



37th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

Handout

517 Years of Jewish Presence in Brazil:
Practical Tips & Tools for Genealogical Research

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Historical Introduction

Genealogy Research in Brazil is a relatively new science, particularly Jewish Genealogy, however in the last years the number of interested people is growing, not only for the sake of pure research but also for discovering ancestors which may guarantee the right for a second citizenship in countries like Poland, Portugal and Italy.

First Jews arrived in Brazil as "Conversos" (Anussim), in the fleet of Portuguese Admiral Pedro Alvares Cabral, the Discoverer. Since then, Jewish presence became relevant along the centuries, concentrating today in 13 of the 26 States, numbering some 120,000 people, mostly in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Porto Alegre.



Simplified Chronology

1500 - Luso-Brazilian Crypto-Judaism

1630 - 1654 - first Jewish community of the Americas, in Recife

1808 - Opening of the Ports – very few had remained of crypto-Judaism in Brazil.

Migratory currents from England, Alsace and Morocco

1810 - Moroccan Jews arrive in considerable numbers to the Amazon and Pará, in the beginning of the Rubber Cycle, going up the Great River as far as Iquitos in Peru.

1870 - Franco-Prussian War motivates the arrival of Jews from Alsace-Lorraine taken from France by the Germans. German and English Jews arrive in Rio and São Paulo

1900 - Baron Hirsch founds the colonies of Philipson (Santa Maria) and 4 Brothers (Erechim) through the Jewish Colonization Association.

1910 - Small nuclei in the North, Bahia and Rio, and sparse immigrants in several points of Brazil.

1920 - Increase in Jewish immigration, post-World War I, coming from Poland, Romania, Germany, Austria, France and Belgium. Urban concentrations in Rio & São Paulo, small communities in the hinterland.

1933 - refugees from Germany, Austria and Italy, generally with high schooling and specialized professionals.

1945 - War refugees and Holocaust survivors

1956 - Refugees from Egypt after the Suez Canal War.

1970 - Jews migrate to nobler regions of cities. Small inland communities disappear.

Jewish Population in Brazil

1914-1918 – 5-7 thousand

1920 – 15 thousand

1940 – 55,563

2017 – 120,000

Total Emigration to Brazil

1872-1949 - 4,555,000 (1.75 % Jews)

% of Immigrants in Jewish Population

1980 – 31.47 %

1991 – 22.32 %

Jewish Immigration to Brazil

1872 – 1929: 42,316

1930 – 1939: 22,452

1940 – 1949: 8,512

Total 1872 – 1949: 73,280

Practical Tips & Tools for Genealogical Research in Brazil – References

Jewish Organizations

Israelite Confederation of Brazil

<http://www.conib.org.br/comunidades>

Addresses of all 13 State Jewish Federations

The Brazilian Jewish Historical Archive - AHJB

was incorporated into the Jewish Museum of São Paulo (MJSP). Probably the most complete Jewish Archive in Brazil.

Cdm@museujudaicosp.org.br

55-11-3088 0879

Instituto Cultural Judaico Marc Chagall specializes in Jewish History in Rio Grande do Sul State, including the Colonies established by the JCA 1 century ago.

Rua General João Telles 329

Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul

@icjmc rs icjmc@hotmail.com

55-51-3019-4600

Museu do Holocausto de Curitiba

has data on Shoah survivors, specially in the southern state of Paraná.

www.facebook.com/MuseuShoaCuritiba/

Instituto Cultural Judaico Brasileiro Bernardo Schulman. Library and historical files on the Paraná State Jews. saraschulman@gmail.com

Arquivo Historico Judaico de Pernambuco – Files on Pernambuco State Jews, home of the first synagogue of the Americas.

tnkaufman@gmail.com

IHIM – Instituto Histórico Israelita Mineiro – Jewish History of Minas Gerais State 55-31-3226-7848 ihimmg@outlook.com
Cemeteries

The JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR)

Brazil (30 cemeteries, 23679 burials)

Vilar dos Telles Cemetery, 4210 burials

Porto Alegre - 2 cemeteries, 2610 burials

Vila Rosaly, 2 cemeteries, 13611 burials

Books in Portuguese with Genealogical Interest (listings)

DICIONARIO SEFARADI DE SOBRENOMES, FAIGUENBOIM, GUILHERME - CAMPAGNARO, ANNA ROSA – VALADARES, PAULO, includes New Christians, Converts, Marranos, has 12,000 surnames and 17,000 entries.

BENCHIMOL, Samuel. Eretz Amazônia – Os Judeus na Amazônia. Amazonas: Comitê Israelita do Amazonas, 1998.

MALAMUD, Samuel. Documentário. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1992.

