Jews of Lebanon: History and Records

by Alain Farhi

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As webmaster of the website Les Fleurs des Orient (see AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXI, No. 1, Spring 2005), I have come across many Jewish families from Lebanon who emigrated from that country in the wake of its several civil wars and wars with Israel. The genealogies of many families linked to the author's own family have been published on Les Fleurs. That information includes a document by the late Ferdinand Anzarouth (1917–97) entitled "Les Juifs du Liban," (The Jews of Lebanon) written a year before his death <www.farhi.org/ Documents/JuifsduLiban.htm>.

Some years later, the article came to the attention of Nagi Zeidan, a Lebanese businessman now living in Morocco. Zeidan was researching and writing a book on the Jewish communities of Lebanon. For that purpose, he had singlehandedly translated numerous Arabic newspapers, electoral lists and death records in order to create a large database and history of Jewish families who had lived in Lebanon until the 1980s. We published several excerpts (in French) of his work-in-progress on Les Fleurs website.

This paper presents the results of Zeidan's research. Initially, he collaborated with Mathilde Tagger, an expert in the publication of Jewish databases, and also with Isaac Sal

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massi and Cecil Dana both of whom have extensive personal knowledge of the Lebanese diaspora and are familiar with Hebrew and Arabic scripts and languages. Later, after surmounting the suspicions of some former Lebanese Jews about the motives behind his questions, Zeidan befriended many of them on Facebook, with the result that their collaboration created an ever-growing genealogical database of families. The death records database of the Jewish communities of Beirut has been published on Jeffrey Malka's SephardicGen.com website. The genealogical information is also partially available on Les Fleurs, with the usual restrictions of privacy for living people.

Lebanon: History and Geography

The country known today as Lebanon was carved out of Greater Syria, a country created following the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I and put under the French Mandate. During the time of the Ottoman Empire and prior to the 19th century, the area known as *Balad El Cham* extended from Turkey to the Gulf of Akaba. Around 1834,

with the first construction of roads following the invasion of Akko by Ibrahim Pasha's armies, namely the roads from Beirut to Damascus, from Damascus to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Jaffa, the Ottoman Empire created three main *vilayats* (provinces): Mount Lebanon, with the Mediterranean Coast from Akko to Turkey (with Beirut as capital); Syria, from Aleppo to the Red Sea on the west side of the Jordan river (with its capital at Damascus); and Palestine (with Jerusalem as the capital). In 1920, Greater Syria under the French was split again into Lebanon (referred to as "Le Grand Liban") and Syria. Lebanon achieved its independence in 1943.

Lebanon originally was a part of an area called Phoenicia in the Bible and in older sources. Its capital was Tyre, which became, during the Roman Empire, a small university town where Roman Law was taught. The Romans called it Beryte or Beritus.[1] Jewish prisoners were concentrated there after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. Kirtsen Shultz, a historian at the London School of Economics, claims in her book, *The Jews of Lebanon,* that the first Jews came to Tyre around 1000 BCE. Jewish residents were first recorded there during the time of King Solomon, when it is thought that Jews were involved in selling cedar for the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. It is more likely, however, as recorded in the Bible, that these trees were sold by Hiram, King of Srour (Tyre) without any Jewish middlemen.[2]

Little is known about the history of Jews in the area subsequent to that early presence except for some ancient tombstones found in the port area of Sidon (Saida).[3] Sidon and Tripoli were the main commercial centers of the Mediterranean coastline from the 14th century BCE.

In 1173, Saladin expelled the non-Muslims from Jerusalem and Safed. At the same time, Benjamin de Tudela, trav-

eling from Zaragoza to Jerusalem (1165–73), reported that about 50 Jews lived in Sidon, most working in the dyeing of threads and textiles.[4]

A census, conducted for the Ottoman authorities by Nabil Khalife in 1519, reported the presence of 19 Jews in Beirut, probably refugees from a plague that ravaged Jerusalem in about 1514. The 1905 *Jewish Encyclopedia* mentions five Iraqi Jews from the Levy family that had settled in Beirut and lived near Saint Elie Catholic Church and the Assaf Mosque (built by Emir Mansour Assaf between 1572 and 1580). In 1807, these five families built a synagogue named Mesguad Ladek (demolished in 1930). Many Ottoman Jewish immigrants moved into the area which became known as *Haret el Yahoud* (the Jewish Quarter).

