



אל כבוד עורך מדור ויתילדו

הנידון: הגה"ק הרבי ר' שמחה בונים מפרשיסחא זיע"א

הכותב הוא מצאצאי הרבי ר' בונים זיע"א. כידוע שם משפחתו היה בינהארט לרבי ר' בונים היה לו בן יחיד וכמה בנות? שמי ישראל יצחק גורמן בן ר' נתן ז"ל בר' דניאל ז"ל בר' ישראל יצחק ז"ל בר' נתן ז"ל והיו לו מספר אחים אחד שמו ר' דב בערקע ז"ל שהיה חותנו של הגה"ק בעל "ישמח ישראל" מאלכסנדר זצ"ל ואחיו היה חותנו של הגה"ק בעל "תפארת שמואל" מאלכסנדר זצ"ל ור' נתן האמור ואחיו היו בני ר' יהודה גורמן ז"ל שהיה נכד הרבי ר' בונים ואיני יודע האין? אנו בני משפחת גורמן מפולטוסק מתיחסים ונקראים פין די חייצ'יקס על שם הסבתא שקראו לה חיה, היא היתאלמנה בצעירותה והייתה עשירה ולקחה לחתנים מורי הוראה וגדולי תלמידי חכמים סיפר הרה"ח ר' משה שלמה וייס ז"ל הנקרא משה בטלן שקראו לו שלמה ע"ש הסבא ר' שלמה שהיה מורה הוראה וחתן אצל חיה, וכן היה לה חתן גורמן נכד הרבי ר' בונים, וזה הסיבה שהרה"ק ר' יחיאל מאלכסנדר זצ"ל הישתדך פעמים עם שני אחים גורמן, הודה לך מאד אם תואיל בבקשה לעזור לי ולפנה את הבלתי ידוע לי ובכלל מי היו הבנות של הרבי ר' בונים וכמה הם היו, גורמן הם מאחת הבנות, ולמי הם היו נשואות וילדיהן מי היו.

בתקוה להענות במהרה.

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## 2. The letter of Israel Yitzchak Gurman

According to the letter (the green area in the family tree – Fig. 4 below), Yehuda Gurman, grandson of Rabbi R' Simcha Bunim, married a daughter of the rich widow Chaya of Pultusk and had at least three sons.

**Nathan Gurman** - he is the g-g-grandfather of Israel Yitzchak Gurman of Bnei Brak, Israel. Nathan had a son named Israel Yitzchak, and he had a son named Daniel, and he had a son named Nathan, who is the father of Israel Yitzchak Gurman of Bnei Brak.

**Dov Berka Gurman** - was the father of Dvora who was the wife of the Admo"r Yitzchak Israel Yerachmiel Dancyger, grandson of the Admo"r Shraga Faiwel. They were matched because of the bride's attribution to R' R' Simcha Bunim. The Admo"r Yitzchak Yisrael Yerachmiel was the one who had gathered the Chasidim of Alexander, which had come to be one of the two great Chasidic sects in Poland together with the Gur Hasidim.

