

International Institute for Jewish Genealogy: Five Years of Progress

by Neville Lamdan

The following reflects a talk Ambassador Lamdan gave at the IAJGS Conference in Washington, DC, August 15, 2011—Ed.

This is a genealogical success story of a different kind. Not a revelation of lost roots but the development of a lively institution. Not the discovery of a new branch of the family, but the re-establishment of Jewish Genealogy as a legitimate branch of Jewish Studies. Not as personal family history, however serious, but as a fully fledged academic field of study. Not simply as a subject in its own right, but also as an interdisciplinary endeavor, capable of contributing significantly to the social and the exact sciences.

The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and the Paul Jacobi Center (IIJG) officially opened its doors at the Jewish National and University Library (now the National Library of Israel) in Jerusalem in January 2006. It did so amid a fair measure of incomprehension and scepticism. Questions were raised about the nature of academic genealogy; doubts were expressed about the Institute's prospects as a research center. Nevertheless, after attending the Institute's first International Symposium in September 2006, Professor Thomas W. Jones wrote in the *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* (which he now co-edits) that:

With clear purpose and objectives, focused and sensitive leadership, financial backing, and energy, the Institute is poised to succeed. Many hurdles remain, however, before IIJG meets its goals. As it proceeds, it can serve as a pathfinder, perhaps even a model, for the wider field—thus shortening genealogy's long road to academic acceptance.¹

In broad terms, the Institute set the advancement of the status of Jewish Genealogy, through research and teaching at the university level, as its primary goal. It still has a long way to go before realizing that goal, but, in the brief span of five years, it has made significant strides towards it. IIJG has carried out, or sponsored, nine research projects that, taken together, demonstrate that Jewish Genealogy—or any genealogy, for that matter—is not merely a useful academic tool or methodology as some contend, but an illuminating lens through which to view Jewish history and society, no less valid and no less insightful than other prisms under which these subjects are examined. The studies have proven that it is possible to move beyond information gathering and databasing to critical analysis and interpretation. They have shown that Jewish Genealogy is capable of addressing what are sometimes simplistically called “macro” or “big picture” issues, and is not limited to “micro” topics, at the level of personal lineages. They have shown too that Jewish genealogy is not, as sometimes and unkindly claimed, simply an amateurish hobby and, on occasion, an attempt at self-aggrandizement based on questionable assumptions,

family lore and “old wives tales.” Rather, the studies have demonstrated that Jewish genealogy is a scientific activity that uses the accepted methods and standards of modern research. In brief, it is a systematic search for hard facts, derived from primary sources and supported by demonstrable evidence. In the process, the studies have illustrated, for example, how an otherwise meaningless litany of names and dates can be contextualized and utilized to produce a comprehensive narrative with the potential of enriching our understanding of the Jewish experience over the generations.

In addition to research, IIJG has devoted considerable thought to the teaching of Jewish genealogy at the university level. It has also produced some innovative tools and technologies to assist the Jewish family historian in his or her work. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly from the Institute's point of view, it has begun to make a mark on the academic world, as witnessed by its presentation of high-level panels on Jewish genealogy at major Jewish studies conferences over the last two years. In parallel, the number of articles in journals, written by scholars associated with the Institute, or where credit is given to it, is growing. A case in point is an article by the author on “Vil-

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lage Jews in the 19th-Century Minsk Gubernya Through a Genealogical Lens,” due to appear in the June issue of the *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly*, thus confirming that the Institute's work is of interest to non-Jewish genealogists as well.

All in all, it is perhaps fair to contend that the Institute has earned its spurs more rapidly than could reasonably have been expected when it ventured into unknown territory just over five years ago. It has established a presence in the academic world. It has found its place in the Jewish genealogical “universe.” It also has garnered considerable support from wide segments of the Jewish world, as can be seen from its distinguished Honorary Advisory Board, which includes Senator Joe Lieberman and Professor Alan Der-showitz in the United States; Sir Martin Gilbert and former Foreign Minister Sir Malcolm Rifkind in the United Kingdom; former Minister of Justice and Attorney General Professor Irwin Cotler in Canada; and Nobel Prize Laureate Professor Aaron Ciechanover in Israel.² While the Institute

has some grounds to take satisfaction from what it has accomplished thus far, its focus at present is on how it might broaden its activities and expand its horizons.