At the beginning of the 19th century (circa 1832), the population of Beirut included 400 non-Jewish Europeans from Austria, France and Italy who had settled there for trading reasons.[5] In subsequent years, Jews from Akko (1809), Greece (1821–30), Egypt, North Africa (1837), Aleppo and Damascus (1900–48), Iraq and Iran (1900–55), and Ashkenazim from Europe (1833), also settled in Lebanon. The port of Beirut became important after the decline of Akko in the 19th century.

In June 1860, following civil unrest and rioting between the Christian and Druze populations in the towns of Barook, Deir el Qamar and Hasbaya, Jewish families from these cities moved to Aley and Damascus. Among them were the Dahan, Khabieh, Zalt and Zeitoune families. Those from Hasbaya came to be known as Hasbani.

In about 1869, members of the Picciotto family, wealthy traders and consuls in Aleppo emigrated from Aleppo and built a mansion for themselves in Wadi Abou Jamil, close to Beirut. This became the new Jewish Quarter of Beirut. By 1940, most of the residential houses of Haret el Yahoud had been converted for commercial use as their owners moved to Wadi Abou Jamil. Haret El Yahoud was destroyed in the 1976 Lebanon Civil War.

The scale of the immigration into Lebanon from Europe and the Middle East can be seen from the Montefiore censuses. These were conducted in 1846, 1861, 1884, 1885, 1889, 1893 and 1895. Jews lived in Aley, Barouk, Beirut, Deir el Qamar, Hasbaya, Mokhtara, Ramiche, Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre and Zahlé. After the construction of the Beirut-Damascus railroad in August 1895, Aley became a popular vacation and weekend destination for the Jews of Beirut. By the 20th century, the Jewish communities of Baalbek, Deir el Qamar, Hasbaya, Mokhtara, Ramiche and Tyre (where Jewish emigrants from North Africa bound for Safed settled in 1834 following a devastating earthquake in Safed) had vanished because of migration to the larger cities. The 20 families of Hasbaya left that town after riots following tension between the Moslem and Christian communities in 1860. Ramiche had only one remaining family, the Grunbergs, who owned a cheese factory there until 1911.

1932 Lebanese Census

In an official census conducted in 1932, many Jews from Damascus claimed to be Lebanese in order to be recorded in the civil records, hoping to be granted citizenship one day. The census recorded only 3,531 Jews in just six cities:

Beirut	3,060
Deir el Qamar	7
Maten	5
Sidon	384
Tripoli	51
Zahlé	24

The Beirut Jews lived in the following districts: Acharafieh (7 families), Bachoura (8 families), Dar El Muraïsseh (25 families), Marfa'a (108 families), Mina El Hossen (901 families), Ras Beirut (11 families), Rumeil (1 family), Saïfi (14 families), Zukak El Bulat (14 families). Wadi Abu Jamil, part of the Mina El Hossen electoral district, had the highest concentration of Jewish residences, businesses and institutions (schools, synagogues and so forth).

Sidon (Saida)

Zeidan states (from undeclared sources) that approximately 20 Jews lived in Sidon between 1289 and 1291 when the Egyptian Mamelouk armies conquered the town. By 1489, the number had dropped to fewer than 10. At the time of the Ottoman census of 1519, 36 Jews lived in Sidon, the increase probably due to immigration of Sephardim from Spain. The families that came from Italy in the 18th century were called Franco. They were mainly wealthy merchants and traders. The first Franco family arrived in about 1700.[6] An earthquake destroyed the city on October 30, 1768, after which many Jews fled to Haifa. A cholera epidemic in May 1813 sent more Jews to Beirut.