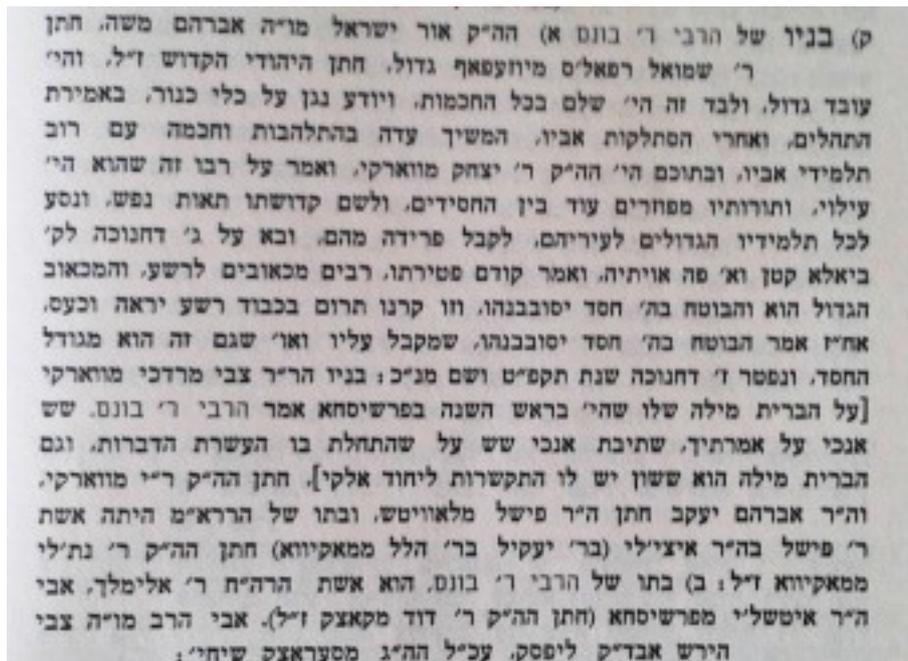
**Yaakov Gurman** - was the father of Sura Rivka, who was the wife of the Admo"r Shmuel Zvi Dancyger, the brother of Yitzchak Yisrael Yerachmiel, and was the mother of Yitzchak Menachem Mendel Dancyger, the last ADMO"R of the direct line of the Alexander Chasidim, who was murdered by the Nazis. In the Chasidic literature, Yaakov Gorman is described as a "mighty," that is to say, very rich, and is called Yaakov Avraham of Pultusk. Again, they were matched because of the bride's attribution to R' R' Simcha Bunim.

It is known that the brothers Yitzchak Israel Yerachmiel Dancyger and Shmuel Zvi Dancyger lived together in Pultusk for many years after their marriage, at the table of their fathers-in-law, and studied together.

In 2015, the writer of the letter, Israel Yitzchak Gurman, was interviewed in Bnei Brak. He said that the Gurmans in Pultusk were descended from the Rabbi Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Przysucha, but he did not know how. According to the letter, Yehuda Gurman is the grandson of Simcha Bunim, but it

is not clear which son or daughter is in question. Chasidic literature did not exactly relate to girls unless they married someone famous. In addition, until 1808 there were no birth records made in Polish towns. However, not all Polish entries are available for search on the Internet today (2016) and in the future more information may be found.

We began looking for records of R' R' Simcha Bunim's family in Chasidic literature, with the help of Rabbi Naftali Aharon Vekstein. The information collected from Chasidic literature about R' R' Simcha Bunim is shown in blue in Fig. 4. Since Rabbi Shraga Fajwel Dancyger, the founder of Alexander's Chasidism, was a disciple of R' R' Simcha Bunim, they matched their children to be married. In the literature of Alexander's Chasidim we see that Levi Yitzchak Dancyger married a daughter, whose name is unknown, of R' R' Simcha Bunim. They had no children. In addition, we found several more extensive records, such as in the book Simchat Yisrael, Chapter 1. "happy Light" page 36.



3. The R' R' Simcha Bunim's family in Simchat Yisrael book, Chapter 1. "Happy Light" by Yisrael ben Yitzchak page 36

Let us pause a bit to describe Rabbi Rabbi Simcha Bunim and his importance to Polish Chasidism. (He is the only person called Rabbi Rabbi by Chasidim.)

Chasidism arrived in Poland with R' R' Simcha Bunim [Shimon Bonhard] of Przysucha<sup>2</sup>. R' R' Bunim was involved in commerce, studying pharmacology, European languages and sciences. After his marriage, he approached Chasidism and became a student of the Visionary of Lublin.

R' R' Bunim used to wear European clothing even when he was with the Admo"rim, and said that he went to theatrical performances during his visits to Danzig [today Gdansk, Poland] for work.

