

# **THE LURIE LEGACY**

## **THE HOUSE OF DAVIDIC ROYAL DESCENT**

**by Dr. Neil Rosenstein**

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**Foreword by Israel Meir Lau  
Chief Rabbi of Israel  
President of The Great Rabbinical Court**

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**Preface by Ranan R. Lurie**

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## Isserles Rabbinical Family Dynasty

**C**racow in the 16th century was a "golden period" for Poland's Jewry. Despite cholera epidemics in 1552 and 1556 which claimed many lives, the number of Jews in about 1560 was 3,000. The city was known as a great center of Talmudic learning and counted among its citizens some of the greatest rabbinical scholars of Poland. There was not always only one authority for the community. Rather the distinguished heads of the various city yeshivas (two or three) acted independently of one another.

At that time Reb<sup>1</sup> Israel ben Reb Joseph lived in Cracow, a member of an affluent and prominent family there. Reb Joseph was the community *parnas u-manhig* [warden and leader] and a member of prominence. His wife, Gitel or Gitele, who died in Cracow, 1552, was the daughter of Reb Moses Auerbach. Auerbach was the leader of the Regensburg community until their expulsion in 1519, whereupon he settled in Cracow. Here he rose to become the *parnas u-manhig*. It appears possible that Israel studied at one time in the Regensburg yeshiva. Gitel, a wealthy woman, had engraved on her epitaph simply that she her entire life was devoted to helping the poor. Her entry on the *pinkas chevra kadisha* (minutes of the burial society of Cracow) states, "and the soul of Mrs. Gitele, daughter of Reb Moses, mother of Isarel Lazers."<sup>2</sup>

Reb Israel married into another wealthy family. His wife, Dina Malka, who was born in 1485 and died in Cracow in 1552,<sup>3</sup> was a daughter of Reb Eliezer<sup>4</sup> Shrentzel, the *parnas u-manhig* of Lvov, whose wife, Dreizel, was a daughter of R. Jehiel Lurie, who was the first of Brest-Litovsk in the 15th century. This Lurie connection is first recorded by R. Joseph Kohen-Zedek in *Shem VeShe'erit*, published in Cracow, 1895. Prior to that date no published sources recorded this connection, and, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, Kohen-Zedek stated that this was the tradition he received from his father.

Reb Israel was one of the more prominent Cracow Jews. His son, the *ReMA*, wrote highly of him in the introduction to his *Torat Chatat*, Cracow, 1569. He was a wealthy businessman whose profession took him on many distant travels. In 1551 the Polish King, Sigismund Augustus, granted the royal privilege to two Jews of Cracow to travel and trade in Vilna without interference from city elders. Reb Israel was one of them. The *ReMA* related three stories that he quotes in his father's name. His father would disembark from a boat on Sabbath by circumventing the breaking of Jewish law. He would stand aboard blocking the exit whereupon non-Jews would push him down so that he was forced onto land. However, he would then not move more than the permitted four *amot*.<sup>5</sup> He also quotes his father that one should not mix red and white wine of Sabbath because of the forbidden labor of coloring. However, the *ReMA* remarked that this was permissible, quoting an early<sup>6</sup> rabbinical authority, R. Eliezer b. Samuel of Metz, author of *Yerei'im*, which does permit this if the intent is for drinking rather than coloring. The third story deals with his father's willingness to discuss the bible with non-Jews who asked him questions. Israel died in Cracow in 1568.<sup>7</sup>

By his marriage to Dina Malka, Reb Israel's wealth increased. Despite his wealth and communal activities, he was also a learned Talmudic scholar which earned him the title of *gaon* (scholarly genius) and *chaver* (fraternal member). In those days these were titles of distinction. The *ReMA* calls his father *the great parnas*, and the minutes of the *ReMA* synagogue call him the wealthy, leader and president.

<sup>1</sup> A title equivalent to Mr.

<sup>2</sup> Is(s)arel or Is(s)erel = Israel and Lazers or Lazarus = [son-in-law of] Lazer or Eliezer.

<sup>3</sup> 10th of Tevet.

<sup>4</sup> Most sources call him Eliezer but some state Eleazar. His name appears in the Cracow *chevra kadisha* minutes as Eleazar. See *Kitvei Yad*, 1861, *Sifrei Defus* and *Matzevot*, #34.

<sup>5</sup> Each measures about 18 inches.

<sup>6</sup> Known as a *rishon*, R. Eliezer, lived about 1115-1198, was a *tosafist*, student of two of *Rashi's* grandsons, *Rabbeinu Tam* and *RaSHBaM*.

<sup>7</sup> See *Kitvei Yad*, #34 (on the 13th Adar I).



Early 18th-century signature of Abraham Abale Isserles (died in 1731), grandson of Abraham Heilprin of Lublin and the *MaHaDuRA BaTRA*, on the title page of the Pentateuch (from the collection of Martin Isserlis).

Israel's wife died in 1552 and, as an everlasting memory to her, he erected a "new" wooden synagogue in her name, which was completed in 1553, according to the wall plaque<sup>1</sup> placed there on that occasion. This latter date, 1553, has led scholars to err by claiming she died in 1553 and not 1552.

### Israel (Isarel Lazars) and Dina Malka Had Four Sons and Three Daughters<sup>2</sup>

Moses, surnamed Isserles<sup>3</sup> (or Isserlis), known as the *ReMA*, was born in Cracow about 1525–1530.<sup>4</sup> He died in Cracow in 1572 on Lag B'Omer.

Isaac Reb Isserles, as he is recalled on his epitaph in Cracow where he died in 1585.

Eliezer, called *aluf* (community officer) on the epitaph of his wife, Miriam,<sup>5</sup> died in Cracow, 1615, daughter of R. Solomon Lurie (the *MaHaRaSHaL*). He was named after his maternal grandfather. Their son, Moses, born after 1573 and named after his uncle, published the first edition of his uncle's responsa in Cracow in 1640. He records his genealogy in the introduction.

Joseph, mentioned in the responsa of his brother, the *ReMA*. He was named after his paternal grandfather.

Miriam, died in old age in 1617,<sup>6</sup> married R. Pinchas (son of Israel) HaLevi Horowitz, one of the city's *rosh yeshivas* and leaders and *manhig* [leader] of the Council of the Four Lands. He died in Cracow in 1618,<sup>7</sup> some four months after his wife, according to the minutes of the Cracow chevra kadisha [burial society]. In the minutes of the *ReMA* synagogue she is listed as Miriam Beila "daughter of the *katzin* [officer] Reb Israel Isserles, whereas her epitaph reads, "Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron." Although it was common practice to add names when a person was seriously ill, the minutes of the *chevra kadisha* listed her simply as Beila, daughter of Israel. Her epitaph however states her name as Miriam, but the acrostic of her death year that follows spells out named Miriam Beila.

<sup>1</sup> On this plaque she is called only Malka. It can be assumed that, as was the common practice, an additional name was given during her final illness, Dina.

<sup>2</sup> According to Wetstein there were four daughters. These are listed in *LeToldot Yisrael VeChachamav bePolin*, in *HaEshkol*, volume VII, published in Cracow, 1913. See also Shlomo Englard, "An Ancient Genealogy of the Descendants of the Family of the *ReMA* and *SHaCH*", *Yeshurun*, Jerusalem 2003 13, 711–743 (Hebrew).

<sup>3</sup> For his full biography see Chapter Three. He signed himself in 1550: Moses ben Israel (may he live and be well), who is called Moses Isserles from Cracow. A detailed biography of this great rabbi, from which much information has been gleaned, can be found in *Rabbi Moses Isserles* by R. Dr. Asher Siev, Yeshiva University Press, New York, 1972.

<sup>4</sup> Sources that give his birth date as 1510 are erroneous, as he died at a comparatively young age.

<sup>5</sup> They were second cousins once removed.

<sup>6</sup> The correct date being 8 Elul (not the fifth). The burial society minutes note she was old.

<sup>7</sup> He died on 17th Tevet.

## Family of R. Moses Isserles (*ReMA*)

The historical records preserve two sons and two daughters<sup>1</sup> of the *ReMA*. Although they were married about three years, it is unclear whether his first wife bore him any children before she died young in 1552.

One daughter was Dreizel, born about 1562,<sup>2</sup> named after her father's maternal grandmother. She married R. Simcha Bonem Meisels and died in Cracow, according to the minutes of the *chevra kadisha*, on Monday, 30th Kislev, which is *Rosh Chodesh* [head of the new month] Tevet, [5]362 [= 1602] son of Bonem Reb Abraham Meisels. His father was *parnas u-Manhig* of the community. Her epitaph states she died young at the age of forty, but learned ahead of her years.

The second daughter was married to R. Eliezer Gunzburg, son of Simon Gunzburg. The couple settled in Safed, Israel, where they died. Simon Gunzburg was a wealthy community leader in Posen and Prague and was mentioned in the responsa of the *ReMA*.<sup>3</sup>

One son, Judah Leib, appears to have died young, but is also mentioned in his father's responsa.<sup>4</sup>

A second son, Simon Wolf,<sup>5</sup> is mentioned in the minutes of the *chevra kadisha*, son of our master and rabbi, Moses R [= Reb] I [= Isserles], died on 6 Av, 1599.

## Meisels Family and Descendants

The Meisels family of Cracow, starting with Dreizel (died 1602) and<sup>6</sup> Simcha Bonem (died 1624), had the following children:

1. Judah Leib Meisels<sup>7</sup> who published and printed books in Cracow between 1660 and 1670. He was the author of *Ta'amei Mesorah*, explanations and novellae, published in Amsterdam in 1728. Some scholars<sup>8</sup> claim this book was written by his namesake grandnephew, but a careful study of the introduction of that book clearly shows this to be untrue for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the son of the author was Nachum Meisels who brought the book to the press. He would have been named for his maternal grandfather, whereas in his grandnephew's lineage the name Nachum does not appear. Secondly the book includes an approbation by a relative [called ב"ש= my kinsman], R. Abraham b. Mordecai, A.B.D. of Zolkiew<sup>9</sup> from 1699, who writes that Nachum was בן דודי וקני [= son of my great or great-great-uncle]. R. Mordecai, also called Mordecai Reb Leibish, was son of R. Isarel, son of R. Isaac Reb Bonems, whose wife was a sister to Judah Leib, the grandfather of the publisher Nachum Meisels. This fits perfectly, whereas, if it was the grandnephew who wrote the book, the generations would not fit, and neither would the statement by Abraham of Zolkiew. Thirdly, the title page of the book states, in the words of a non-family member, that Judah Leib Meisels was נין וכד [= *nin ve-neched* = descendant of] the *ReMA* instead of simply *neched* [= grandson]. This could have been simply referring to the author's son and the publisher, Nachum Meisels, a great-grandson, or a generic style description.