Ohel Jacob, the first synagogue in Sidon, was built in 1850 and opened with 250 members. According to the Montefiore census of 1855, 453 Jews lived among 5,000 Moslems and Christians. Riots between Moslems and Christians in the mountains of Lebanon (1860) caused many Jews to move to Sidon, but the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 started a massive emigration of Jews to Egypt from all over the Ottoman Empire. A few even had ventured to Brazil by the turn of the century.

After the beginning of the French Mandate following the fall of the Ottoman Empire, several bomb explosions, not directed toward the Jews, frightened the Jewish population nevertheless; by the end of World War II, only a few Jewish families remained in Sidon. During the Lebanese civil war, their number dropped to 40 and by 1985 none was left. Only the Jewish cemetery remains as proof of their former residence. For Sidon, the numbers are as follows:

Table 1. Jewish Families in Sidon

Year	# Families	# Persons
922	1	
1110	60	
1173		20
1289		19
1291		20
1498		9

Year	# Families	# Persons
1519		36 men
1521	20	
1750	20	
1830	25	
1838		625
1839		373
1850		250
1852		600
1855		453
1858		600
1861		700
1866		589
1893		604
1901		750
1907		918
1908		781
1914		888
1925		352
1932		348
1956		1108
1975	40	
1984		3
1985		0

Zahlé

A few Jewish families migrated at the end of the 19th century from Damascus to this small agricultural town in the Bekaa valley. A Katri family lived there from 1902 to 1911. In 1932, the Abraham, Faour, Katri and Kataifi families also lived there. They remained until the 1960s, but did not establish a synagogue, school or cemetery in the town.

Montefiore Censuses

From 1839 to 1876, Sir Moses Montefiore commissioned censuses of the Jewish populations of Alexandria and the Holy Land—which included the area now called Lebanon. The 1839, 1840 (Alexandria only), 1849, 1855 and 1866 censuses have been placed on the Internet by the Montefiore Endowment and can be consulted openly at www.montefioreendowment.org.uk/census. Work is continuing on the 1875/6 census. The 1866 and 1875 censuses did not cover Beirut and Sidon.

Lebanese Records for Jewish Residents

A list of all the Jewish names of Lebanese citizens can be compiled from census records and electoral rolls. The earlier censuses were conducted by a state agent in the presence of the *mokhtar* of each city or area. The mokhtar, a civil servant with duties like the mayor of a city, presumably knew all his constituents personally and had to certify the accuracy of the censuses. The censuses recorded everyone living in the country, while the electoral lists included only the Lebanese nationals.

In local Lebanese Jewish folklore, only three families, the Dana, Hana and Mana, were considered ethnically Lebanese; all the others were considered immigrants. In fact, those families also started as immigrants from Akko, Lithuania and Tunisia, but had lived in Lebanon for so long that no one remembered their origins. This folklore is based upon the fact that the three family surnames rhyme in Arabic.

From 1925, under a free trade and customs agreement, Lebanon and Syria were run separately but as part of an economic union between the two countries. Syrian nationals who came to Beirut were never granted Lebanese nationality automatically. Under that union, abrogated by Syria in 1950, Lebanon occasionally gave citizenship to Syrian immigrants from Damascus, but denied it to those from Aleppo. The favoring or discrimination was based upon proximity to or distance from Beirut. Beirut and Damascus are like the "Twin Cities" in Minnesota; Aleppo is much further away. No direct legal path to citizenship existed; the authorities granted it only as they saw fit—and in practice only to a few resident businessmen—non-Jews as well as Jews.

After creation of the State of Israel in 1948, Syria stopped issuing passports to Jews and many Jewish Syrian citizens already residing in Lebanon suddenly lost their passports. Stateless Lebanese residents could buy foreign passports and become Iranian or Panamanian nationals, but these passports carried no right of abode in the issuing countries. Lebanon, like many other Arab countries at the time, issued *laisser-passers* to its stateless Jews for a one-way trip out of the country.

