

# Jewish Refugees and Stateless Persons from Greece and Turkey in Paris During World War II

by Laurence Abensur-Hazan

In a previous article, I described the Paris police headquarters archives. Included in its collection are some World War II Russian records (in French, “fonds de Russie”) that can be useful for genealogical research about Jewish families, especially those from Greece and Turkey.

Before the beginning of World War II, France enacted laws pertaining to foreigners within its borders. For example, a decree of July 20, 1939, reinforced the checking of foreigners and created a type of census. Individual registration forms, entitled “Census of foreigners without nationality or beneficiaries of the right of asylum” (in French, “Dénombrement des étrangers sans nationalité ou bénéficiaires du droit d’asile”) were used by local police headquarters around the country. Those registered also had to sign a declaration saying that they were refugees in France.

The Paris police headquarters archives holds several typewritten lists of names corresponding to the various situations of the foreign population at this time. Some lists concern beneficiaries of the right of asylum. Each list corresponds to an age category, as for example, “foreigner beneficiaries of the right of asylum between 20 and 26 years old who have an identity card” (in French, “Etrangers bénéficiaires du droit d’asile âgés de 20 à 26 ans inclus titulaires de la carte d’identité”). The forms supply full identity information arranged by country. One can find birth date and place, occupation, address and family situation (married, unmarried, widowed and number of children). At the Paris police headquarters are registrations for foreigners domiciled in Paris or its suburbs.

Another list holds the names of “foreigners without nationality and other foreigner beneficiaries of the right of asylum between 20 and 48 years old, including those expelled or proposed for expulsion” (in French, “étrangers sans nationalité et autres étrangers bénéficiaires du droit d’asile âgés de 20 à 48 ans inclus expulsés ou proposés pour une mesure d’expulsion”). In such cases, the reason for expulsion also is included e.g., a prison sentence.

A list of stateless persons also is available and here one may find Sephardi from Greece and Turkey born in the 1900s and 1910s (among many non-Jews as well). These lists can help to locate a person who cannot be found in other records. They also can help to find the composition of a family, as in the example of the Morahim family from Constantinople. Three men, all peddlers, Abraham born in 1917, Léon born in 1913 and Salomon born in 1914, appear on the list “Foreign beneficiaries of the right of asylum between 20 and 26 years old who have an identity card.” Turkish and unmarried, they lived at the same address in the Paris suburbs. With the same surname and born during a period of a few years, one may assume that they were brothers. Research

Police record for an immigrant from Turkey

in the population census of the city where they lived, kept in the Department Archives (“Archives départementales”) will allow us to check this hypothesis.

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