Freudenthal overlooks the kinship preserved in the *Ta'amei Mesorah* and attempts to use the length of average generations as well as other remote possibilities to try prove the relationship as being otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars, such as Zunz and Horodetzky, claim a third daughter, named Sarah.

<sup>2</sup> And thus from the second wife, and not as some scholars claim from the first wife who had died in 1552. *LeToldot Hakehilot BePolin*, 33, incorrectly states Dreizel was a daughter of Golda, as does Joseph Kohen-Zedek in his notes to *LeToldot Mishpachat Gunzburg*, 220.

<sup>3</sup> #40 (end).

<sup>4</sup> #122.

<sup>5</sup> Wetstein in *LeToldot*, 25 states that he was the ancestor of the wife of the *SHaCH*, but other scholars disagree.

<sup>6</sup> One scholar, Reuben Margolis in *LeToldot Anshei Shem BeLvov*, in the journal *Sinai*, Vol. 26, 119, 207, claims Dreizel died young (but it is known she died at age forty), and Bonem remarried having issue who then would not be from the *ReMA*. Nevertheless, by naming patterns, it is certain that Moses and Israel Isser would be from the *ReMA*'s side. The son Abraham would be from the Meisels side (father of Bonem). The son Isaac had a son Moses, again probably named for the *ReMA*. Further the strong tradition of the *ReMA* descent would cast further doubt on this statement by Margolis.

<sup>7</sup> His father-in-law was Nachum Meisel who operated the printing press before this period.

<sup>8</sup> See the lengthy detailed discussion by Max Freudenthal in his *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns* (Berlin, 1900) 280.

<sup>9</sup> Salomon Buber, *Kiria Nisgava* (Josef Fischer: Cracow, 1903) 8–9.

His states what he feels is illogical and thus wrong, and then attempts to give his solution. He writes that in 1684 the search committee for a new Cracow rabbi included one Simcha Bonem b. Abraham who went to the Jaroslaw fair to offer the position to R. David Lida. Then Freudenthal comments that this Simcha Bonem is possibly the father of Judah Leib being discussed. Freudenthal again states that it is possible that this Abraham was a son of "our" Simcha Bonem and his wife, Dreizel.

Judah Leib was also the father of Simcha Bonem Meisels of Mogilev who married a daughter of R. Solomon Zalman Katzenellenbogen of Lukow, near Brest-Litovsk. Their son was R. Solomon Zalman Katzenellenbogen, named after his maternal grandfather, and became A.B.D. of Mir. From them descend the Mirkes rabbinical family, which includes R. Isaac Jacob Reines, 1839–1915, rabbi and one of the founders and first head of the Mizrahi movement.

2. A daughter, married R. Isaac Reb Bonems, rabbi in Pinsk.<sup>1</sup> He was the father of R. Moses,<sup>2</sup> A.B.D. of Lyubomil and then Lublin, author of *MaHaDuRA BaTRA*, published in Amsterdam, 1728 and of Reb Wolf,<sup>3</sup> leader and manhig of the Vilna Jewish community. Moses was a son-in-law of R. Samuel Eliezer HaLevi b. Judah Edels, 1555–1631. In the 1650s Wolf was forced to flee from Vilna because of the attacks of the Cossacks, Swedes and Russians. He found refuge in Hamburg where,

*As an old man in a strange environment, in a city in which Portuguese and German Jews quarreled with one another, he had to try to win new standing and gain a livelihood. His strength of character was such that, despite all his misfortunes and all the obstacles in his way, he managed to strike root in his new homeland in an astonishingly short time.<sup>4</sup>*

### Children of Wolf of Vilna-Hamburg

A. Yente, wife of R. Shabtai b. Meir HaKohen, 1621–62, known as *ShaCH*<sup>5</sup> after his classic work *Siftei Kohen* from whom descend the Morgenstern Chassidic Dynasty of Kock (Kotsk) and the Birnbaum family. Yente settled in Zolkiew after her husband had died in Holleschau in 1622 where her daughter, Toyba lived and was married to R. David b. Isaac Katvan who was originally from Prague.<sup>6</sup> Katvan occupied a high position within the Zolkiew community and was recorded in the pinkas of Zolkiew as, "the manhig [= leader] of the province, aluf [= officer], rosh [= the head], sar [= sir], nagid [= the wealthy]."<sup>7</sup> Katvan died in Zolkiew in 1698, buried next to his wife who was buried next to her mother.

Buber in *Kiria Nisgava* further writes that he had received a letter from the scholar, Israel Landau, wherein it was stated in the name of R. Joseph Kohen-Zedek that Kohen-Zedek had in his possession a manuscript written by R. Naftali Herz Berenstein.<sup>8</sup> This manuscript stated, "David Katzvan was a son-in-law of the *SHaCH* and died young, and his widow remarried Aaron *MiGeza Tzvi* [= Aaron of the seed of Zvi]<sup>9</sup> who was the A.B.D. of Leczyca (Lunshitz). At this point Buber argues against this, because Katvan is buried in Zolkiew next to his wife. Buber thus concludes that the connection must have been through

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars maintain that he was a son and not a son-in-law of Simcha Bonem. See detailed discussion by R. Dr. Asher Siev in *Rabbi Moses Isserles* (New York, 1972) 313.

<sup>2</sup> S. B. Nissenbaum, 61. According to R. Joseph Lewinstein of Serock in his notes to *Ir Tehila* (Brest-Litovsk), he died in Lublin at the end of 1668.

<sup>3</sup> Fuenn, *Kiryat Ne'emanah* (Vilna 1894) 95. He is sometimes called Benjamin Wolf, Samson Wolf or Simeon Wolf. He is incorrectly listed in *Ir HaTzedek* as a son of Simcha Bonem and Dreizel Meisels which fact is disproven in *Miflat Ir HaTzedek* as does *Luchot Zikaron* (#45).

<sup>4</sup> Selma Stern, *The Court Jew* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1950) 55–56.

<sup>5</sup> Published in Cracow, 1646.

<sup>6</sup> Salomon Buber, *Kiryat Nisgava* [Zolkiew] (Josef Fischer: Cracow, 1903) 36.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–22.

<sup>8</sup> He was R. Jacob Naftali Herz Berenstein, 1814–73, a descendant of R. Aryey Judah Lieb Berenstein of Brody, 1708–88, A.B.D. of Zbaraz in Galicia, known as *Rav HaMedina* (state rabbi) who was a descendant of David Katvan.

<sup>9</sup> See article in *Avotaynu*, by Rosenstein and Weber, Volume XIV, Number 2, Summer 1999, 29. The seed of Zvi implies descendants of R. Zvi Helman, son of R. Haim of Worms and brother of R. Judah Lowe, the *MaHaRaL* of Prague.

<sup>10</sup> *Da'at Kedoshim*, 191.

## Stammtafel der Familie Wulff.

**Moses Isserles**  
b. Israel Iffer, 1520—1572,  
H. in Kratau, 2. zweiter Ehe verch. mit  
Tochter des R. Serfon C. J. S. 10.

Die übrigen  
Kinder S. 9,  
Anm. 5.

**Isakel**, 1561—1601,  
Frau des Simcha Bonem b.  
Abraham b. Josef Meisels  
in Kratau (f. 1624). S. 10.

**Jehuda Loeb Meisels**,  
Druckbesitzer in Kratau;  
f. Anhang Note I.

**Isak**,  
Vorsteher in Winst.  
S. 11.

**Moses**, Schwieger-  
sohn des R. Samuel  
Edels, S. 11.

**Simon Wolf**,  
Vorsteher in Wilna,  
flücht nach Hamburg,  
f. 1682 in Halberstadt. S. 11—24.

**Frau des  
Juda b. Meir  
Wahl b. Saul  
Wahl**, S. 12.

**Lea**,  
Frau des R.  
Sabbatai Cohen,  
S. 12.

**Isakel Wolf**,  
(Dariusch Ruben),  
Hofrath in Berlin,  
f. 1708. S. 16—26.

**Benjamin Wolf**,  
(Simcha Bonem)  
in Berlin und  
Dessau, f. 1697.  
S. 27—34 u. S. 117.

**Salomon**  
in Hildesheim  
und Dessau,  
S. 26.

**Saul Wahl** in  
Dessau,  
S. 118.

**Hebekka**  
Frau des Mi-  
chael Abraham in  
Berlin, S. 20.

**Lea**, Frau  
des Ruben  
Hirsch in Berlin,  
S. 17.

**Isakel**,  
S. 22, 23  
u. S. 128.

**Moses Benjamin Wolf**,  
in Berlin, Hofrath in  
Dessau, f. 1729.  
Verheiratet seit 1678.

**Serfon Wolf**  
Allendorf,  
S. 120.

**Mirjam**, Frau  
des Ahron Lewi  
in Dessau,  
S. 130.

**Frau**  
des Magnus  
Moses in Halle,  
S. 128.

**Fara**, Frau  
des Dr. Isakel  
Wulff in Dessau,  
S. 132.

**Elies Wolf**,  
Hofrath in Dessau,  
f. 1754.  
S. 133 ff.

Die übrigen  
Kinder S. 127 ff.

**R. Isak Josef**,  
Landesrabbiner  
in Dessau f. 1736.  
S. 19 u. 120 f.

**Debora**, Frau  
des Abraham  
Fränkel in Berlin,  
S. 130.

**Baruch**  
Ahron Lewi,  
Hofrath in Leipzig,  
S. 130.

**Lea**

**Benjamin Wolf**,  
(Bonem Dessau)  
in Berlin f. 1756.  
S. 139.

Die übrigen  
Kinder S. 138 ff.

