

## Israel Research Guide

### Brief Historical Background

This guide provides information about Jewish genealogical sources in Israel. Many Jewish genealogists can track a branch/es of their families living in Israel or who lived in Israel in the past. Your research depends on the time period which the records cover.

The records from Israel that are available to Jewish genealogists are generally divided into two periods: the “Old Yishuv” and the “New Yishuv”. The “Old Yishuv” refers to the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael until 1880, and the “New Yishuv” refers to the Aliyah period from 1882 until 1948, which includes the five legal Aliyot and the illegal Aliyot which followed them. Palestine was under the Ottoman Empire until 1918 and the British ruled over Palestine from 1918 until 1948.

### Vital Statistics Records

Address: Municipality of Jerusalem  
P.O. Box 775  
91007 Jerusalem, Israel

The Jerusalem Municipality Historical Archives holds genealogical records from the Ottoman period (until 1918) as well as the British period (1918-1948).

### ***Ottoman Period Records (Until 1918)***

The table below includes records that are kept in the Jerusalem Municipality Historical Archives from the Ottoman period\*:

<b>Mukhtar Registers</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Period/Year</b>
Alter Berenblum's ledgers	Birth date of male Ashkenazi Ottoman citizens	1883-1896
Alter Berenblum's ledgers	Naturalization list of Ottoman citizens (=Turkish list of naturalization)	1915
Alter Berenblum's ledgers	Male birth date (from the 1905 census, arranged by residential quarters)	1869-1882
Alter Berenblum's ledgers	A list of persons who were born in 1900	1900
Todros Warschawski's ledgers***	Ottoman Ashkenazi families arranged by residential quarters and records full name, father's name and birth's year.	1905 census
Todros Warschawski's	Ashkenazi males list	--

ledgers***	including name, father's name, and more.	
Aharon Hochstein's ledgers	American citizens list including the following information: name, age and year of immigration or naturalization.	--
Aharon Hochstein's ledgers	Ashkenazi Ottoman citizens (males) born in the period 1830-1895. The list is arranged by residential quarter.	1830-1895
Aharon Hochstein's ledgers	A list of males born in the year 1896. The list includes the name of the male, his father's name and the <i>kollel</i> to which the father belonged.	1896
Montefiore Censuses** (Jerusalem)	Jerusalem Censuses	1855, 1866, and 1875.
United Home for the Aged (=Moshav Zekenim ve-Zekenot ha-Meuhad)	The register includes the following information about each resident: name, father's name, age, country of origin, and the year of admission to the United Home for the Aged.	1892-1914

\*The information in the table was extracted from: Sack, S.D. (1995). A guide to Jewish genealogical research in Israel (Rev. Ed.), Avotaynu.

\*\*Note that the Jewish National and University Library has Montefiore censuses on microfilms. However, these are not accessible to the public. Also, there is a project of the Montefiore Endowment and the Israel Genealogical Society to build databases for the 5 Montefiore censuses. The censuses of 1839 and 1855 are supposed to be online within the next few months. (R. Feldman, personal communication, November 20, 2009).

\*\*\*Note that Todros Warschawski's ledgers database will be available at <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/148/5642.asp> for Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) members only.

The Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) has produced databases that are included in Eretz Israel Records Indexing. At the present time, there are five searchable databases for the Ottoman Empire Period:

- **British Proteges and Subjects.** The Israel Genealogical Society's index contains names of Russian Jews who rejected their Russian citizenship or Jews from North Africa who rejected their French citizenship. To search the database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4972.asp>

- **Helkat Mehokek.** A database of 8,090 listed tombstones at the Mount of Olives cemetery in Jerusalem. <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4977.asp>
- **1839 Census of Eretz Israel & 1840 Census of Alexandria (Montefiore Endowment).** Check the Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) website <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/5186.asp> .

At present, the census of 1839, 1840 (Alexandria) and 1855 are on line at <http://www.montefioreendowment.org.uk/census/>

- **American citizens living in Eretz Israel in 1917.** A list of American citizens living in Jerusalem in 1917 from the US State Department. To search the on-line database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4974.asp>

### **British Mandate Period (1918-1948)**

The table below includes records that are kept in the Jerusalem Municipality Historical Archives from the British Mandate period\*:

<b>Registers' Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Period/Year</b>
Archive of the <i>Vaad ha-IR</i>	Includes collections of population lists.	1918-1931
Election to <i>Vaad HaKehilla</i> -Electoral Registers	Includes lists of Jews ages 18 and older who were eligible to vote. The registers provide the full name of each person, his/her father's name, age and address. Also included are other lists of residents, such as lists of deaths for the years 1939-1943.	--
General List of Jerusalem Jews Ages 18 and Older	This list includes about 17,500 names of both men and women.	1928
Lists of Those Receiving Palestinian Citizenship	These lists are arranged by residential quarter and include mostly men's names.	1917-1927
Municipality of Jerusalem Elections	Includes a list of Jewish voters in Hebrew, English and Arabic. Also, district registers for electoral districts nos. 9, 19, 11 and	1934

