Introduction

Topic of Discussion

The extensive array of different traditions and collective thinking reflected in the adoption of surnames, especially by Jews (by choice or by imposition), suggests that there can be great value in analyzing surnames as an additional, or alternative, research tool in dealing with social developments in specific areas and at specific times. The historian Katharine S. B. Keats-Rohan, specializing in prosopography, states that "unlike first names, bynames (i.e., surnames) frequently have transparent semantic value. . . . A great deal of information is contained in such descriptions."[1]

Linguistic and semantic features contained in names in general, and in surnames in particular, can therefore constitute a rich and interesting corpus of evidence related to and influenced by different historical phenomena such as migrations and dispersion; occupational structure; acculturation and assimilation; relations between authorities and minorities; and beliefs, aesthetics, and social fashions.

I believe that the onomastic (i.e., name-related) evidence that can be assembled from different historical and contemporary sources has the potential to provide insights into most of the above issues as well as other aspects. The present study attempts to seek and find in a large corpus of surnames the direct reflection of different aspects of social history, starting from the individual name bearer and culminating in the assembly of a significant number of names that will reflect upon the society at large.

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to prove that through a careful analysis of the surnames used by the members of a historical group, the researcher can learn more about, or at least clarify, and thus better understand and/or corroborate, different sociohistorical trends and processes that characterized that specific group within a given territorial area and time span and even help to resolve disputed historical and historiographical issues.

1. Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity," 169.

State of Research on the Topic

Research on the History of the Jews in Romania

Since the nineteenth century, numerous studies have been dedicated to the history of the Jews in Romania, mostly by Jewish scholars, (e.g., Elias and Moses Schwarzfeld, Iuliu Barasch, Lazăr Şăineanu, Moses Gaster). Their numbers expanded during the twentieth century, concentrating on documenting the history of the various Jewish communities and different aspects of the Jewish presence in Romania (e.g., Joseph Brociner, Eliyahu Feldman, Theodor Lavi-Löwenstein, Itzik Schwartz-Kara) rather than on a comprehensive historical overview (e.g., Israel Bar-Avi).

In the last decades, historians have tended to focus much of their research on specific themes such as the Middle Ages (Victor Eskenasy), the struggle for emancipation (Carol Iancu), socioeconomic aspects (Jacob Geller, Liviu Rotman), the Holocaust (Jean Ancel), anti-Semitism and the post-Communist period (Michael Shafir, Leon Volovici, Raphael Vago).

Among Romanian historians, Nicolae Iorga dedicated a series of studies to the history of the Jews in Romania, and in more recent years scholars such as Dan Berindei, Constantin Giurescu, and Andrei Pippidi have begun investigating different aspects of Romanian Jewish history.

Research on Names and Names Used by Jews

Scientific interest in Jewish names began toward the end of the first half of the nineteenth century with the study published by Leopold Zunz in 1837.[2] His overview of over two thousand years of Jewish history was intended to prove that the Jews had adopted names of foreign peoples even in very early times; this approach was seemingly used in the petition of 16 August 1838 by the Jewish community of Berlin to the Prussian Ministry of the Interior in order to secure for Jews the right to use names not restricted to the Hebrew Bible.[3]

Since then, numerous studies, articles, and books dealing with different aspects of names in different areas and time periods have appeared (see Edwin D. Lawson's annotated bibliographies).[4] Among these are various dictionaries of Jewish names.[5] In Romania, however, there have been only a few sporadic studies, but no

2. Zunz, *Namen der Juden.*
3. Bering, *Stigma.*
4. Lawson, "Some Jewish" and "Some Jewish 2."
5. Lévy, *Les Noms des Israélites en France*; Kaganoff, *Dictionary of Jewish Names*; Laredo, *Les Noms des Juifs du Maroc*; Kolatch, *The New Name Dictionary*; Faiguenboim, Valadares, and Campagnano, *Dictionary of Sephardic Surnames*; Menk, *Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames*; Beider's dictionaries

dictionary and comprehensive study of Jewish names in Romania. Names, including Jewish names, have also been treated in other disciplines, mainly psychology[6] and sociology.[7]

In the historical context, prosopography is the discipline investigating the common background that characterizes a historic group by means of a collective study of their lives.[8] The basic elements of prosopography are individuals and their name forms, with all their associated variants, occurring in its sources. Any prosopographic study will gather a great deal of evidence that, if handled correctly, will provide a valuable database for interdisciplinary research. The names can be investigated by specialists, such as linguists and anthroponymists, as well as by historians, who will not be concerned with the semantics of the names as linguistic units but with the information that they provide about individuals' identity and occupation and the society in which they lived.[9]

Prosopographical research proceeds by collecting and analyzing statistically relevant quantities of biographical data, including names, about a well-defined group of individuals. In practice, however, it has the primary aim of learning about patterns of relationships and activities through the study of collective biography. Unfortunately, most historians, more interested in discovering patterns of social positions/functions or social mobility, do not follow Keats-Rohan's recommendation to investigate the individuals' names for the information that they contain.