**Moses Fränkel**,  
Rabbinatsassessor in  
Dessau, f. 1812.  
S. 131.

**Mirjam**,  
Frau des Hier-  
landesältesten  
Daniel Jybi in  
Berlin. S. 143 ff.

**Isak Benjamin Wolf**,  
(Hiel Dessau)  
Kellner in Berlin,  
f. 1802.  
S. 140 ff.

**David Fränkel**,  
Direkt. d. Franzschule  
in Dessau, Herausgeber  
der Sulamitt. S. 131.

**Isak Daniel Itzig**,  
Vorsteher der Frei-  
schule in Berlin  
f. 1806. S. 147 ff.

**Isak Wolf**

**Isak Wolf**,  
und seine übrigen Ge-  
schwister S. 148 u.  
Anhang Note II.

**Morik Jonathan Itzig**,  
1813 bei Rügen verwundet,  
begr. in Dessau. S. 149.

German genealogy of the Wulff family from Max Freudenthal, *Aus der heimat Mendelssohns* (Berlin, 1900).

another daughter of the SHaCH. Two children from Aaron were Moses (father of Aaron)<sup>10</sup> and a daughter (probably named Beila) who died in 1783. Beila married into the prominent Krotoschin family, her husband being Joseph Pulvermacher, son of Samuel Heilprin (died in Krotoschin in 1707) the *parnas u-manhig* [warden and leader of the community]. Another of Samuel's sons was Isaac Itzig Pulvermacher (died in Krotoschin in 1736) who was *parnas u-manhig* of Poznan (Posen). Joseph was the father of Eliezer Lipman Heilprin who married Hanale (died in Krotoschin in 1792). Eliezer and Hanale were the progenitors of the Munk rabbinical family.

Buber, moreover, writes that he received a second letter from rabbi Landau about the genealogy which appeared in the book, *Siftei Tzadikim*, written by R. Heschel of Rymanow, which stated, "Isaac Babad, who was initially A.B.D. of Brzezany was the son-in-law of David Katvan of Zolkiew."

The same years (1903) that *Kiria Nisgava* was published, Samuel Z. Kahana published his genealogical work, *Anaf Etz Avot*, in Cracow. It is unclear which book was published first, but Kahana states that David Katvan only married Toyba, daughter of the SHaCH.<sup>1</sup> However, a later publication by the renowned rabbi and genealogist, R. Zvi Hirsch Horowitz, in his *Kitvei HaGeonim*,<sup>2</sup> raises the point that Katvan had a wife prior to Toyba and that his issue was from this first wife. This would imply that descendants of Katvan do not, therefore, trace their lineage back to the SHaCH, the ReMA or the Meisels family. Horowitz concludes that the name of this wife is unknown and that Katvan only married later in life to Toyba.

A third daughter of the SHaCH was Esther, who married Menachem Meinish b. Meir. He published the commentary *Siftei Kohen* on *Choshen Mishpat* by his father-in-law in 1663 in Amsterdam with the help of his Wulff relatives.<sup>3</sup> His son was Samson, *rosh* [the head] and *manhig* [leader] in Zolkiew where he died in 1733. In the minutes of Zolkiew,<sup>4</sup> he is called stepson of David Katvan which has led some scholars to assume his mother, Esther, may have been the wife of David Katvan when in fact it could have simply been that he was raised by Katvan on the early death of his parents.

B. Dreizel married R. Judah Wahl Katzenellenbogen from whom descended the Mendelssohn family. The two most famous members of this line were Moses Mendelssohn and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The fact that even later descendants were also prominent will explain the appearance of at least two obituaries in *The New York Times*; that of Ernst Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in 1909 and Otto Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in 1949.<sup>5</sup>

C. Bernd Wulff (Baruch Minden) settled in Berlin where, in 1672, he became the Berlin Court Jew and Court Purveyor of the Great Elector and Court Jew of the Duchess of Sachsen-Merseburg. He was a prominent community leader who was careful to have his children marry into other prominent German Jewish families. He also became a community leader of the newly founded city of Halle Jewish community. He died in Berlin at the beginning of the 18th century.

His daughter, Ziporah, married her first cousin, Moses Benjamin Wulff (below).

Another daughter, Rebecca, led an unhappy life. She married and later divorced the well-known mint master, Michael Abraham of Berlin.<sup>6</sup> His father's sister was the wife of the renowned R. Abraham Abale Gombiner of Kalisz (died 1682).<sup>7</sup> Michael was one of the first to settle in the newly established Berlin Jewish community. He also published, together with his brother-in-law, Moses Wulff, *Zayit Ra'anan* in Dessau in 1704, the commentary by his uncle, R. Gombiner.

A third daughter, Leah, who died in Berlin in 1716, married Ruben Fürst whose family was from Hamburg, son of Solomon, son of Haim Fürst. Haim was *parnas* [warden or president] of the Hamburg community and impressed by Glückel of Hamlen as she wrote in her memoirs.

*In those days we were hardly forty families [in Hamburg in 17th century] all told. No one was very rich, but everyone earned an honest living. Chayim Fürst was the richest among us, with a fortune of 10,000 Reichsthalers, then came my father . . . Chayim Fürst, also parnas and the richest man in the community, died . . . Chayim Fürst's son Solomon, likewise parnas, likewise died; an excellent man and a great student of Talmud.*

<sup>1</sup> #104 and 162.

<sup>2</sup> Published in Piotrkow, 1928, 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Kiria Nisgava*, 77-78.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 47a.

<sup>5</sup> Ernst (son of Paul Herman) was a nephew of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. His obituary appeared Dec. 26, 11:6. Otto was the son of Paul son of Felix. His obituary appeared July 30, 15:2. Descendants of Moses Mendelssohn can be found in Chapter Three, *The Unbroken Chain* (1990).

<sup>6</sup> Max Freudenthal, *Aus der heimat Mendelssohns* (Berlin, 1900) 16, 20.

<sup>7</sup> See "Main Lurie Tree."

His father, Solomon, cared for the poor all his life but died young. Ruben moved to Berlin and was followed by other members of his family. The community grew rapidly, and in 1698 he established a charitable organization with Benjamin Frankel. In 1706 he published the novellae of R. Samuel Edels which was supported by his entire family. It was not a business but a labor of love. Ruben died in Berlin in 1707.

Ruben's children were Hendel, who married R. Isaac Joseph, son of his first cousin, Gershon b. Benjamin Wulff; Mordecai; Simon Wolf; Nathaneel (called Daniel) Fürst, a community leader who died in Berlin in 1740; David; Sarah, who married Isaiah Moses Hollander; and a daughter who married Samuel Heide (died in Berlin 1707), son of Joseph Heide.<sup>1</sup> Samuel Heide's sister who died in 1777 married the Berlin-Dessau court Jew, Wolf b. Gershon of Ullendorf (son of Benjamin Wulff).

D. Benjamin (Simcha Bonem) Wulff,<sup>2</sup> who temporarily converted to Catholicism when attacked by the Cossacks, which he later renounced when he settled in Berlin and then Dessau. He became one of the community leaders and one of the founders of the *chevra kadisha* [burial society]. He died in 1697. His wife, Deborah, a daughter of Elias Cohen, is mentioned in the memoirs of Glückel of Hameln.<sup>3</sup>

*Elias Cohen, however, was younger and daily growing richer; he had a good head and he came from a good family. So he said to himself, and he didn't mind it being overheard, "Why shouldn't I make as good a parnasa [income] as my brother-in-law . . . I am as clever and as rich . . . about then God, who had set his term and fate, carried him off.*

Their son was Moses Benjamin Wulff, born probably in Berlin after 1661, died in 1729, the year Moses Mendelssohn was born and after whom the latter was named. He was so tall that he was nicknamed "the Tall Jew." Later, when expelled from Berlin in the middle of winter with his wife (his first cousin, daughter of Bernd Wulff), two small children and his parents, he settled in Dessau. Here he became Court Purveyor of Anhalt-Dessau and personal friend of Prince Leopold and then Court Purveyor to Dresden as the Court Jew to Augustus the Strong. He also founded, in 1694, his own printing press in his home. He published a number of scientific, Kabbalistic and prayer books. As a result of lawsuits, he was forced to close down in 1703.

The "Tall Jew's" son was Elias Wulff, Court Jew of the Merseburg Court, who died in 1754. He paid for the printing of rabbinical and prayer books and opened his own press in Dessau. Here he published a commentary by R. David Fraenkel, teacher of Moses Mendelssohn, which the rabbis of the day remarked was a work such as had not appeared since the days of Rashi. He was the father of Benjamin (Simcha Bonem) Elias Wulff who applied in 1752 for permission to set up a cotton and calico factory in Charlottenburg. He demonstrated that his products were equal in quality to Indian cloth, made more cheaply and that he was able to supply all of Europe. He died in Berlin in 1756. He married his first cousin, Leah, daughter of Sarah and Dr. Isaac Wallich of Dessau.

Benjamin Elias Wulff was the father of Isaac Benjamin Wulff (also known as Eisek Dessau) who enlarged his father's plant. By 1785 he was considered to be the most important cotton goods manufacturer in Berlin. Isaac's sister was Marianne (Miriam), 1727–88, who in 1748 married Daniel Itzig, 1722–99 from whom are descended the Itzig family of Berlin and Vienna.

E. Salomon Wulff of Hildesheim and Dessau married Ziporah, daughter of R. Samuel Hameln, A.B.D. of Hildesheim, and a brother-in-law to Glückel of Hameln. Salomon died at an advance age in Dessau in 1730. His epitaph records not only his good deeds but his family pedigree as well.

3. R. Abraham Meisels, father of R. Simcha Bonem Meisels who signed in 1684 an approbation to *Be'er Esek*,<sup>4</sup> father of Judah Leib Meisels.

<sup>1</sup> Samuel's sister married Wolf son of Gershon mentioned above (son of Benjamin Wulff). The family Heide stems from Prague (*Da'at Kedoshim*, The name נ"ייד is an acrostic for God will avenge his blood).

<sup>2</sup> In *Kiria Nisgava*, 36, he is erroneously stated as being the brother of the *MaHaDuRA BaTRA* (whose father was known to be Isaac).

<sup>3</sup> Standard edition, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Well of Contention, quoting Genesis 26, v.20. Author was R. David b. Aryey Leib of Amsterdam. The book was published in 1684.



