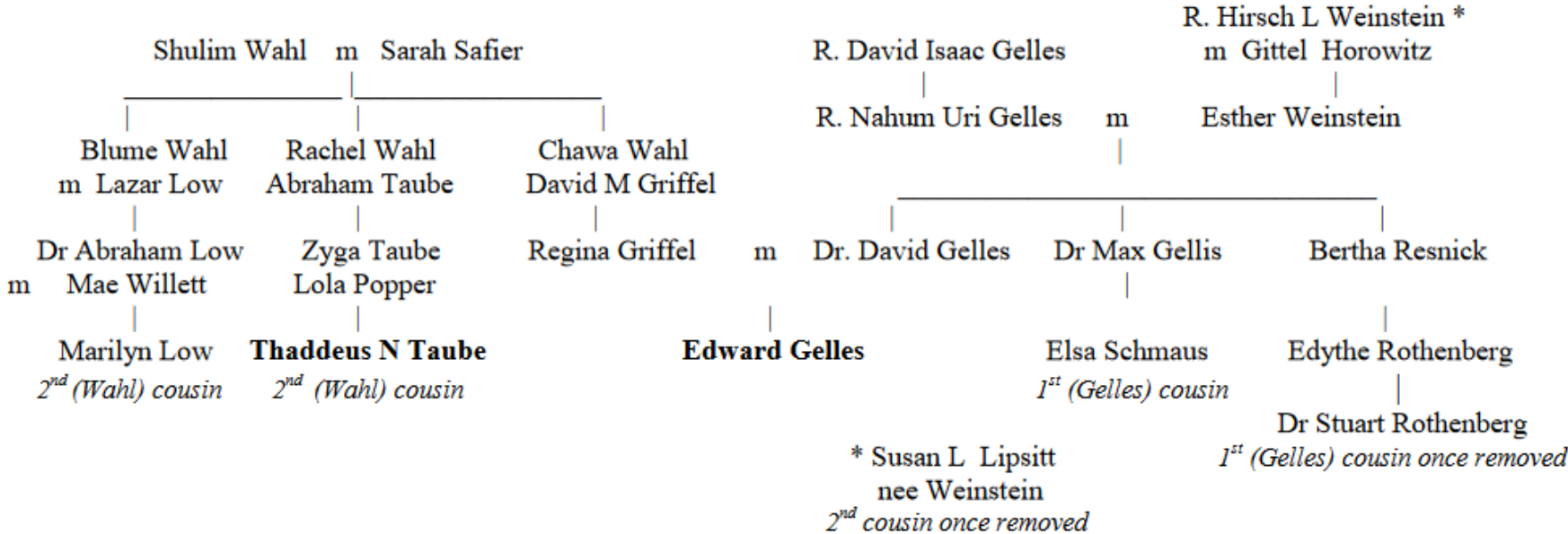
1. Edward Gelles ancestral overview (B 1)
2. Benveniste Nessim of Barcelona and Shem Tov Hlevi of Gerona (A 9)
Millennial descent from Shem Tov Halevi of Geroma (A 10)
3. Chayes connections (B 17)
4. Descent of Esther Weinstein from Rabbi Mordecau Jaffe (A 27)
Paternal ancestry of Edward Gelles (B 10)
5. Edward Gelles autosomal DNA matches with close cousins (C. DNA tests)
6. Connections of Tad Taube and Edward Gelles (B 19)
7. Some Family Connections with Wahl Katzenellenbogen (A 18)

George S Sacerdote

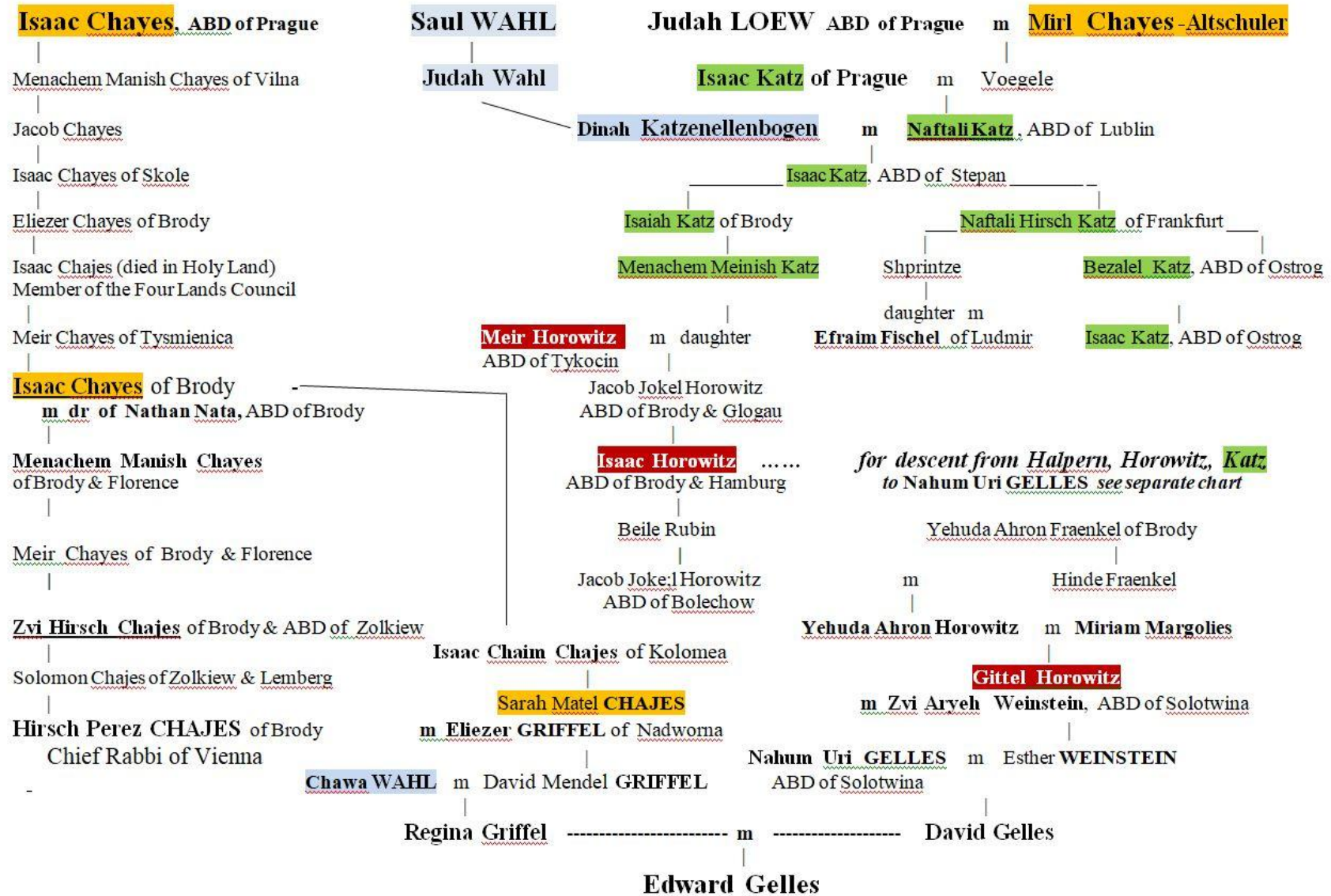
Remembrance and Renewal” George S Sacerdote 2007
Memories of Memories “, Sacerdote & Co. 2019
Maintaining your cultural heritage - www.youtube.com
(Cary Memorial Library, uploaded September 2020)