Research Projects

As of this writing, IJG has awarded research grants totaling \$75,000 to nine proposals of a historical and/or sociological nature. These proposals were subject to open competition (except for the first two funded in 2006).³ They were adjudicated, and the subsequent research was monitored by the Institute's academic committee, whose principal criterion (beyond originality and academic excellence) has been the extent to which the projects broaden the scope of Jewish genealogical research and the horizons of Jewish genealogy in general.

The range of the projects in terms of time and space is remarkable—from 14th- and 15th-century Spain and the Mediterranean Basin after the Expulsion from Spain, through early modern Italy, 18th- and 19th-century Hungary and late Ottoman Palestine, to pre-World War I Lithuania and inter-war Latvia, until Europe as a whole during the Shoah. The projects have an impressive success rate. Five have filed solid final reports, posted on the Institute's website (www.ijg.org), while a sixth report, in the form of a scholarly article, is in preparation. One project, which has submitted only an interim report, generated an important technological breakthrough (see below). The two research projects outstanding are still works in progress, currently on track for completion as scheduled, one later this year and the other in the spring of 2012.

Space precludes describing each of these projects; perhaps a glance at three of them will suffice to illustrate some of their scope and content.⁴

The Lives and Lineages of Jews in Medieval Cervera.

In 2008, Maria Jose Surribas Camps of Barcelona proposed using the county archives of Cervera, a provincial Catalan town with an old Jewish community, as a means to explore the lives and lineages of Jews living there in the 14th and 15th centuries (prior to the Expulsion). She confounded her critics on the academic committee who wondered about the archives' potential by uncovering well over 3,000 documents in Latin and Old Catalan relating to the Jews of Cervera between the years 1328 and 1499. She analyzed her material from various genealogical perspectives, notably kinship, onomastics, and mobility and migration. As regards the first, she was able to reconstruct a series of family trees over a number of generations and, incidentally, discover relatives of the great rabbinical scholar Solomon ben Abraham ben Adret (the *Rashba*). She systematized the names of all the Jews in the documents, finding some with surnames that are still current among Sephardic Jews today. She made special record of the given names of Jewish women and also of toponyms, thus widening knowledge in both those fields. She observed that Cervera was situated at an important crossroad on international thoroughfares of the time. Jews hailing from various locations throughout the

Iberian Peninsula and beyond (from France, for example) passed through and settled in Cervera—and, conversely, many Jews from the town relocated elsewhere. These movements, often suggestive of family connections and kinship networks further afield, are of great interest within the field of migration studies.

Beyond these particular discoveries, Ms. Surribas demonstrated conclusively that research in archives in small towns in pre-Expulsion Spain is a promising new area for Jewish genealogy, with the potential of extending backwards the pedigrees of certain venerable Sephardic families by two centuries and more. This prospect has already caught the attention of leading scholars in Israel who wish to explore it.

Sephardic DNA and Migration. Even before the Institute's official opening in 2006, it was approached by two leading researchers of Jewish genetics, Professor Michael Hammer of the University of Arizona and Dr. Doron Behar of Haifa University. In conjunction with Family Tree DNA of Houston, Texas, they were conducting a study into Sephardic DNA with a view to complementing DNA analyses conducted earlier into Ashkenazic males. They inquired whether IJG could identify a sample group of paired individuals (i.e., having the same surnames) with pedigrees tracing back to pre-Expulsion Spain. Alain Farhi, a founder of the Institute and creator of the extensive Sephardic website, *Fleurs d'Orient*, brought together 54 such individuals.

The results of their DNA testing were fascinating. For example, by no means did all of its members originate in pre-Expulsion Spain, despite their claims. In reality, several came from the Middle East and others from Western Europe. In certain cases, some of them, not necessarily sharing the same surname, probably had a common ancestor, while others with the same or similar surname, were not related. Within the sample, 17 unique DNA "signatures" were identified, suggesting that Sephardic Jews are genetically more diversified than Ashkenazic Jews. The claimed male-inherited cohanic status of one or two of the individuals in the sample was found to be questionable.

These results have been folded into a larger study that Hammer and Behar are currently conducting on Sephardic DNA. They also have inspired other DNA studies seeking, for instance, to establish the percentage of males in Spain today who carry an identifiable Jewish haplotype in their genetic make-up.