4. R. Israel Isser Meisels<sup>1</sup> of Cracow, studied in his youth under R. Joel Sirkes of Cracow, known by the acronym *BaCH*, after his famous work, *Bayit Chadash*. Isser is mentioned in Sirkes' published responsa #25.

5. R. Moses Meisels, born some time after 1572, father of Haim Meisels and R. Aryey Leib Meisels,<sup>3</sup> known as *Leib Chassid* [the pious], A.B.D. of Lvov and Przemysl. The four children of R. Aryey Leib Meisels were:

Zalman Meisels who died in Lvov in 1753.

The wife of R. Joseph Segal, *rosh mesivta* [head of the Talmudic academy] in Lvov, and then A.B.D. of Przemysl.

The wife of her first cousin, R. Alexander Meisels, A.B.D. of Opatow, son of Haim Meisels.

Haim Meisels, father of Moses Meisels from whom descends the Meisels-Rosenwasser family through two of his three sons, Isaac Meisels of Wlodawa and R. Abraham Nathan Nata Meisels, A.B.D. of Wisznice and later preacher of the *Chevra Hachnasat Orchim* in Amsterdam, Holland, author of *Neta Sha'ashuim*, published in Neuwied and Amsterdam, 1735, and *Kol Shachal*. He died in Israel.

### **Itzig Family of Berlin, Dessau and Vienna**

The Itzig<sup>4</sup> family was originally surnamed Jaffe and possibly descended from R. Mordecai Jaffe, 1530–1612, known as the *Levush* after his classic published works, all titles which commenced with *Levush* [clothed]. This earned him the title of *Ba'al Levushim* [author of the *Levushim*].

The first known representative of the family was David Jaffe whose son Itzig died in 1741. He was a horse dealer and purveyor to the Prussian king Frederick William I. One of his sons was Daniel who adopted the surname of Itzig some time prior to 1756. Since his brother continued to use the surname of Jaffe, Daniel appears as the head of the Itzig family. Daniel was a noted philanthropist, Prussian banker, a member of the wealthy banking firm of Itzig, Ephraim & Son, head of Prussian Jewish communities, head of the Prussian council of elders, owner of large lead factories as well as of the oil mill in Berlin, Mint master to Frederick the Great (in 1756 and 1758), and Court banker under Frederick William II (in 1797).

By his wife Miriam, Daniel Itzig had five sons and ten daughters. There were no less than four marriages of his children with that of his wife's relatives of the Wulff family. By 1870 there were known to be 140 families who traced their ancestry back to Daniel Itzig.<sup>5</sup>

1. Hannah (Hanche) Henrietta, 1748–1801, married in 1766 to Joseph Ferdinand Fliess, 1758–1820. Daniel Itzig's brother-in-law was Moses Isaac Fliess.
2. Babette (Bella), 1749–1824, married Levin Jacob Salomon, 1739–87. Their daughter, Leah, 1777–1842, married Abraham, 1776–1835, son of Moses Mendelssohn. They were the parents of the famous composer, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy.
3. Isaac Daniel Itzig, 1750–1806, eldest son, *Hofbaurat* (royal counselor) of building affairs, court banker, road inspector, elder of the Berlin Jewish community, and chief provincial counsellor for Prussian Jewry. He married 1) Hannah Ephraim who died childless in 1776 and 2) his first cousin, Edel, 1764–1851, daughter of Isaac Wulff. They had nine children (four sons).

A son of Isaac Daniel, Moritz (Moses Jonathan) Itzig, 1787–1813, was an ardent support of Judaism and defender of anti-Semitism. He died as a result of wounds after volunteering to service against Napoleon. Another son, Albert, married Elizabeth Nobiling and a daughter, Johanna, married Carl Nobiling.

<sup>1</sup> *LeToldot HaKehilot BePolin*, 33. See there for a full discussion about him.

<sup>2</sup> For this lineage see Reuben Margolis, *LeToldot Anshei Shem BeLvov* (Jerusalem, 1950) 22. He was named for his maternal grandfather.

<sup>3</sup> *Anshei Shem*, 36–37.

<sup>4</sup> Also Hitzig.

<sup>5</sup> *The Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia* (New York, 1941) 5:640–643.

מצבות קברות הרבנים ואנשי השם

כהן הגבירה בלסמן נולדה י"ז אייר תקי"ז  
 כהן הנרייך ר' אלפר טלר חיי שש הקט"ו  
 כהן הנרייך ר' בנעם טלר י"ד סיון הקט"ו  
 כהן כארבעעסן פעלכע טלרה ר"ח כסלו הקי"ח  
 כהן הגבירה צפרנע טלרה י"ז שבט תקי"ז  
 כהן הגבירה צערלכע טלרה י"ז סיון תקכ"א  
 כהן הגבירה רבקה טלרה כ"ו מרחשון תקכ"ד  
 כהן הנרייך ר' יצחק טלר ר"ג מרחשון תקכ"ה  
 כהן הגבירה רעקלכע טלרה ע"ב סמו תקכ"ז  
 כהן הגבירה יעקב טלרה י"ד סיון תקכ"ז  
 כל נפש כהן וכוונתו שלש עשרה ימים הלוחה אחס כלי יעמוד על  
 הנכונה ויחי כלם בנקיטת דמו ורע יאריכו ימים.

246. R. Daniel, (Sohn R. Isaac's) Jette. Gestorben 1799.

מצבת שנת תרי"ב עם פירוש הגבירה דניאל יפה בן שבעים  
 ושבעה שנה נאמן אל אבותיו ביום ששה עשר  
 ותקבר בשמחה עשר לחודש אלול והקט"ט 5  
 שלח פנק' הנאמן למחנות  
 והשת צדקה קטרה לפי חסדו  
 סורי בשם הגבירה כיתו  
 סורי אלוהים על כל חסדו  
 עליה לנבחרת אל אל שכה רחוק  
 כי בא סעוד עם ישרים יחייק הגבירה.

מצבות קברות הרבנים ואנשי השם

ועל דברי זו וגד למור של יפה בן י"ב פמנות פמארים ותלמי  
 צמחלים סלמו כמרים של נבנה יד לנים חלקי שלל יאשו  
 זני כסם למחר פניו נאולה למלך.

שיר זיהרות

מזכור בו נכבדות ימים הלוחה פנים מרינה הפד רגאל יפה אשר  
 המדות כדחתו בן שבעים ושש שנה יום ב' י"ז אדר שני שנת ה'תל"א  
 יפה אשר המדות

מה ברק' מאח' ר' יצחק סאמבאב.

רגאל אשר עליוהו אמרה  
 נריב העם ון דהם יום הולדתו  
 ימים מאח' עם שבוך גברה  
 אשריך באשר ומן הגלח ילדת  
 לא רבים דמו אליך אשר אמנה.

כהן ביהו ביה וכל ק' תולמדיהם  
 גמורה (א) למק' שבתיו הרינה  
 יסרו עת סתוללים חנה גודים  
 עזרו חנה כיה ליהוש' זנך לבער  
 חנהה ק' תריכה ליאמרים תול למערים  
 קראת ישתנה לכו עני באשר.

די חיה למור מאכ לאבינוים  
 עור גוה לאבינו לשאר פדים  
 חשיבה מאו ומשיבה גם דהום  
 חסן יקרי חשיבה כבוד ודולה  
 עזר עם עור יקרי טעם טעלה טעלה  
 עזר עם עור חשון ליהוש' כבוד ודולה.

חסן יקרי חשיבה כבוד ודולה  
 עם טעמה ודמק' נתיב אמת ברו ובמתי ואלו בן

אלה תולדות רגאל אשר הלוח' מן אשתו הגבירה מרים  
 בת מרדוך שפחה ביום נכר הנאון המפורסם חר"א וז'

כהן הגבירה רגאלכע טלרה ששנה חנה הקי"ט  
 כהן הגבירה בלכע טלרה פ"ו מרחשון תקי"ז  
 כהן הגבירה יעקב טלר כ"ב כסלו הקי"ח

(א) הגבירה מרים טלר חיי שש שנה כהן ר' יצחק פ"ו עם יתול לכו  
 חסן יקרי חשיבה כבוד ודולה  
 עם טעמה ודמק' נתיב אמת ברו ובמתי ואלו בן

19th-century published Hebrew text (Feiner, Moses. *Kitvei Yad, Sifrei Defus and Matzevot*, Berlin, 1861), recording the epitaph of Daniel Itzig, listing his children, and recording his wife's ancestry back to Moses Isserles, the *ReMA*.

4. Bluemchen, born in 1752–1814, married David Friedlander, 1750–1834.
5. Moses Itzig, 1754–1818, married his first cousin, daughter of Jacob Wulff.<sup>1</sup>
6. Elias Daniel Itzig, 1755–1818, the youngest son, converted in 1811 and adopted the surname Hitzig. He married Mirainne Loffman. He took over his father's leather factories and became a city councillor in Potsdam.

Elias was the father of Eduard Hitzig, 1780–1849, the first of the family to convert in 1799, noted criminologist, publisher, and author in Berlin. Elias was also the father of Julius, the father of Friedrich Georg Heinrich (Fritz) Hitzig (1811–81) who as an architect built the Berlin Stock Exchange on the site of his grandfather Daniel Itzig's residence. Georg was the father of Julius Eduard Hitzig, 1838–1907, professor of medicine and neurology at Zurich and Halle, with expertise on diseases of the brain.

A daughter of Julius, Clara, married Franz Kugler (1808–58), noted art historian. Her daughter, Margarete (died in 1862) married the poet Paul Heyse (whose mother was a descendant of Daniel Itzig) and her son was Bernhard Kugler (1837–98), history professor in Halle.

<sup>1</sup> *Aus der heimat Mendelssohns*. Other sources state she was Miriam Oppenheim.

