



NAMES ANALYSIS REPORT Montefiore Surname Meaning & Origin

There are many indicators that the name **Montefiore** may be of Jewish origin, emanating from the Jewish communities of Spain and Portugal.

When the Romans conquered the Jewish nation in 70 CE, much of the Jewish population was sent into exile throughout the Roman Empire. Many were sent to the Iberian Peninsula. The approximately 750,000 Jews living in Spain in the year 1492 were banished from the country by royal decree of Ferdinand and Isabella. The Jews of Portugal, were banished several years later. Reprieve from the banishment decrees was promised to those Jews who converted to Catholicism. Though some converted by choice, most of these New-Christian converts were called CONVERSOS or MARRANOS (a derogatory term for converts meaning pigs in Spanish), ANUSIM (meaning "coerced ones" in Hebrew) and CRYPTO-JEWS, as they secretly continued to practice the tenets of the Jewish faith.

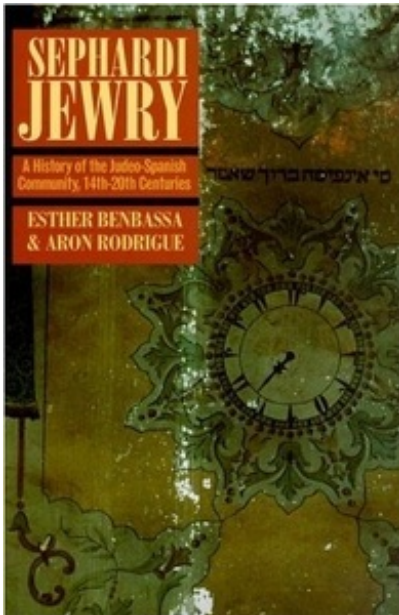
Our research has found that the family name **Montefiore** is cited with respect to Jews & Crypto-Jews in at least 8 bibliographical, documentary, or electronic references:



From the records of Bevis Marks, The Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London |

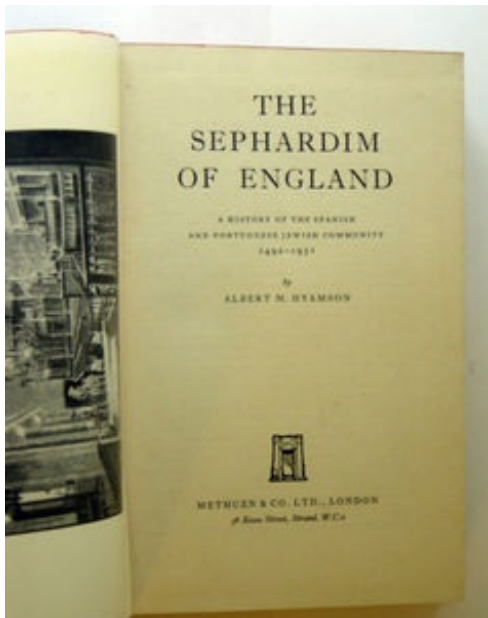
Bevis Marks is the Sephardic synagogue in London. It is over 300 years old and is the oldest still in use in Britain. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London

has published several volumes of its records: they can be found in libraries such as the Cambridge University Library or the London Metropolitan Archive



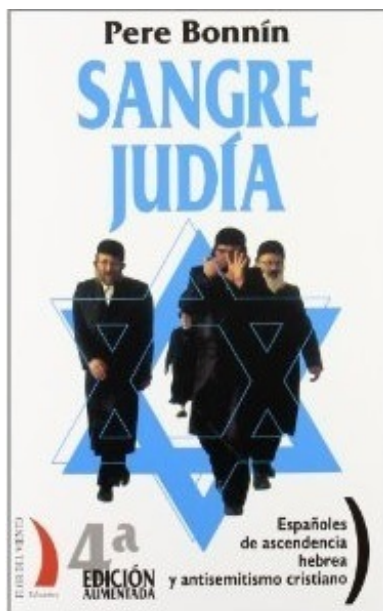
The Jews of the Balkans, The Judeo-Spanish Community , 15th to 20th Centuries, by Esther Benbassa and Aron Rodrigue |

This volume is a history of the Sephardi diaspora in the Balkans. The two principal axes of the study are the formation and features of the Judeo-Spanish culture area in South-Eastern Europe and around the Aegean littoral, and the disintegration of this community in the modern period. The great majority of the Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 eventually went to the Ottoman Empire. With their command of Western trades and skills, they represented a new economic force in the Levant. In the Ottoman Balkans, the Jews came to reconstitute the bases of their existence in the semi-autonomous spheres allowed to them by their new rulers. This segment of the Jewish diaspora came to form a certain unity, based on a commonality of the Judeo-Spanish language, culture and communal life. The changing geopolitics of the Balkans and the growth of European influence in the 19th century inaugurated a period of westernization. European influence manifested itself in the realm of education, especially in the French education, dispensed in the schools of the Alliance Israelite Universelle with its headquarters in Paris. Other European cultures and languages came to the scene through similar means. Cultural movements such as the Jewish Enlightenment (haskalah) also came to exert a distinct influence, hence building bridges between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi worlds



The Sephardim of England, by Albert M. Hyamson |

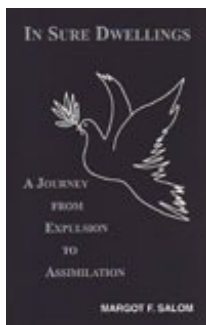
A history of the Spanish & Portugese Jewish Community, 1492-1951.