Jewish Kinship Networks and Modernization in Darbenai and its Diaspora. Employing genealogical sources and methods, Professor Eric Goldstein of Emory University has reconstructed 19th-century kinship networks in Darbenai, a representative shtetl in Lithuania, in order to throw light on a series of issues of interest to Jewish genealogy—the centrality of family ties to social and economic life, the emergence and maintenance of social categories, including elite groups, communal leadership and kinship networks, as well as geographical mobility and patterns of migration into the early 20th century.

By documenting these "Ties that Bind" as he calls them,

Professor Goldstein's work has revealed family networks as the basic building block of shtetl life and illuminated the central importance of these networks—and their disintegration—in the broader history of Jews in the modern period. While historians of Eastern European Jewish life have generally ignored the family and focused on topics such as intellectual and religious movements, leadership elites, communal organizations and Jewish self-government, this study has shown that the family network was a much more vibrant and fundamental factor in the daily lives of average Jews, particularly those who lived in small towns and did not have a highly organized communal structure on which to rely. (Those Jews constituted more than 50 percent of the Jewish population in the Pale of Settlement on the eve of the 20th century.) The ways in which these networks were challenged by a series of forces, particularly social and economic, and ultimately replaced by new frameworks for social and cultural identity in post-immigration settings, have been analyzed in depth. In turn, they have generated a completely new narrative for understanding the process of migration and modernization for Eastern European Jews, with broad implications for Jewish family history.

Teaching

IJG is not a teaching institution and does not confer university degrees or professional accreditation. With regard to the teaching of Jewish Genealogy, therefore, the Institute's executive committee decided that IJG's principal function should be to encourage and assist universities throughout the world with strong Jewish studies programs to offer academic courses in Jewish genealogy (as distinguished from beginners' "how-to" courses, several of which are readily available online). An international teaching committee, composed of tenured faculty (mainly full professors) was established to give thought to this issue. On the assumption that no serious lecturer or professor would agree to have a course dictated to him or her down to the last jot and title, the committee opted to elaborate broad "Academic Guidelines" in order to delineate a conceptual framework for a syllabus for BA and MA courses in Jewish genealogy and to offer informed recommendations as to their components. With the assistance of a team of expert consultants, the committee produced detailed Academic Guidelines in 2008. At the same time, it polled appropriate institutions of higher learning worldwide in the hope of identifying a major university that would offer a Jewish genealogy course which, if successful, could serve as a model for universities elsewhere. One such university in the U.S. stepped forward in 2009 and the necessary procedural steps were begun towards gaining the requisite academic approval to launch a BA course in the fall of 2010. To the Institute's great disappointment, this promising initiative fell through in the summer of 2010, when the university concerned decided to close down its Judaic Studies Department due to budgetary constraints!

Since then, IJG has actively explored various alterna-

tives. It sent the Academic Guidelines to a number of universities that had evinced interest in courses in Jewish genealogy in one form or another, but none followed through for various reasons, including the rigidity of their course requirements, a lack of qualified teaching staff and ongoing budgetary problems. The Institute also examined the possibility of "distance learning" by offering advanced courses online, either directly or in collaboration with a university that has experience in this field. It came to the conclusion, however, that an ambitious, and expensive teaching operation of this kind is beyond IJG's capabilities for the time being.

As a result, the executive committee reconsidered earlier this year its approach to the whole question of promoting the Academic Guidelines. Until recently, it was highly restrictive in distributing the Guidelines, fearing that if they were circulated in an uncontrolled way, they might be plagiarized or even stolen "lock, stock and barrel" by some unscrupulous body that might seek to profit from them commercially or otherwise. However, given the objective difficulties in finding a university willing to offer a BA course based on the Academic Guidelines, the executive committee decided in April of this year to reverse the Institute's position and to post the Guidelines freely on the Institute's website, in the hope that they will be taken up, in part if not in full, by some teaching institution that the Institute has been unable to identify thus far. If the publication of the Guidelines does inspire academic courses in Jewish genealogy and if others can benefit from them, the Institute will have achieved its purpose, at least in part.