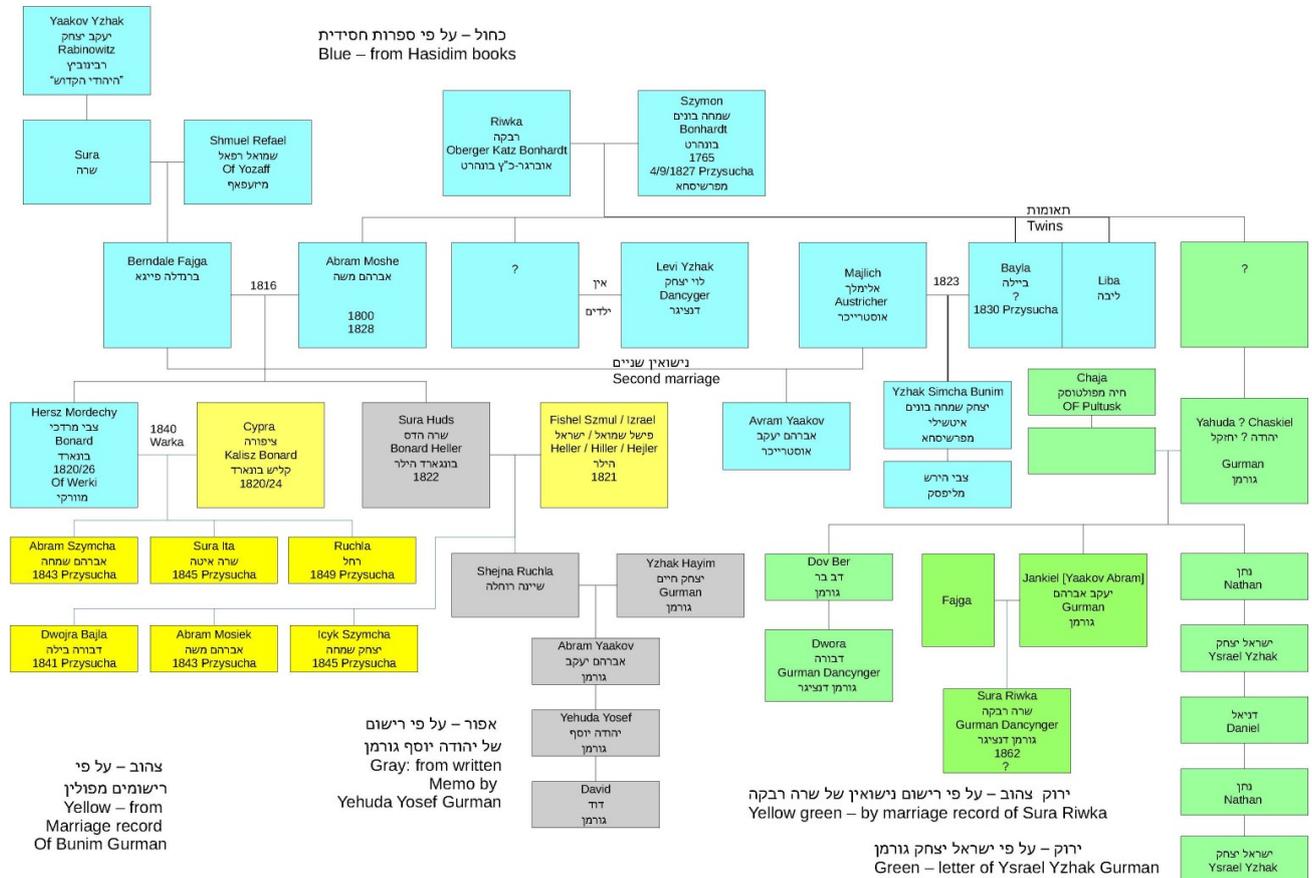
R' R' Bunim developed the "Przysucha method" that required the Chasidim to study the sciences and writings of the Ramba"m, which are not taught by most of the ultra-Orthodox Jews, so some of the Admo"rim attempted to boycott him, but failed. The subject of the boycott is remembered as one of many stories that have been collected about R' R' Bunim, in many books written about him and in some doctoral studies that were done about him.