Connections of Tad Taube and Edward Gelles

relationship with Edward Gelles indicated in italics

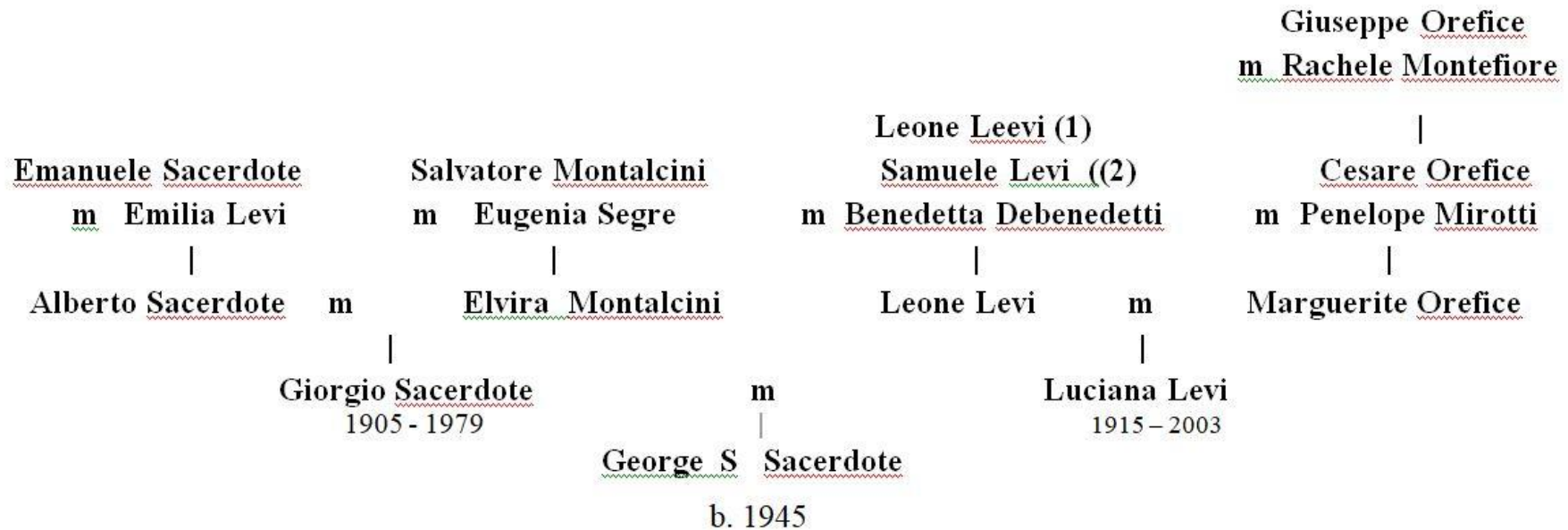


Chaves, Wahl, and Horowitz ancestors of Edward Gelles



Ancestry of George S Sacerdote

(from George Sacerdote's publications and other sources)



A sister of Giorgio Sacerdote was Eugenia Sacerdote de Lustig. She was Born in Turin in 1910 and died in Buenos Aires in 2011, reaching an age of 101 years. She had a distinguished career in medical research. Her husband Maurizio Lustig was from Trieste of a wide spread Austro -Hungarian family.

A sister of Elvira Montalcini was Adele Montalcini who married Adamo Levi, a son of Leone Levi .
Their daughter Rita Levi Montalcini (1909 –2013) won the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1986 and lived 103 years.
She was a first cousin of both parents of George Sacerdote