Genealogical Collections

The Institute has as one of its goals the preservation of private collections of genealogical papers and printed works. A select committee will decide whether collections offered meet certain standards related mainly to the significance of the collection to Jewish genealogists and indeed Jewish history in general. Thus far, two important collections have been promised to the Institute.

While waiting to receive them, IJG has engaged in inventorying and indexing two major genealogical collections housed at the Israel National Library with a view to making them more accessible to researchers and the general public. The first and larger of these is the Jacobi Collection, compiled by the late Dr. Paul Jacobi, a renowned genealogist in Jerusalem (died 1997). Over a period of half a century, Jacobi carried out original research into more than 400 prominent Ashkenazic families, in many cases going back several centuries. His typed studies of 114 families (in the form of so-called monographs) have been indexed, while his painstaking researches into some 300 other families, still in handwritten (and barely readable) form have been inventoried.⁵ The second collection comprises the research papers of the late Rabbi Shmuel Gorr, also a prominent genealogist in Jerusalem (died 1988). Its index is due to be posted on both the Institute's and the National Library's websites later this year.

Tools and Technologies

The Institute has endeavored to provide tools to assist the work of Jewish family historians. It has, for example, proposed standards for the recording of proper names, dates and places, a complicated area not solely applicable to Jewish genealogy.⁶ It also has published, with explanations for use, Paul Jacobi's unique system for the absolute dating of generations over centuries, which addresses a genuine issue confronted by Jewish genealogists.⁷

On the technological front, the Institute can take credit, direct and indirect, for two notable achievements. It sponsored a project that produced a viable solution to the complex problem of merging incompatible genealogical datasets. As a pilot study, the researchers took on a challenge of modest and manageable dimensions and successfully developed and tested algorithms that enabled the merging of data culled from headstones in an old Jewish cemetery in Zdunska Wola (a shtetl some 50 kilometers southwest of Lodz, Poland) on the one hand, and metric data found in the town's records on the other.⁸

The second technological breakthrough was a spin-off from earlier work on an Institute project seeking to reconstruct Jewish communities destroyed during the Shoah from the genealogical point of view. The researchers were confronted with the vexing problem of identifying and verifying Jewish surnames, subject to variable spellings in multiple European languages. Alexander Beider and Steve Morse developed an algorithm to search lists for names that are phonetically equivalent to the desired name. The system, dubbed BMPM (Beider Morse Phonetic Matching), is similar to a soundex search in that an exact spelling is not required—but, being phonetic, it has the significant advantage that it does not yield a large number of false “hits” (false positives) as does a digital soundex. The system attempts to determine the language in question and then applies phonetic rules for that particular language in order to transliterate the name into a phonetic alphabet. Where need be, generic phonetic rules and language-independent linguistic rules are also applied to enhance the reliability of the name identification and the multi-lingual matches.⁹

BMPM already is in use in several large genealogical websites, including JewishGen, SephardicGen, JRI-Poland and Routes to Roots. One of the creators, Steve Morse, employs the system on his “One-Step” webpages for searching the Ellis Island database and the Dachau concentration camp records. In addition, it is being considered for use in other large databases, both Jewish and non-Jewish.¹⁰

New Horizons

The Institute recently has made a major policy shift in the way it solicits and promotes its research projects. Over the last four years, IJG has invited projects, essentially at random, to be submitted from outside through its annual “Call for Research Proposals.” Of late, however, the paradigm has been changed. The Executive Committee, on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis of the Institute conducted

Help Support IJG Projects

The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy (IJG) seeks funding for these new projects. Tax deductible contributions (for those who pay U.S. taxes) may be sent to Friends of the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy, 155 North Washington Ave, Bergenfield, NJ, 07621. Non-U.S. contributions should be sent to the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy, c/o National Library of Israel, Edmond J. Safra Campus, Givat Ram, POB 39105, Jerusalem, Israel. A contribution can also be made through PayPal to ijg@earthlink.net.

last year and in conjunction with the Academic Committee, has decided to initiate of its own accord research proposals that conform with the Institute's research priorities and to proactively look for funding for these projects among groups that have a specific interest in them. This fundamental change of direction has been characterized as a move from a “bottom-up” approach, where research proposals come in from the field, to a “top-down” approach, where the proposals are designed from the center within a defined framework, reflecting IJG's preferred areas for research.¹¹