At the height of a population explosion following the immigration of the refugees from Aleppo in 1950–52, the Jewish community of Lebanon numbered about 10,000 people. Later, many emigrated to Israel, Europe, North and South America as well as to Asia and Australia. This was mostly for economic reasons and was seldom due to religious or political persecution. The Lebanese civil wars accelerated the exodus. An article published in the Lebanese paper *Al-Nahar* in 1995 claimed that the Jewish community had been reduced to 4,000 by 1971. Between 1975 and 1980, several Jews, including the president of the Jewish community of Beirut, were kidnapped for ransom and often murdered by various gangs.

According to some observers, the number of Lebanese Jews who voted for candidates representing minorities in the 1970's elections may not have exceeded 1,500. In 2009, the electoral rolls included about 9,000 Jewish names, even though many had died or emigrated.[7] The discrepancy between registered voters and living residents may lead one to suspect that such lists may have been used for electoral fraud. In 2005, the list for Deir el Qamar included 100 names, but only one person voted—a blank protest vote. Currently, uncorroborated Lebanese sources put the post-1984 Jewish population at 200, most living in hiding.[8] According to Jewish sources, that number should be fewer than 30, many married to Christian or Muslim partners.

The Jewish community of Lebanon reached its greatest expansion, fame and glory during the French Mandate. At that time, Jews owned newspapers, banks, international trading companies, real estate companies as well as many small businesses in Beirut and smaller cities.

Size of the Jewish Population

Estimates of the Jewish population during the 20th century vary widely. Before the first emigration wave of 1948 to the mid-1950s, the Jewish community of Beirut is said, by some sources, to have numbered about 25,000. Tagger estimates the figure at only 5,000, Shultz at about 14,000 and Salmassi at fewer than 10,000. No formal records of the exact number of Jewish residents exist. Death records, however, were well recorded and are maintained to this day by the Jewish Community of Beirut.

The following table offers brief details of the growth and emigration of the Jewish population over the centuries.

Table 2. Growth and Emigration of the Jewish Population in Lebanon Over the Centuries

Numbers compiled by Nagi Zeidan based upon various documents from newspapers and other sources.

Year	Population
922	1 family in Sidon
1173	50 - source Benjamin de Tudela
1519	19 men - Census Nabil KhalifeE
1799	5
1824	15 families (about 95 individuals)
1830	25 families (about 150 individuals)
1832	200
1840	25 families (about 150 individuals)
1846	250
1849	29 families (Sir Montefiore Census)
1861	About 1000
1884	995 (61 Ottoman nationals: 5 men and 26 women
1885	1,061 (553 men and 508 women)
1888	1,464 (723 men and 741 women)
1889	1,500
1893	2,083 (282 Ottoman nationals: 143 men and 139 women)
1895	889
1900	2,500
1922	About 1.000 families
1925	3,500
1932	3,060 (1437 men and 1623 women).
1956	5,000
1976	60
1980	20
1982	95
1984	25 families in East Beirut
1986	50 individuals
2001	100 individuals in Lebanon
2004	About 73 individuals in Lebanon
Oct. 2006	About 35 individuals in Lebanon
2012	Not known

Family Names. The following is a list of surnames for Beirut families.