- Elias' daughter, Henriette Hitzig, 1781–1845, married Nathan, 1781–1852, son of Moses Mendelssohn.
7. Benjamin Daniel Itzig, 1756–1833, married in 1780 to Ziporahh, 1760–1830, daughter of his first cousin, Isaac Wulff. He directed and developed two of his father-in-law's silk factories in Berlin and Potsdam.
  8. Vogelchen (Fanny), 1757–1818, became known as Baroness Fanny von Arnstein of Vienna, married Baron Nathan von Arnstein, 1748–1838.
  9. Caecilie (Zipperche or Ziporah), 1760–1839, married 1) her first cousin, Benjamin (Simcha Bonem) Wulff, and after divorce, married 2) Bernhard, Freiherr (Baron) von Eskeles, 1753–1839. Their daughter, Sarah Wulff, 1785–1850 married her uncle, Jacob Itzig.
  10. Zaerlche (Sarah), 1761–1854, married Samuel Levi, son of Salomon Levi. He became known as Samuel Salomon, 1760–1806.
  11. Rebecca, 1763–1854, married David Veitel Ephraim, 1763–1847, son of Daniel Itzig's partner, Veitel Heine Ephraim. He became known as Johann Andreas Schmidt, 1762–1834. Their daughter, Marianne, married Alexander, son of Joseph, son of Moses Mendelssohn.
  12. Jacob Itzig, 1764–1838, who adopted the surname of Bornheim, married in 1785 his niece, Sarah, daughter of Benjamin (Simcha Bonem) Wulff.
  13. Rachel (Recha), 1766–1826, died unmarried.
  14. Jettchen<sup>1</sup> (Yetta), 1767–1842, married in 1791 to Mendel Oppenheim, 1758–1820. Their sons adopted the surname Oppenfeld.
  15. Leah, 1768–1794, married in 1794 to Bernhard Seligmann, 1771–1814.

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<sup>1</sup> Also Jette or Gette (German name was Henriette).