To that end, the Institute has compiled a portfolio of six pure research projects and two projects that fall into the “Tools and Technologies” category, which it is seeking to “market” at present in order to elicit the necessary funding. All of the research projects have been proposed by, or are supported by, prominent scholars. They include, for example, a proposal by the renowned British historian Sir Martin Gilbert to write a geographical and genealogical history of British Jewry; a project to continue the pioneering work of Ms. Surribas into Jews in pre-Expulsion Spain; and a proposal to investigate the connection between Ashkenazic surnames and DNA that has been recommended by a leading expert in Jewish genetics at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine in New York.¹² The two “Tools and Technology” projects were both formulated by the Institute.¹³ The first envisages the opening of a computerized portal to Jewish genealogical sources and resources worldwide, and the second the digitalization and indexing of Paul Jacobi's handwritten materials.

Of quite a different order, and independent of the research portfolio just described, is an IJG proposal to conduct a demographic and genealogical survey of Scottish Jewry, which has already been endorsed by leading Jewish organizations in Scotland. An unusual combination of circumstances comes together to make this ground-breaking project feasible. Scottish Jewry is barely two centuries old; the total number of Scottish Jews, including first-generation immigrants, is manageable (estimated to be in the region of 50,000 all told); Scottish censuses from 1841 to 1911 are online, as are vital records (births, marriages and deaths) up to more recent times; a central archive of Scottish Jewry has been methodically collecting materials for 25 years; some 20 dissertations have been written on Scottish Jewry; and

an unusually strong group of individuals with the necessary historical, demographic, genealogical and informational technology skills is available to carry out the project. The aim is to complete the work before the bicentenary of Scottish Jewry in 2016. Among its planned end products are a scholarly report or reports on the results of the survey, a more popular narrative in illustrated book form, a travelling exhibition on Scottish Jewry, and a series of teaching aids for use within the community and by other ethnic and faith minorities, in order to foster and improve intergroup relations.

In all probability, this endeavor will become the Institute's flagship project over the next few years. If it succeeds, it has the potential to raise Jewish genealogy to a new plane, moving it beyond narrowly defined research projects to a comprehensive study of an entire national Jewry. Again, if successful, this ambitious project could become a model for other national Jewries with similar characteristics similar to Scottish Jewry in terms of size and age (e.g., Ireland, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Australia) and indeed pave the way to a new phase in Jewish genealogy altogether.

Some Reflections

Has the Institute delivered on Thomas Jones' prediction that it is "poised to succeed" and "as it proceeds, it can serve as a pathfinder, perhaps even a model, for the wider field—thus shortening genealogy's long road to academic acceptance?"¹⁴ The truth is that it is too early to tell and, as they say, "the jury is still out." IJG can put a number of feathers in its cap, particularly in the areas of research and technological achievements. On the other hand, it has not yet succeeded in the field of university teaching. Likewise, it would wish to find better ways in which to reach out to and serve the Jewish genealogical community as a whole. As a meaningful step in that direction, it is working on the

establishment of a Genealogical Service at the Israel National Library for use by Jewish genealogists worldwide.

As for shortening "genealogy's long road to academic acceptance," that too has yet to be seen. While the Institute may have taken strides towards its primary goal of advancing the status of Jewish Genealogy and begun to make its mark on the academic world, it still has a long row to hoe before it realizes its ultimate goal of gaining recognition for Jewish genealogy as an independent branch of Jewish Studies. The highest hurdle, as Jones put it, remaining to be crossed appears to be the reticence on the part of traditional Jewish scholars, particularly in the U.S., to accept the proposition that Jewish genealogy is a genuine academic pursuit and a legitimate field of Jewish studies.

In sum, and in less than academic language, the Institute has come a long way in its first five years, but it still has a long way to go.