Sephardic surnames are Abadi, Abouhab, Abraham, Addissi, Ades, Ajami, Alalou, Albamnes, Alfie, Alwan, Amranian, Antebi, Anzarouth, Araman, Arazi, Argalgi, Armouth, Askenazi, Attar, Atttieh, Azar, Azoury, Bagdadi, Balaciano, Ball Y, Ballaila, Ballas, Bari, Baruch, Barzillai, Bassal, Battat, Bazbaz, Beda, Behar, Bekhor, Bencol, Benisti, Benjamin, Benjuoa, Berakha, Bercoff, Bigio, Blanga, Bochi, Bodek, Bondi, Boucai, Braun, Btesch, Dana, Darwiche, Dayan, Daye, Ddelbourgo, Dichy, Diwan, Dominioue, Douek, Doumani, Durzie, Elia, Eliachar, Elkayem, Elmaleh, Elneka Ve, Eskenazi, Esses, Fakes, Farhi, Ferem, Gabbay, Grego, Guer (Le), Guindi, Habboba , Halawa , Haddad, Hadid, Hakim, Halabi, Hallak, Hamadani, Hamisha, Hanan, Hanono, Hara, Harari, Hasbani, Hassoun, Hassouni, Hazan, Hefez, Helouani, Jajati, Jammal, Jamous, Jmal, Juda, Kachi, Kalach, Kamhine, Kamkhaji, Karaguilla, Karkoukli, Kassar, Kattan, Khafif, Khasky, Khayat, Khbuzo, Khedoury, Khedrieh, Krayem, Laham, Laniado, Lati, Lawi, Levy, Lisbona, Lizmi, Mamieh, Mann, Marcos, Maslaton, Masri, Masrieh, Mawas, Metta, Mhaddeb, Mizrahi, Moghrabi, Molkho, Moralli, Mouchon, Mouaddeb, Moussalli, Nahmoud, Nahon, Nahoum, Namer, Obersi, Ozon, Pariente, Perez, Pessah, Phlosophe, Picciotto, Pinto, Pqliti, Pariente, Rabih, Rouben, Salmassi , Saad, Saadia, Sabban, Safadi, Safdieh, Safra, Sakkal, Saleh, Salem, Sananes, Sankari, Sarfati, Sasson, Sayegh, Scaba, Sidi, Sofer, Srougo, Srour, Stambouli., Sutton, Tabbakh, Tager, Taragan, Tarrab, Tascheh, Tauby, Tawil, Tayar, Telio, Totah, Toubiana, Yedid, Zavarro, Zaafarani, Zaroukh, Zeitoune.

Ashkenazic surnames are Adler, Albert, Apppelrot, Bernstein, Buchbinder, Doubin, Froumin, Glazer, Gold, Goldberg, Goldman, Green, Greenberg, Israel, Katz, Koslovski, Kougel, Krouk, Lehrer, Lerner, Lichtman, Loubelchik, Loubliner, Margolis, Moise Dr, Perlin, Rappaport, Rediboim, Reinich, Rogovsky, Romano, Rosenheck, Rosenthal, Rosenzweig, Samsonivich, Shkolnik, Sopher, Steinberg, Tauber, Tesler, Toyster, Turkieh, Vinacour, Weinberg, Ziberberg, Ziezik, Zirdok.

From Sidon, we have the following family names. Acher, Araman, Balaciano, Barzilai, Bassal-Levy, Benesti, Boukai, Chamoun, Cohen, Liniado. Dana, Diwan, Essysie, Ghershon, Hadid, Isaac, Kattan, Khabieh, Khalili, Khayat. Khodary, Laoui, Levy, Lozieh. Mann, Mansour, Nigri, Politi, Salem, Simantov, Srour, Yehuda, Zeitouni.

Origins of Jewish Families

One can derive the country of origin of some families from the electoral lists and censuses.

Family name	Declared Birth Place	Real Origin
Abadi	Aleppo	
Alfieh	Beirut	Damascus
Allouan	Beirut	
Apelrot	Lublin	Poland
Azrial	Jerusalem	Greece / Bulgaria
Balaila	Damascus	Damascus
Bellelli	Alexandria	Alexandria
Benisti	Sidon	Sidon
Bercoff	Jerusalem	Poland
Charles	Beirut	
Cohen	Aleppo	
Cohen	Manisa, Turkey	
Corcos	Beirut	Morocco
Dana	Beirut	Tunisia via Akko