## *Isserles-Meisels Family Trees*

*Meisels and Mendelssohn-Wulff Families*

*Descendants of SHACH (Rabbi Shabtai HaKohen)*

*Descendants of MAHADURA BATRA (Rabbi Moses, Chief Rabbi of Lublin)*

*Weidenfeld Family*

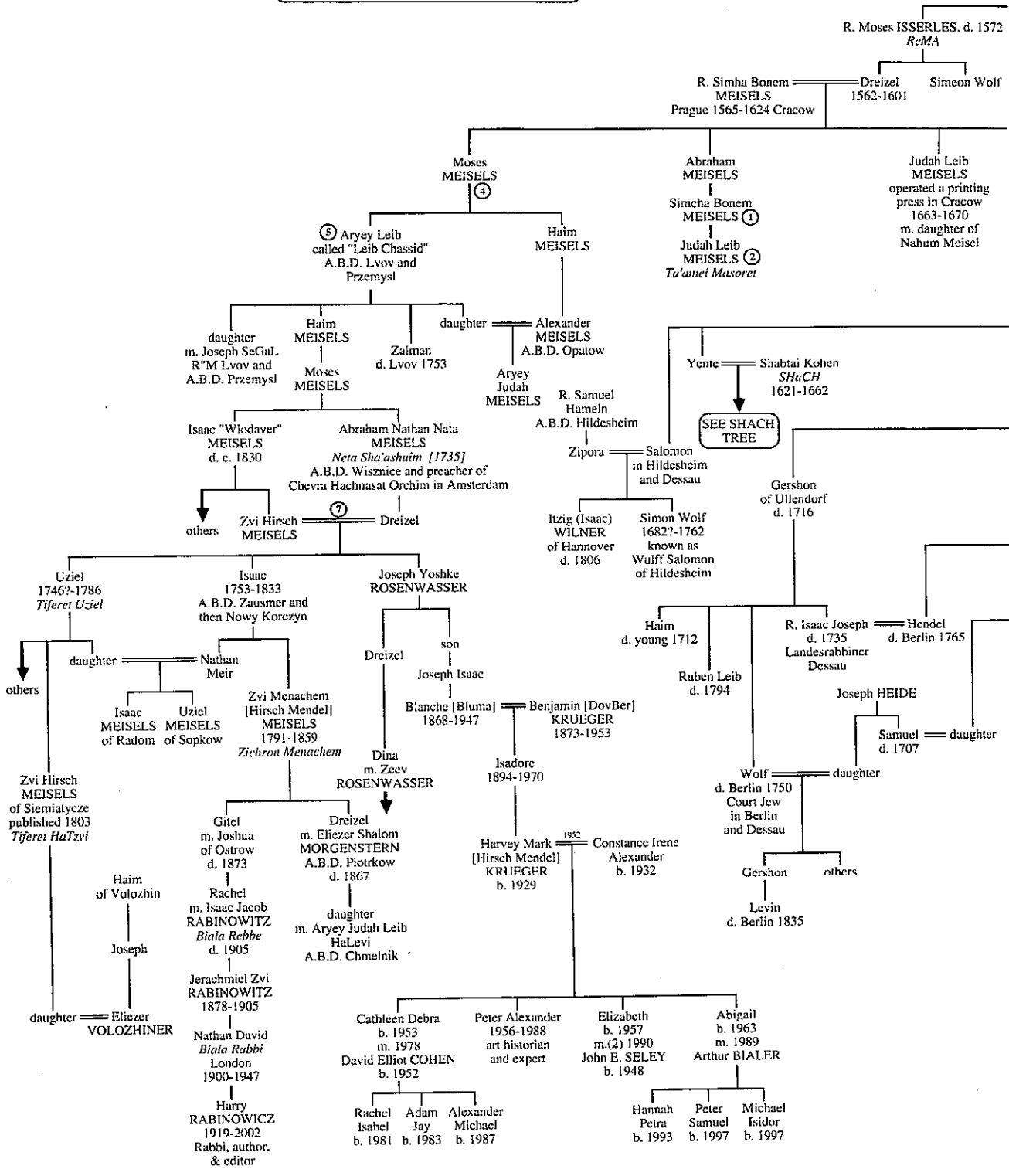
*Margoloth/Margolis Family*

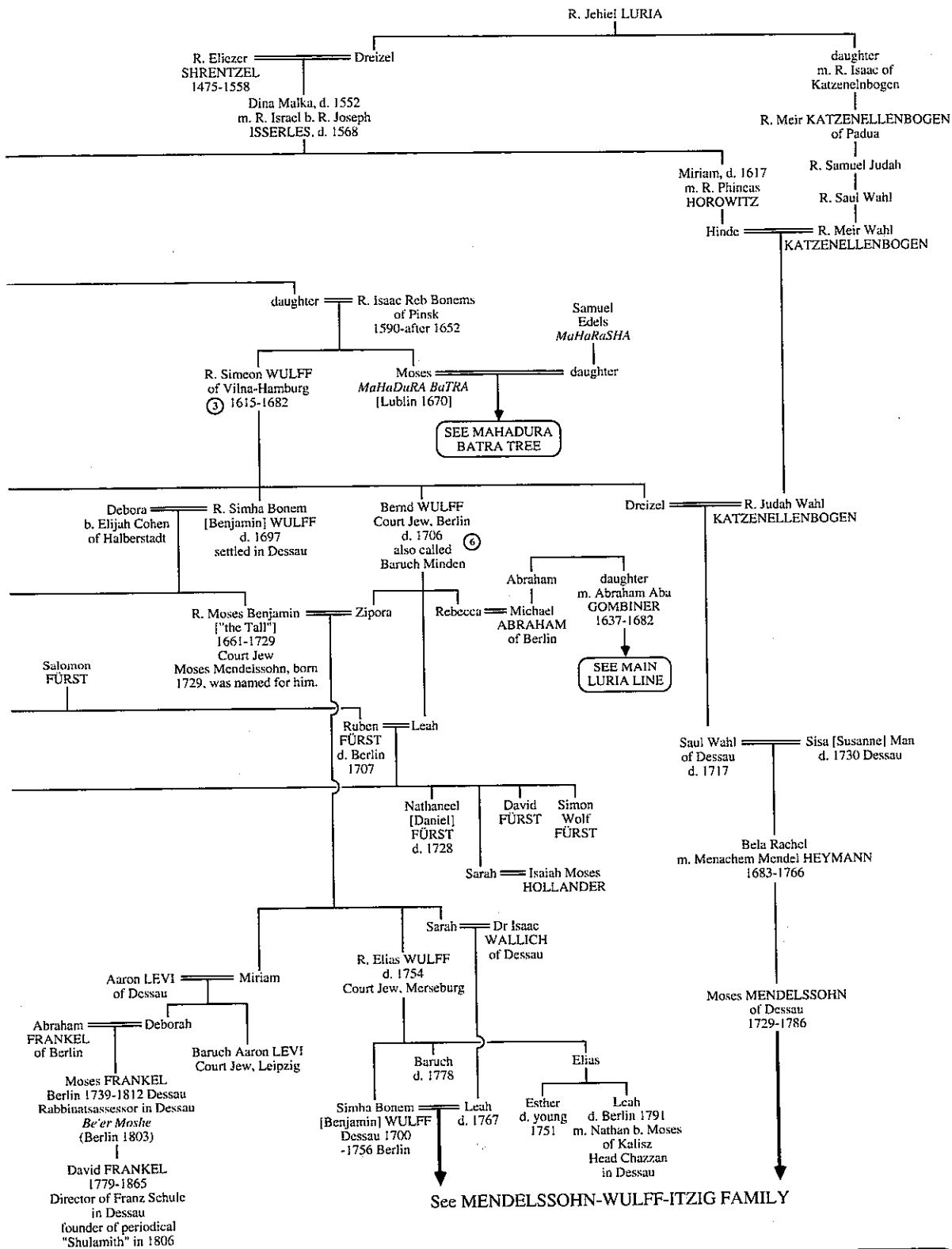
*Mendelssohn-Wulff-Itzig Family*

*Pereira-Arnstein Family Eskeles-Wimpffen Family*

*Eskeles-Wimpffen Family*

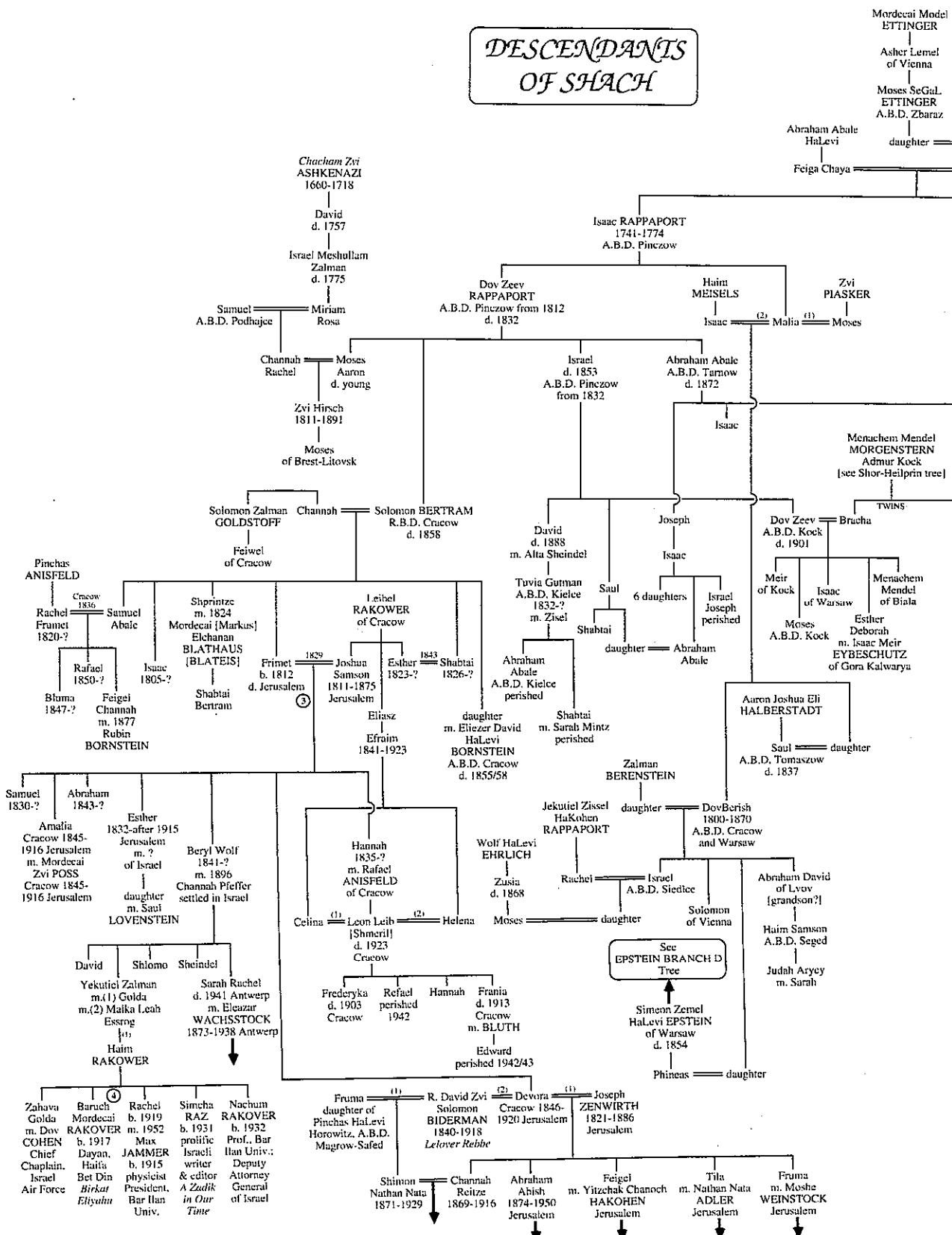
**MEISELS AND  
MENDELSSOHN-WULFF  
FAMILIES**

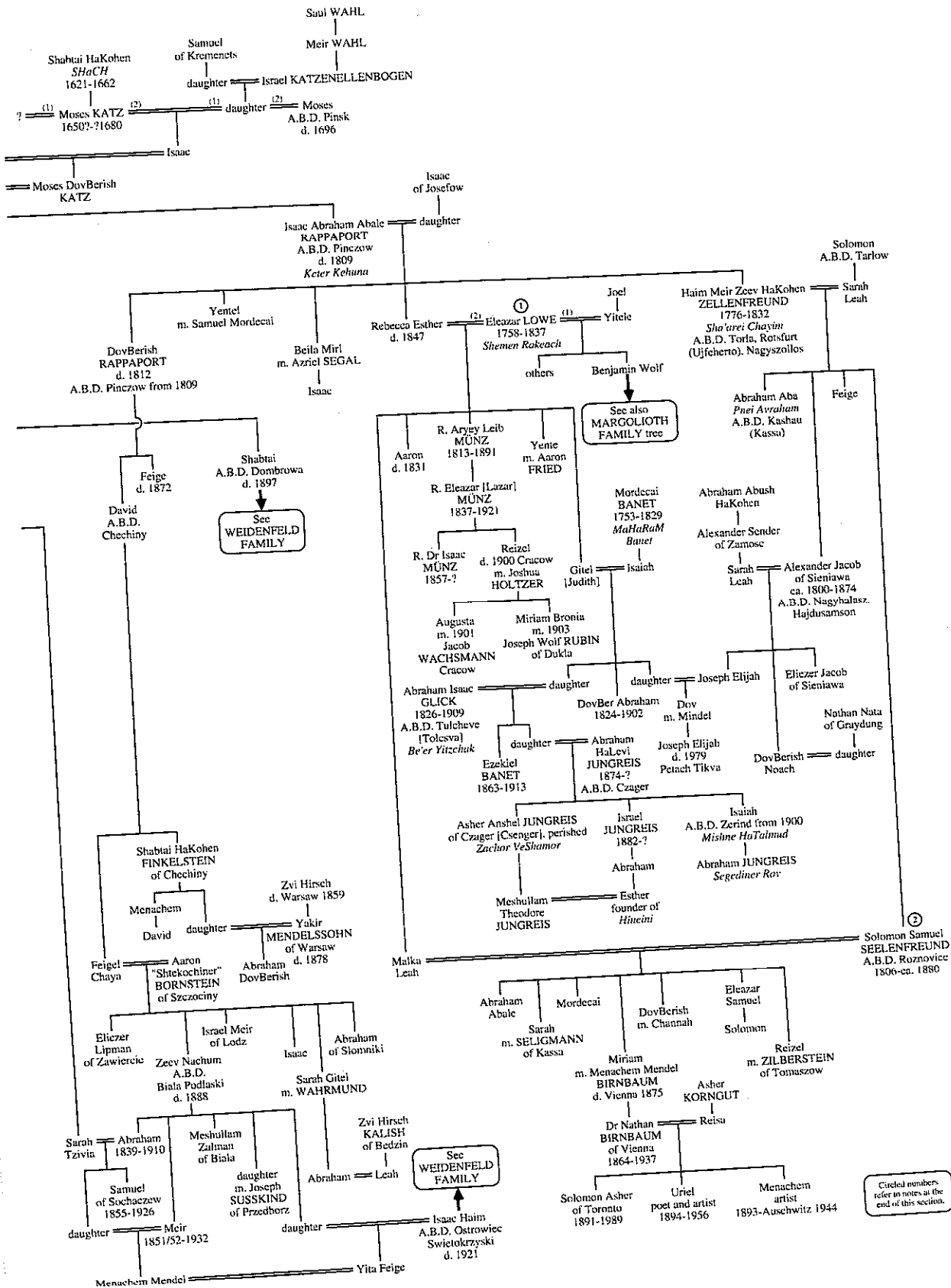




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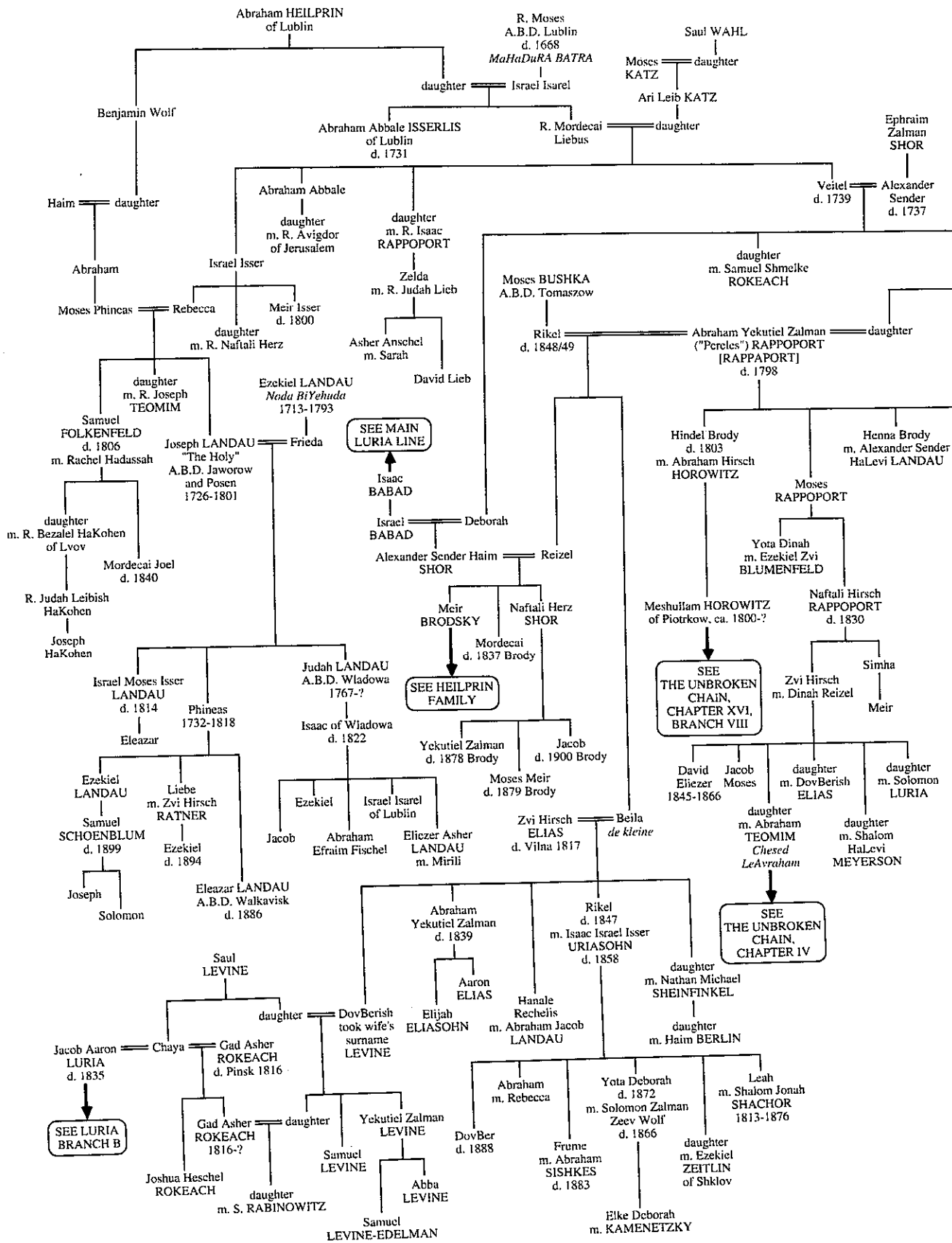
# DESCENDANTS OF SHACH