Few attempts have been made until now to use the analysis of Jewish names or surnames documented in a specific area and period in order to ascertain the different aspects of Jewish history in that specific context.[10] A few articles have been published in recent years on the issue of late official changes of Jewish names to non-Jewish names and the reasons for this in the territories of Poland and especially Hungary.[11] Nevertheless, the existing onomastic studies do not, at this stage, offer a practical methodology that can make use of (Jewish) surnames for the purpose of supporting or clarifying historical issues. Furthermore, practically none of these works have treated the subject of Jewish names or surnames in Romania. Among the vast number of historical studies regarding Romanian Jewry, I know of no previous attempts to apply the analysis of Jewish surnames as an additional, complementary research tool.

of Jewish surnames from the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Poland, Galicia, Prague, the Maghreb, Gibraltar, and Malta.

6. David and Harari, "Stereotyping of Names"; Falk, "Identity and Name Changes"; Lawson, "Semantic Differential Analysis."

7. Maas, "Integration and Name"; Broom, Beem, and Harris, "Characteristics."

8. Stone, "Prosopography."

9. Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity," 168.

10. Bering, *Stigma*; Beider, *Dictionary of Ashkenazic.*

11. Jagodzińska, "My Name"; Farkas, "Surnames of Foreign Origin."

Purpose of the Present Study

According to Moshe Rosman, who advocates "methodological hybridism," the historian specializes in knowledge, mastering myriad details that are brought together to form a context that makes it possible to apply methods to and interpret a given phenomenon. Historiography does not have a particular methodology; it has particular ways of thinking and particular objectives—historicist assumptions and the questions they engender. History is an art of interpretation that uses, among other things, tools offered by the social sciences and other disciplines.

There is a wide range of methods that can assist historians in their work; more and more disciplines borrow methods from other fields. Jewish history, therefore, can and should take advantage of the methodologies of other disciplines to help it find answers to its particular brand of questions.[12]

As a Jewish historian, Aaron Demsky recognized many years ago the importance of onomastics, that is, names and name-giving practices, as an essential instrument for understanding the social and cultural history of the Jewish people. Following in this vein, the present study is an attempt to explore a new approach in historical research by applying onomastic tools, that is, the linguistic and semantic analysis of the surnames used by Jews, as an additional and valid research method that enables the historian to verify and/or clarify different aspects, trends, and processes within the context of the history of the Jews.

Given that there are no previous comprehensive studies on the surnames used by Jews in the Old Kingdom of Romania (defined below), such a goal is a desideratum. The application of this historical-onomastic research approach to provide a better understanding of its particular name patterns should contribute much to the history of Romanian Jewry. Given the lack of studies on the subject, this could constitute a "case study" designed to map the issue, open it for discussion, and pave the way for further studies to come.

As a by-product, this study has documented a corpus of surnames for the Jewish population in the Romanian lands for over four centuries. It is not an attempt to establish a prosopography of Romanian Jewry, which would be practically impossible, but rather to achieve a description of the sum of most of the Romanian and Romanized[13] surnames adopted or used by Jews in these areas. The resulting dictionary of surnames is incorporated at the end of the present work.

This study reviews, analyzes, and explains the surnames and naming patterns used or adopted by Romanian Jews from their earliest available historical documentation until the World War II (WWII) period in those areas where the

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12. Rosman, *How Jewish*, 154–67.

13. The term "Romanized" will be used here, with its linguistic meaning of graphic, phonetic, and morphologic adaptation to the Roman/Latin language, referring in this particular case to the Romanian language.

Romanian language was officially spoken. It focuses, in particular, on the types of Romanian and Romanized surnames that are most likely to provide evidence about Jews' interaction with, and the measure of their adaptation to, their surroundings.