Sangre Judia (Jewish Blood) by Pere Bonnin. Flor de Viento, Barcelona, 2006.

A list of 3,500 names used by Jews, or assigned to Jews by the Holy Office (la Santo Oficio) of Spain. The list is a result of a census of Jewish communities of Spain by the Catholic Church and as found in Inquisition records. |

Pere Bonnin, a philosopher, journalist and writer from Sa Pobla (Mallorca), a descendant of converted Jews, settles with this work a debt "owed to his ancestors", in his own words. The book, written in a personal and accessible style and based on numerous sources, includes a review of basic Jewish concepts, Jewish history in Spain, and Christian Anti-Semitism. There is also a section that focuses on the reconciliation between the Church and Monarchy and the Jews, which took place in the 20th Century. In this study, Bonnin deals in depth with the issue of surnames of Jewish origin. In the prologue, the author explains the rules he followed in the phonetic transcription of surnames of Hebrew origin that are mentioned in the book. The researcher cites the Jewish origin, sometimes recognized and other times controversial, of historically prominent figures (like Cristobal Colon, Hernan Cortes, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra and many others) and links between surnames of Jewish origin with some concepts in Judaism.. The book also includes an appendix with more than three thousands surnames "suspected" of being Jewish, because they appear in censuses of the Jewish communities and on the Inquisitorial lists of suspected practitioners of Judaism, as well as in other sources. In the chapter "Una historia de desencuentro", the author elaborates on surnames of Jewish origin of the royalty, nobility, aristocracy, clergy, and also of writers, educators and university teachers during the Inquisition. Special attention is given to the "Chuetas" of Mallorca, the birthplace of the author.



In Sure Dwellings | A Journey From

Expulsion to Assimilation, by Margot F. Salom

In 1492, the last professing Jews in Spain were driven out of their beloved Sepharad where they had formerly been accepted as an important part of a thriving, pluralistic society for seven centuries of Islamic rule. The Christian Reconquista in the last of those centuries, spelt the beginning of the end for the Jews of Spain as well as for the convivencia (cooperation) that had long existed between Jew, Muslim and Christian in what has been called the "Golden Age". Many of the expelled Spanish Jews spread out around the surrounding Muslim lands where they found some refuge. Others found a brief hiatus of safety in Portugal. Decades later many of the expelled Jews travelled to the mercantile centres of the Mediterranean, northern Europe and the New World where they participated in the burgeoning trading empires of Holland, England the Italy. It is this fascinating history that the author has attempt to trace, using her ancestors as a paradigm. Realizing that this narrative of the western Sephardim is all but forgotten with the secularisation of a resolute assimilation process, she has written a story that both describes the history of the countries of her ancestors' settlement as well as her personal search through many of the lands of their diaspora, in an attempt to establish the journey of her ancestors as they travelled from fifteenth century Spain to nineteenth century Australia. It was in Australia that this lineage finally became established in a land of "sure dwellings" and where the inevitable outcome of assimilation was the loss of an ancient faith - a loss that has created the primary impetus for the telling of this story

Histoire des Juifs de Rhodes, Chio, Cos,(History of the Jews of Rhodes | Chio,Cos) by Professor Abraham Galante, published in Istanbul.

Abraham Galante (1873-1961) was first a teacher and an inspector in the Jewish Turkish Schools of Rhodes and Izmir. He conducted an active campaign for the adoption of the Turkish language by the Jews. In 1914, after the revolution of the Young Turks, Galante was appointed professor of Semitic languages and later of history of the Ancient Orient. His principal field of scientific activity was the study of the Jewish history in Turkey



The Circumcision Register of Isaac and Abraham De Paiba (1715-1775) from the Archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of Bevis Marks (London. England). |

This register is from the manuscript record preserved in the Archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London named "Sahar Asamaim" transcribed, translated and edited by the late R.D. Barnett, with the assistance of Alan Rose, I.D. Duque and others; There is also a supplement with a record of circumcisions 1679-1699, marriages 1679-1689 and some female births 1679-1699, compiled by Miriam Rodrigues-Pereira. The register includes surnames of those circumcised as well as the names of their Godfathers & Godmothers.

Sephardic Family Trees found in Jewish Encyclopedias by Mathilde Tagger |

Family trees found in The Jewish Encyclopedia (NY 1901-1904) or Encyclopaedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972)

Around the 12th century, surnames started to become common in Iberia. In Spain, where Arab-Jewish influence was significant, these new names retained their old original structure, so that many of the Jewish surnames were of Hebrew derivation. Others were directly related to geographical locations and were acquired due to the forced wanderings caused by exile and persecution. Other family names were a result of conversion, when the family accepted the name of their Christian sponsor. In many cases, the Portuguese Jews bear surnames of pure Iberian/Christian origin. Many names have been changed in the

course of migration from country to country. In yet other cases "aliases", or totally new names, were adopted due to fear of persecution by the Inquisition.

A common variation of **Montefiore** is [Montefiori](#).