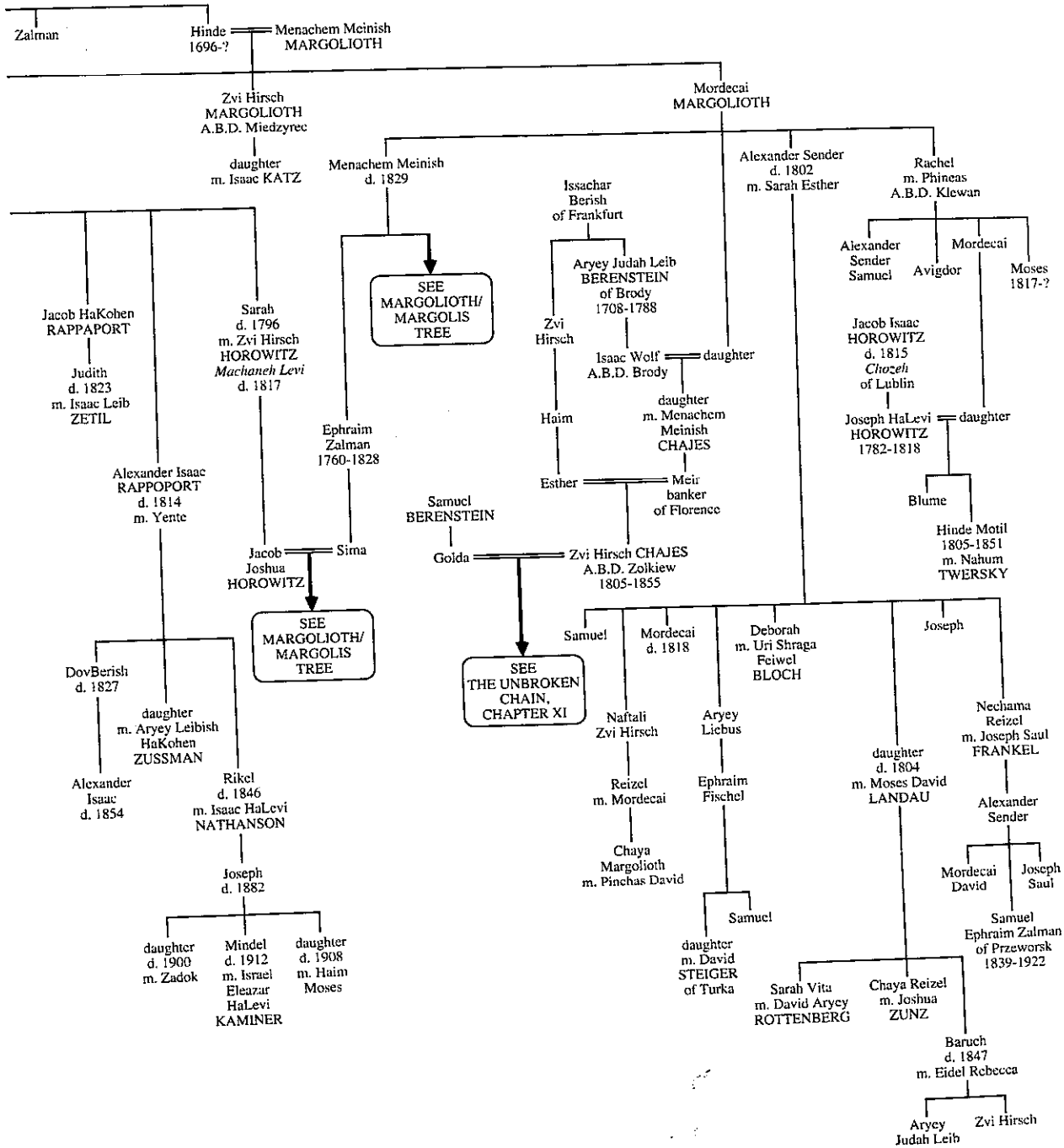


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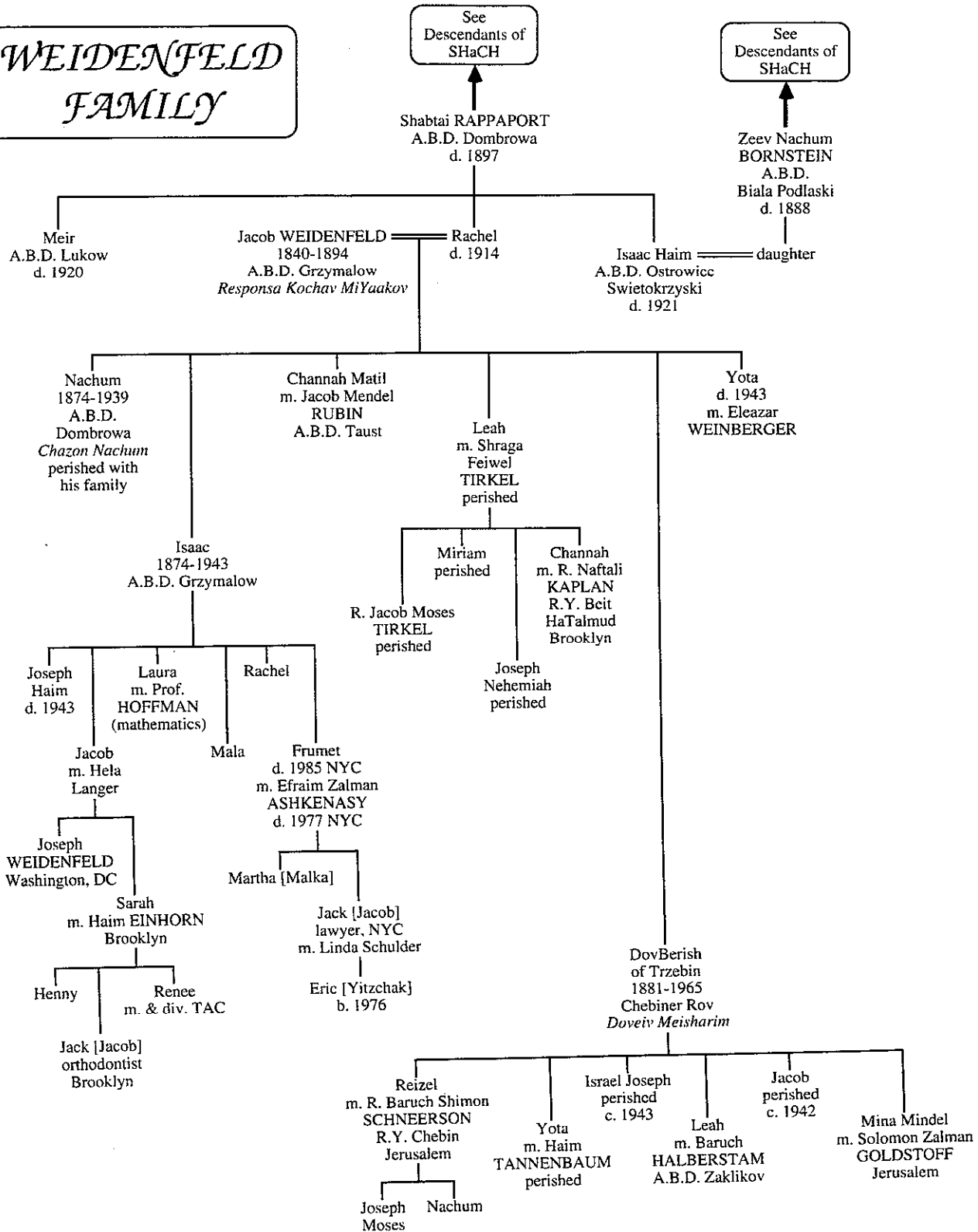