Family name	Declared Birth Place	Real Origin
Darwich		Sidon
Dichy	Beirut	
Ferbol		
Franck	Eisenstaedt	Austria
Gebra	Aleppo	Aleppo
Goldenthal	Zanzibar	Zanzibar
Greco	Aley (Lebanon)	Greece
Halfoun	Adana	Turkey
Jabés		Egypt
Kalach		Alep
Kaminsky	Odessa	Ukraine
Khezbo	Beirut	Damascus
Kugel	Simferopol	Ukraine
Levy	Odessa	Ukraine
Levy	Sidon	
Lisbona	Damascus	Damascus
Lusca	Poland	Poland
Mann	Beirut	Lithuania
Menache	Istanbul	Turkey
Moghrabi	Beirut	Morocco
Perez		Grèce -Alexandrie
Philosophe	Istanbul	Turkey
Pikovsky	Jaffa	Russia
Pilov	Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Salame	Damascus	Damascus
Salem	Ain Kini (Lebanon)	Greece
Sasson		Baghdad
Shalom	Aleppo	Aleppo
Srour	Tripoli	Deir el Qamar
Tabach	Iskandaroun	Syria
Vogelman	Shumen	Bulgaria
Zeitouni	Sidon	Deir el Qamar
Zeller	Modena	Italy

Jewish Schools in Lebanon

Local communities created Hebrew schools. In Beirut, the first opened in June 1878 near Haret el Yahoud. In July 1878, a local newspaper, *Lissan el Hall*, reported that the school was located at a site facing the sea at the Place des Canons (now Place des Martyrs) off la Rue de Damas. It also reported that its students came from Alexandria, Baghdad, Beirut and Damascus. The principal was Rabbi Isaac "Zaki" Cohen who was born in Aleppo in 1828 and died in Alexandria in 1904. He was assisted by his two sons, Selim and Raphael.

L'Ecole de l'Alliance Israelite Universelle opened its first school in Lebanon around 1878. In 1888, 60 students were enrolled and were taught English, French and German as well as Arabic and Hebrew. In 1896, 96 boys and 102 girls were enrolled with six teachers (four men and two women). In 1926, a third school, Ecole Selim Tarrab, was established. Later, L'Alliance took it over. The first Alliance school in Sidon opened in 1902.

Beirut Cemetery

The Jewish cemetery of Beirut is located in Ras El Nabee. The first burial recorded was for Rabbi Moise Yedid-Levy who died in 1829. In 1857, the Ottoman government, seeking to enlarge the Beirut to Damascus road, moved several tombstones and relocated them amidst older ones. When the original cemetery became too small for its 150-tombstone capacity, it was expanded and now has 3,308 tombstones, the inscriptions on 133 of which are illegible. The cemetery was on the front line between the fighting factions during the civil war of 1980–87 and, although rockets and shelling damaged several tombstones, the cemetery was respected and is kept as such, although without any regular maintenance.

Cemetery records are written in registers with entries in French and Arabic. Dates given refer either to the Hebrew or the Gregorian calendars. The records were translated by Nagi Zeidan with the help of Mathilde Tagger, Isaac Salmassi and Cecil Dana who had personal knowledge of the people and families of Lebanon. The databases are now available online with both French and English versions on SephardicGen.com, at (English version) <www.Sephardicgen.com/databases/BeirutCemeterySrchFrm.html>; (French version) <www.sephardicgen.com/databases/BeirutCemeterySrchrmFR.htm>.

Sidon Cemetery

The death records of the Sidon cemetery are not yet on the web.

Electoral Lists

Zeidan has had information from copies of the electoral lists of 1983 and 2009 transcribed to French in a spreadsheet format. Included are the names of members of the family with their dates and places of birth, as well as the electoral district of their residence. Because the list includes living people, no effort has been made to publish online although the information for many families already on the Les Fleurs website has been updated to reflect the newly discovered information. The usual rules of privacy have been applied to living people (i.e., no personal data is visible to the general public).