	12 including full name, age and residential quarter.	
Register of Births		1920-1922
Register of Deaths		1917-1920
Register of Divorces		1919-1925

The Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) has searchable databases for the British Mandate Period:

- **Change of Names in the Palestine Gazette (1921-1948).** List of the change of names registered in the Palestine Gazette during the British Mandate over Palestine. To search the on-line database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4971.asp>
- **British Mandate Census 1922.** Includes the list of Petah Tikva and Tel-Aviv-Jaffa residents. To search the on-line database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4979.asp>
- **Americans in Palestine in 1929.** List of American Citizens residing in Palestine in 1929 from the US State Department (1929). To search the on-line database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4975.asp>
- **Medical Practitioners.** <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4548.asp> (For IGS members only).
- **Various Registers from the Petah Tikva Archives (in Hebrew only).** <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/6583.asp> (For IGS members only; database is in Hebrew).
- **Victims of the 1929 Riots.** 133 victims of the 1929 riots in Jerusalem, Motza, Hebron, Tel Aviv, Beer Tuvia, Hulda, Haifa, Safed and Ein Zeitim. To search on-line database click here <http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/153/4980.asp>
- **1937 Book of Residents of Rehavia quarter, Jerusalem (Hebrew).** The book is available on PDF file. [http://www.isragen.org.il/upload/infocenter/info\\_images/22032009085338@1937Rehavia-address-low.pdf](http://www.isragen.org.il/upload/infocenter/info_images/22032009085338@1937Rehavia-address-low.pdf)

### ***State of Israel (1948 to present)***

#### **Births**

Birth records are held by the State of Israel Ministry of Interior. Israeli residents can obtain birth records by contacting the State of Israel Ministry of Interior. Non-residents need to contact the Consulate General of Israel located in their vicinity.

You may only request a copy of a birth certificate for someone to whom you are directly related; otherwise you will need to provide a letter of explanation.

### **Death Certificates**

Death records are held by the State of Israel Ministry of Interior. Israeli residents can obtain death records by contacting the State of Israel Ministry of Interior. As in the case of birth records, non-residents should contact their nearest Consulate General of Israel.

The Ministry of the Interior does not keep records of the deceased in Israel who were buried abroad. An Israeli death certificate is not issued in such cases. Instead, a document for the transfer of the body to a foreign country is issued, but it is not available to researchers.

As in the case of birth records, you may only request a copy of a death certificate for someone to whom you are directly related; otherwise you will need to provide a letter of explanation (see above).

### **Burial Societies (Chevrot Kadisha) & Cemeteries**

The *Chevra Kadisha*'s web site is available via the Ministry of Religious Services at [http://www.dat.gov.il/religion/console/mng/kadisha\\_search.aspx](http://www.dat.gov.il/religion/console/mng/kadisha_search.aspx) (In Hebrew only)

Haifa Burial Society. Searchable burial database  
<http://www.kadisha.net/kadisha/contentpages/search1.aspx>

Israel Genealogical Society's website;  
Information on Burials in the State of Israel is available at  
<http://www.isragen.org.il/siteFiles/1/202/4661.asp>

Mount Olives Cemetery searchable database. <http://www.mountofolives.co.il/eng/>

Tel-Aviv & the greater Tel-Aviv area's cemeteries searchable database  
<http://www.kadisha.biz/> (In Hebrew)

Tel-Aviv Burial Database (English Front-End).  
<http://www.stevemorse.org/hebrew/kadisha.html>

## **Genealogical Resources In Israel**

### **Ben Zevi Institute (Yad Ben Zvi)**

Address: 12 Abravanel St., P.O.Box 7660, Jerusalem 91076 Israel  
Telephone: 972-2-5398844  
Fax: 972-2-5612329  
Library: 13 Ibn Ezra, Jerusalem  
Website: [www.ybz.org.il/](http://www.ybz.org.il/)  
E-mail: [mahonzvi@h2.hum.huji.ac.il](mailto:mahonzvi@h2.hum.huji.ac.il)

The Ben Zevi Institute includes 3,000 manuscripts, 300 Sephardic communities' antique ketubot, and other collections.