# DESCENDANTS OF MAHADURA BATRA

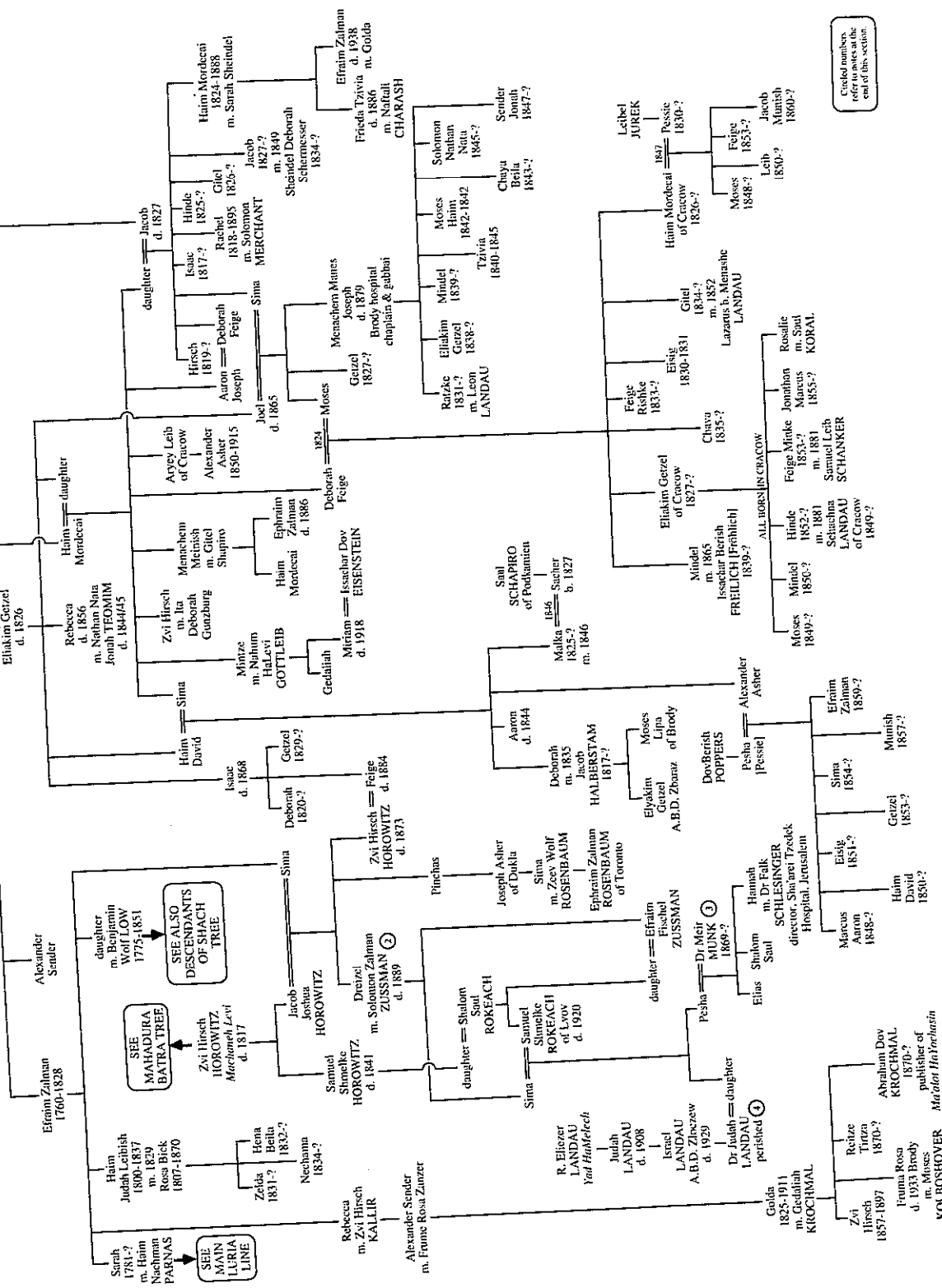


# WEIDENFELD FAMILY



# MARGOLIOTH/MARGOLIS FAMILY

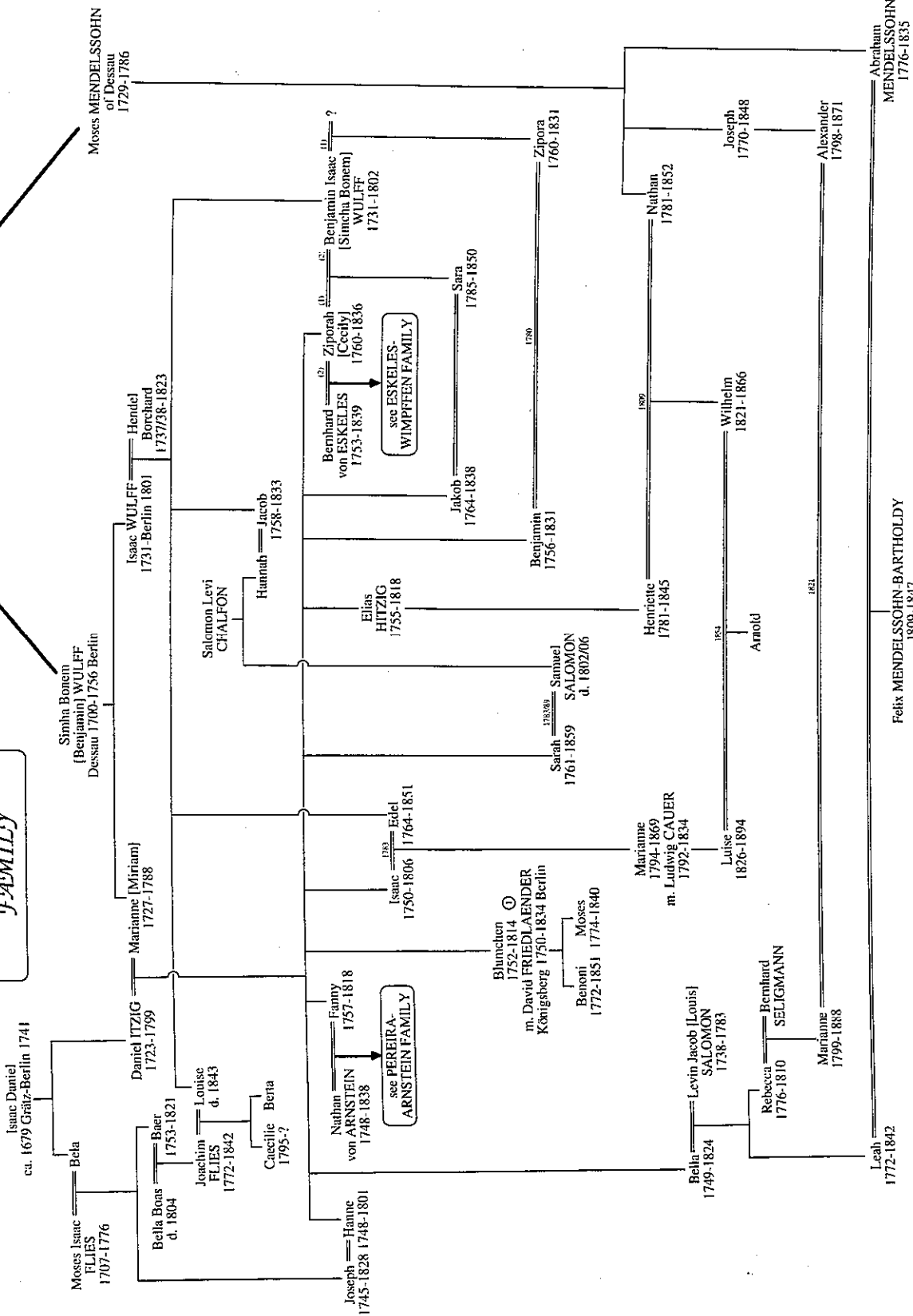
SEE MAHADURA BATRA TREE  
Menschel Metinsh MARGOLIOTH



Circled numbers refer to notes at the end of this section.

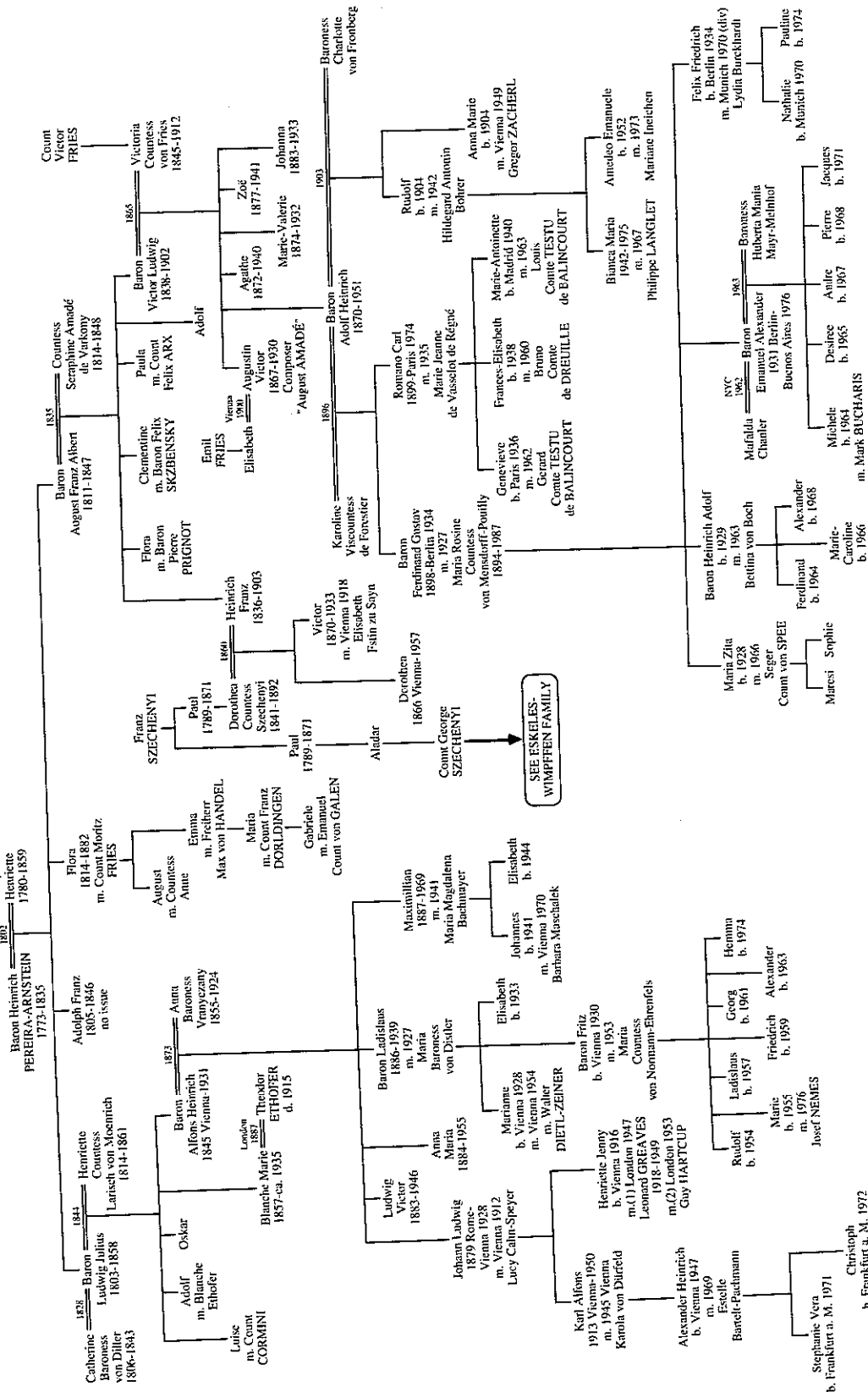
**MENDELSSOHN  
WULFF-ITZIG  
FAMILY**

see MENDELSSOHN-WULFF ANCESTRY



see MENDELSSOHN-WULFF-ITZIG FAMILY

**PEREIRA-ARNSTEIN FAMILY**



# ESKELES-WIMPFEN FAMILY

Benjamin [Simha Bonem] —  
WULFF of Dessau