Synagogues of Lebanon

The first known synagogue in Beirut, Mesguad Ladek, was built in about 1807. It was demolished in the 1930s in order to build a new road leading to the Parliament and a hotel. Only one of 19 Jewish schools, religious schools and synagogues survives today. The Magen Abraham Synagogue (built in 1920) currently is being restored by the Lebanese Jewish community, the local government and the Hezbollah party, with funding from former Lebanese bankers in Geneva, Switzerland. The following websites and Facebook pages have been created to report on the progress:

Chief Rabbis of Lebanon 1799–1921

From	To	Rabbi	Birth	Death	Burial	Comments
1799	1829	Moïse Yedid-Levy		1829	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	
1829	1849	Raphael Alfandari		1849	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	Likely as many tombstones are not readable
		Aharon Yedid Levy		1871	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	son of Moise
1849		Youssef Isaac Mann			Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	Likely as many tombstones are not readable
1859	14 Jul 1865	Abraham Laredo	Tetouan	14 Jul 1865	Saida	Born in Tetouan, Morocco
		Nathaniel Acher Corriat	Oran	ca 1870	Oran, Algeria	Born and died in Oran Algeria
		Zaki Cohen	1829	1904	Alexandria	Born in Aleppo
		Menashe Ezra Sutton	1822	1885	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	May have been buried in Aleppo as he was chef Rabbi of both Communities
		Jackob Bukai	Saida	1900	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	
		Acher Nathaniel Corriat	Oran	Alexandria		
		Haim, Eliahou Dana	1842	13 Dec 1903	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	Born in Acco - son of Eliyahou son of Isaac son of Youssef
		Moise Yedid-Levy		7-Apr-17	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	son of Aharoun son of Moise Wakil (deputy) Hakham Bashi
		Haim Dana	Saida	11-Apr-28	Ras El Nabaa, Beirut	son of Mordehai son of Youssef son of Mordehai son of Youssef
1909		Nassim Danon (Effendi)	Turkey			Wakil (deputy) Hakham Bashi
	April 1921	Jacob Tarrab	Damascus			
April 1921		Chabetay Bahbout				First Chief Rabbi of Lebanon

Diarna Project: http://snipurl.com/23tnhck

https://www.facebook.com/BeirutSynagogue?v=app_2347471856

Lebanese Jewish Community Council: www.thejewsoflebanonproject.org. This website is not run and operated by the Jewish Community in Beirut but by Aaron Beydoun, an American Lebanese living in Beirut who took an interest in the Jewish community history.

Diaspora of the Jews of Lebanon

The Jews of Lebanon now are dispersed all over the world but remain in close contact via traditional communication links and more recently through the Internet with social network and channels like Facebook, Yahoo and Google and a private chat room called B400 <www.B400.com>.

They now are living in Australia, Israel, Europe, and the Americas (from Canada to Argentina). They remain a closely knit worldwide community with common customs in language (French and Arabic plus their local one), vernacular, culinary tastes, religious practices, family ties and in many cases financial success and wealth. Although travel to Lebanon may seem unlikely to many, they remain forever nostalgic for their homeland.

Entrance to Jewish cemetery in Sidon (Saida)

Notes

1. Ferdinand "Fred" Anzarouth www.farhi.org/ Documents/JuifsduLiban.htm.
2. St. Takla Coptic Bible: http://st-takla.org/Full-Free-Coptic-Books/FreeCopticBooks-002-Holy-Arabic-Bible-Dictionary/06_H/H_247.html.
3. Ferdinand "Fred" Anzarouth www.farhi.org/ Documents/JuifsduLiban.htm.
4. http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0d/Benjamin_of_Tudela.jpgTravel by Caravan
5. Nagi Zeidan.
6. A letter dated June 2, 1712, from a Mr. Achille, French consul in Sidon.
7. *L'Hebdo Magazine* May 1, 2009, p. 48
8. *Al Akhbar* April 12, 2012

Alain Farhi is a retired businessman with a passion for genealogy who started and manages The Fleurs de l'Orient website. He started tracking the Farhi families in the early 1980s and now covers many families of Middle East origin and beyond. The site currently numbers more than 150,000 families and 250,000 names. Farhi is one of the founders of the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and administrator of the Sephardic Heritage DNA Project at FamilyTreeDNA. Born in Egypt and educated in France, he chose the United States as his country of adoption. Farhi is a member of the Palm Beach, Florida, Jewish Genealogical Society.