**Beth Hatefusoth (The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora)**

Address: Tel Aviv University Campus, Klausner Street, Ramat Aviv  
P.O.B. 39359, Tel Aviv 61392  
Telephone: 972-3-745 7800; Fax: 972 3 745 7831  
Website: [www.bh.org.il](http://www.bh.org.il)  
E-mail: [bhwebmas@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:bhwebmas@post.tau.ac.il)

Beth Hatefusoth includes a film collection of family life in Poland, Morocco, Greece, and more. Also included is the Memi De-Shalit Database of Jewish Family Names, and family trees that were donated to the museum.

**Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP)**

Mailing address: P.O. Box 39077, Jerusalem 91390  
Telephone: 972-2-6586249  
Website: <http://sites.huji.ac.il/archives/>

The Central Archives are rich in genealogical material from various communities. The main genealogical sources are vital records, which were maintained chronologically in most communities from about the end of the 18th century onwards. The *Central Archives* have a large collection of such registers from Germany, as well as sporadic registers from other countries, such as France, Italy and Poland. Other sources are circumcision registers, voting lists, and tax lists.

**Central Zionist Archives (CZA)**

Address: 4 Zalman Shazar Ave. Jerusalem, 91920, Israel  
Phone: 972-2-620-4800  
Fax: 972-2-620-4837  
Website: <http://www.zionistarchives.org.il/ZA/pIndexE.aspx?I=1070&Src=2> (Family Research).

The Central Zionist Archives contains useful genealogical documents, such as resources on legal/illegal immigration to Palestine, a database and files of the Jewish Agency's Relatives Search Bureau, and the 1939 Jerusalem Census. However, there is no remote access for this information. Also, researchers who are interested in any file should contact the CZA directly.

### **Yad Vashem**

Address: The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority  
Har Hazikaron  
P.O.B. 3477  
Jerusalem 91034 Israel  
Website: <http://www.yadvashem.org/>

Yad Vashem, the Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority, is the central repository of documents relating to the Holocaust. Its library, archives and online databases are most valuable. Check the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names at [http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/IY\\_HON\\_Welcome](http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/IY_HON_Welcome) for names of victims and testimony submitters.

### **Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (JNUL)**

Address: Hebrew University Givat Ram,  
Jerusalem, Israel  
Website: <http://jnul.huji.ac.il>

JNUL includes collections of Sephardic Jewish communities:

- Constantine – Community Archives (1795-1960).
- Thessalonica – Community Archives (1913-1946).
- Istanbul – ‘Pinkassim’ of the rabbinical court (1839-1841); Izmir Community Archives (1760-1970).
- Italy – ‘Pinkassim’ and other documents from various Jewish communities in Italy.
- Morocco – ‘Pinkassim’ and documents from various Jewish communities in Morocco.
- Amsterdam – Portuguese Community Archives (17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries).
- Bucharest – Sephardic Community Archives (1818-1947).
- Tunis – ‘Pinkas’ of the Portuguese Community (1710-1936).

## **Resources at the Center for Jewish History**

### **The Ackman & Ziff Genealogy Institute**

#### **Books**

Malka, Jeffrey S. *Sephardic genealogy: Discovering your Sephardic ancestors and their world. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* (Bergenfield, New Jersey: Avotaynu, 2009). pp. 204-208.  
**CGI CS66.J4 M35 2009**

Tagger, Mathilde A. & Kerem, Yitschak. *Guidebook for Sephardic and Oriental genealogical sources in Israel.* (Bergenfield, New Jersey: Avotaynu, 2006).  
**CGI 21 .T34 2006**

Sack, Sallyann Amdur. *A guide to Jewish genealogical research in Israel*. Revised Ed. (Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1995). **CGI Z6374.B5 S23**

### **Periodicals**

- **Avotaynu** (Teaneck, N.J. : G. Mokotoff, 1985-). **CGI DS101 .A87** (also available on CD-ROM; 1985-2008)
- **Sharsheret Hadorot** (Yerushalayim : ha-Hevrah, [1987-].) **CGI CS1500 .A43**
- **Moreshet** (Galil Jewish Genealogical Society)

### **Articles**

- Lev-Zion, Martha. "Israel Genealogy Society posts databases on its website", *Avotaynu*, XXI, winter 2005.
- Stroweis, Jean-Pierre. "Preview of 2004 International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem", *Avotaynu*, XIX, summer 2003.
- Haringman, Meriam, "Jews in Eretz Yisrael in 1875", *Avotaynu*, XIX, winter 2003.

### **Microfiche**

- Index to the name changes in the Palestine Gazette. (6 microfiche, Gary Mokotoff, 1990).

### **YIVO Institute for Jewish Research**

**German Jewish Children's Aid.** Included are files of children who went to Palestine (Israel) before, during and after WWII. **YIVO RG 249.**

**HIAS--UHS, Main Office, N.Y. 1954-1967.** Included are files of children and adults who went to Palestine (Israel) before, during and after WWII. **YIVO 245.8**