Scope and Limits of the Study and Style Conventions

Territorial Limits

As stated above, this research will focus on those Romanian lands where, for most of the time, the Romanian language was official and Romanian culture was dominant. These are the territories lying inside the historical boundaries of the former Romanian Principalities of Moldavia (the Carpathian Mountains to the west, the Ceremuş and Dniester Rivers to the north and east, the Black Sea and the Danube, Siret, and Neajlov Rivers to the south) and Walachia (the Carpathian Mountains and the Neajlov, Siret, and Danube Rivers to the north, the Black Sea to the east, Bulgaria and the Danube River to the south, and the Carpathian Mountains to the west).

This leaves outside the scope of this study the territories to the north and west of the Carpathian Mountains collectively known as Transylvania (encompassing historical/inner Transylvania—Ardeal in Romanian—as well as Maramureş, Crişana, and Banat), where, while Romanian was widely spoken, the Jewish population adopted, at different times in its history, the German or Hungarian languages and cultures of the elite and ruling classes.

The principalities of Moldavia and Walachia struggled to maintain their independence from the Hungarian and Polish kingdoms and the Balkan states but became vassals of the Ottoman Empire in the the fifteenth century. They succeeded in uniting in 1859 in the wake of the Crimean War and gained full independence and the retrocession of the Dobruja region in 1878, becoming what came to be known as the the "Kingdom" (Rom. *Regat*) of Romania. Following World War I (WWI), Greater Romania was established, which included all of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia in addition to the core territories now called the "Old Kingdom."

The study will also include Bukovina, which was under Austrian rule from 1775 to 1918, and Bessarabia, which was part of the Russian Empire from 1812 to 1917, because these provinces were an integral part of the Principality of Moldavia for most of their documented history and are therefore also relevant to our analysis (map 1).

Time Framework

This study will try to take into account surname-like nicknames and surnames used by Jews in the Old Kingdom territories from the sixteenth century during

an extensive four-hundred-year period until the end of WWII, when a large part of Romanian Jewry was annihilated. More exactly, the *terminus ad quem* is 1944, marking the end of the war in Romania, followed shortly thereafter by radical changes in Jewish life under Communist rule and the beginning of mass emigration to Israel.

This specific year was chosen not only because thereafter Romanian Jewry diminished drastically in absolute numbers but also because the new conditions under the Communist regime radically changed its socioeconomic, religious, intellectual, and political composition and institutions, putting an end to its relatively free development. An example of the changes that occurred after 1944 is the phenomenon of interfaith marriages, which were fairly infrequent before WWII (4,145 according to the 1942 Jewish census)[14] but greatly increased after it, significantly affecting the naming patterns, and especially the surnames pool, of Romanian Jews.

In order to provide complementary data, this study will go beyond the above territorial and time frameworks and occasionally present surnames of Romanian-born Jews who had left the country in different periods for such destinations as the Land of Israel and North and South America.

Style Conventions and Transliterations

Names of personalities will be given with their official spelling in the language of origin. Names of organizations and titles of written works or newspapers will be given in the original language, followed by an English transliteration within parentheses. Quotes from Romanian sources will be given in English; the original quotes appear in footnotes.
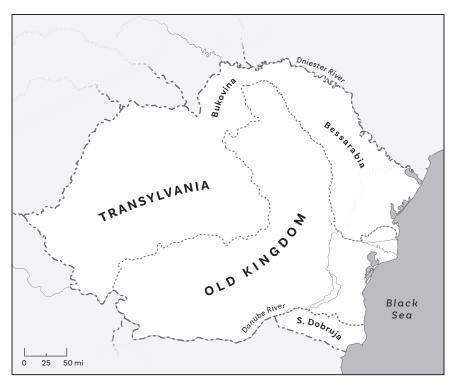
Romanian surnames that are subject to linguistic analysis will be given without quotation marks, followed by the English translation—when there is one—also within parentheses.

Names of countries, regions, and geographic features will be given in English when they have a traditional English equivalent (e.g., Romania, not România; Bessarabia, not Basarabia; Dniester, not Nistru); the same is true for names of places outside Romania (Warsaw, not Warszawa) as well as for the main cities in Romania (Bucharest, not Bucureşti). Names of towns and villages in Romania, however, will be given with the Romanian spelling, including diacritics. Whenever a place-name has a traditional English equivalent, it will be given within parentheses only at the first mention of the place in the text.

Historical and other specialized terms will be explained in a glossary at the end of the study. Etymological references will be given in italics.

Brackets will be used for completing lacunae.

14. Benjamin, *Evreii din România*, 2:97.

MAP 1. Greater Romania within the post-WWI borders (shows the dividing lines between the Old Kingdom and Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Southern Dobruja)