MALAMUD, Samuel. Recordando a Praça Onze. Rio de Janeiro Kosmos, 1988.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Breve História da Sociedade do Cemitério Israelita de São Paulo. São Paulo, Scisp, 1989.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Campos – Ascensão e Declínio de uma Coletividade. Rio de Janeiro, Cemitério Comunal Israelita, 1986.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Documentos V. Rio de Janeiro: edição dos autores, 1994.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Sepulturas Israelitas. Rio de Janeiro: Centro de Estudos Judaicos, 1976.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Sepulturas Israelitas II. Rio de Janeiro, Cemitério Comunal Israelita, 1983.

WOLFF, Frieda e Egon. Sepulturas Israelitas III. Rio de Janeiro, Cemitério Comunal Israelita, 1987.

AVOTAYNU CD, now a database in AVOTAYNU Back Issues (1985–2011) the International Review of Jewish Genealogy. There are 58 entries for Brazil.

LDS did an extensive job in the National Archive in Rio de Janeiro, online in <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1932363>, Brazil, Immigration Cards, 1900-1965, Indexes and images of immigration cards created by Brazilian consulates in several countries of the world and presented to the port of entry by foreigners visiting or immigrating to Brazil. These records are in the National Archive in Rio de Janeiro. The indexes are published as they become available.

Government Archives

Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro
Passenger arrival records in Brazilian ports.
Covers roughly 1920-1960
Search tips: Sobrenome – Surname, Nome – given name, Buscar or Consultar - Search

Military Archives

Army
<http://www.ahex.ensino.eb.br/>
Navy
<https://www1.mar.mil.br/dphdm/>
Air Force
<https://www.facebook.com/cendoc.fab>
<https://www.facebook.com/Incaer-Instituto-Hist%C3%B3rico-e-Cultural-da-Aeronautica-1411859719109607/>

Private Archives

CBG – Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia
Av. Augusto Severo, 8

20021-040 Rio de Janeiro - RJ

Tel 55-21 2221-6000

Open for consultation on Tuesdays - 2-5 PM

Newspapers

O GLOBO has a new website holding all editions since the first in July 29, 1925

<http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com/>

Libraries

Biblioteca Nacional – National Library

Av Rio Branco 219 – Rio de Janeiro

The library is the official depository of all books printed in Brazil

Abroad – Organizations holding substantial references on Brazil

CJH - New York

Amsterdam Archives – Municipality (Dutch Invasion 1630-1654)

Portugal – Torre do Tombo - Lisbon

OBSTACLES TO JEWISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

All landsman societies and some relevant Jewish Libraries, Schools and some organizations in Brazil disappeared or merged in the last half-century. The decline of the Yiddish language contributed for this, as well as the natural geographical changes of the community. Even fires (Ostrowiec Landsleit) and a building collapse (Jewish Library) had affected the memory of Jewish institutions, not to mention the pure and simple discarding of papers and documents from entities that have been extinguished or merged with one another. Only more recently there has been a greater interest in preserving the memory of the community.

In the 90s the Brazilian Society of Jewish Genealogy – SBGJ published some editions of a rich Bulletin – Gerações (Generations), fortunately still available in several libraries, in Brazil and abroad. It seems the society is no more operating.

Another relevant obstacle may probably be the Portuguese language, as not all people speaks English; most of the relevant literature and web pages are also in Portuguese. If any difficulties arise in your research work on Brazilian Jewish

Genealogy, please let me know, so I can gladly help you. See my contacts above.

Web Resources holding data on Brazil

ancestry.com
findmypast.com
passengerlists.de
familysearch.org
jewishgen.org
The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Jerusalem (CAHJP)
<http://cahjp.nli.org.il/>
Archives of the Joint Distribution Committee
<http://archives.jdc.org/explore-the-archives/searchable-lists.html>
Ellis Island and other Ports of Immigration in transit to/from Brazil
www.libertyellisfoundation.org/passenger
<http://www.stevemorse.org/>
244 entries on Brazil, in Yizkor Books and Trade Directories
<http://genealogyindexer.org>
Baron Hirsch Colonies Descendants
<http://firs8.wixsite.com/judeus-da-colonia>
<http://www.amazoniajudaica.org/167563/Documenta-o>

Brazil, Immigration Cards, 1900-1965

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1932363?collectionNameFilter=false>

FGV – Getulio Vargas Foundation
<http://cpdoc.fgv.br/acervo/arquivospeessoais/consulta>
National Library
http://acervo.bn.br/sophia_web/

Civil Servants of the Federal Government
www.portaltransparencia.gov.br/servidores/Servidor-ListaServidores.asp

Online phonebooks
www.102busca.com.br/busca/home.asp
www.telelistas.net/

Communities on facebook.com
Descendentes de Judeus de Ostrowiec
Polonia Judaica Brasil

Author: Israel Blajberg, 1st Generation Brazilian born of Polish descent (1945). Freelance writer on Jewish Genealogy, History & Travel. Author of 2 books on Jewish Brazilian Soldiers since the Discovery in 1500.