Notes

1. Thomas W. Jones, "International Institute—A Breakthrough for Academic Genealogy?" *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly*, xxii, 1 (March, 2007), pp. 41–44

2. The full membership of IJG's Honorary Advisory Board is Prof. Aaron Ciechanover (Nobel Prize Laureate in Chemistry, Israel Institute of Technology), Prof. Irwin Cotler (MP and former Canadian Minister of Justice and Attorney General), Baroness Ruth Deech (House of Lords, former Principal, St. Anne's College, Oxford), Prof. Alan Dershowitz (Professor of Law, Harvard), Hon. Stuart Eizenstat (former U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury and Ambassador to European Union), Mr. Abraham Foxman (National Director, Anti-Defamation League, USA), Sir Martin Gilbert (historian and author, Oxford), Mr. Arthur Kurzweil (author and pioneering Jewish genealogist), Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau (Chairman, Yad Vashem Council, former Chief Rabbi of Israel), Senator Joe Lieberman (U.S. Senate), Dr. David Marwell (Director, Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York), Sir Malcolm Rifkind (MP, House of Commons, former British Foreign Secre-

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tary), and Rep. Henry Waxman (U.S. House of Representatives, Chair, Energy and Commerce Committee).

3. The years and short titles of the nine projects, together with the names of their principal researchers, are:

2006: A Genealogical Reconstruction of Communities Destroyed during the Shoah (Sallyann Sack-Pikus); Sephardic DNA and Migration (Alain Farhi).

2007: Jewish Kinship Networks and Modernization in Darbenai and its Diaspora (Eric Goldstein); Jewish Familial and Economic Networks in Early-Modern Italy (Federica Francesconi).

2008: A Genealogically-oriented Approach to the Historical Geography of Eretz Yisrael: Case-studies of the Moyal and Chelouche Families (Ruth Kark and Joseph Glass); The Lives and Lineages of Jews in Medieval Cervera (Maria Jose Surribas Camps).

2009: A Systematic Study of the Riga House Registers as a Source for Jewish Genealogy (Rubin Ferber); Communal Protocols and Hungarian Jews (Howard Lupovitch).

2010: Hungarian Jewish Families in the Modern Era—Case-studies of the Munk and Goldziher Families (Erzsébet Mislovics).

4. Full details of all the projects can be found on IJG's website (www.ijg.org).

5. Details of the Jacobi material and its treatment are posted on IJG's website.

6. Cf. Gary Mokotoff, "A Proposed Standard for Names, Dates and Places in a Genealogical Database," on IJG's website and also in AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, Fall, 2008, pp.3–6.

7. Cf. Chanan Rapaport, "Jacobi Absolute Generations Scale," AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXV, No. 4, Winter 2009, pp.3–8 (also on the Institute's website).

8. See K. Klauzinska, "A Modern Approach to the Genealogy of Polish Jews: Zdunska Wola as a Test Case," *Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia*, vol. 5, 2007, pp.39–51; H. Daniel Wagner, "Tombstone Identification through Database Merging," AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp.8–10; and K. Klauzinska,

"Strategies for the Integration of Genealogical Datasets" (on the Institute's website).

9. See Alexander Beider's description of the system on the Institute's website; cf. Alexander Beider & Stephen P. Morse, "Beider-Morse Phonetic Matching: An Alternative Soundex with Fewer False Hits," AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXIV, No. 2, Summer 2008, pp.12–18

10. S. Morse, private communication to the author (e-mail, May 19, 2011).

11. IJG "Preferred Research Areas" can be viewed on its website.

12. The full list of research projects is as follows: Prof. Yom Tov Assis (Jerusalem), *Genealogical Research into Jewish Communities in Medieval Spain and Portugal*; Sir Martin Gilbert (London), *Geographical and Genealogical Origins of Anglo-Jewry*; Dr. Noa Kohler, *Ashkenazic Family Names: An Integrative Historical, Genealogical and Population Genetics Study*; Dr. Laurence Leitenberg (Geneva)/Sandy Crystal (Bow, NH), *Digital Maps of Jewish Populations in Europe (1750-1930)*; Prof. Uzi Rebhun, *Montefiore Data and Research Center*; Prof. Shaul Stampfer (Jerusalem), *Village Jews in the 19th Century Minsk Gubernya through a Genealogical Lens*.

13. IJG—*Master Bibliography and Genealogical Portal*; and IJG—*Jacobi Papers: Digitalization and Indexing*.

14. Thomas W. Jones, *loc. cit.*, p. 44.

Since 2006, Neville Lamdan has been the Director of the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy at the National Library of Israel, which he helped to found. A former Israeli ambassador with a doctorate in history from Oxford, he has published in AVOTAYNU and written scholarly articles on Jewish genealogy in learned journals. He has presented papers on the subject at major Jewish studies and genealogical conferences.

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