R' R' Bunim had many disciples, among them two Chasidim who founded the two great Chasidic sects in Poland - Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter, the author of "Chidushei Harim" and the founder of Gur Chasidism, and Rabbi Shraga Fajwel Dancyger of Grojec. Rabbi Shraga Fajwel or his son

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simcha\\_Bunim\\_of\\_Peshischa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simcha_Bunim_of_Peshischa)

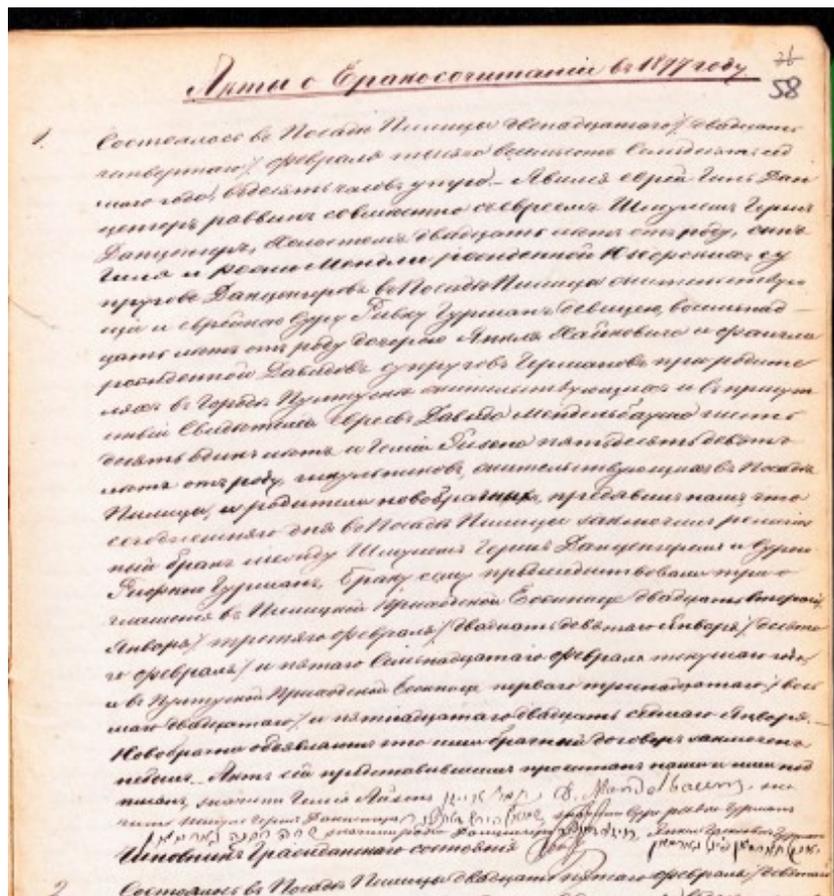
Rabbi Yechiel are considered to be the founders of the Alexander Chasidim (Alexander is a suburb of Lodz, Poland). The Alexander Chasidim mostly perished in the Holocaust, but the Gur Chasidim today has great numbers and follows the path of the Przysucha method. As described in the Sochaczewski family history, we are descendants of Rabbi Shraga Fajwel.

From this it is clear that blood relation to Rabbi Rabbi Simcha Bunim is a great attribution in Chassidic society. Here is the family tree of R' R' Simcha Bunim, which we built after much research:



#### 4. Family tree of Rabbi Simcha Bunim

In the continuation of the study of the Gurman family, we found the marriage record of Sura Rivka Gurman to Shmuel Zvi Dancyger:



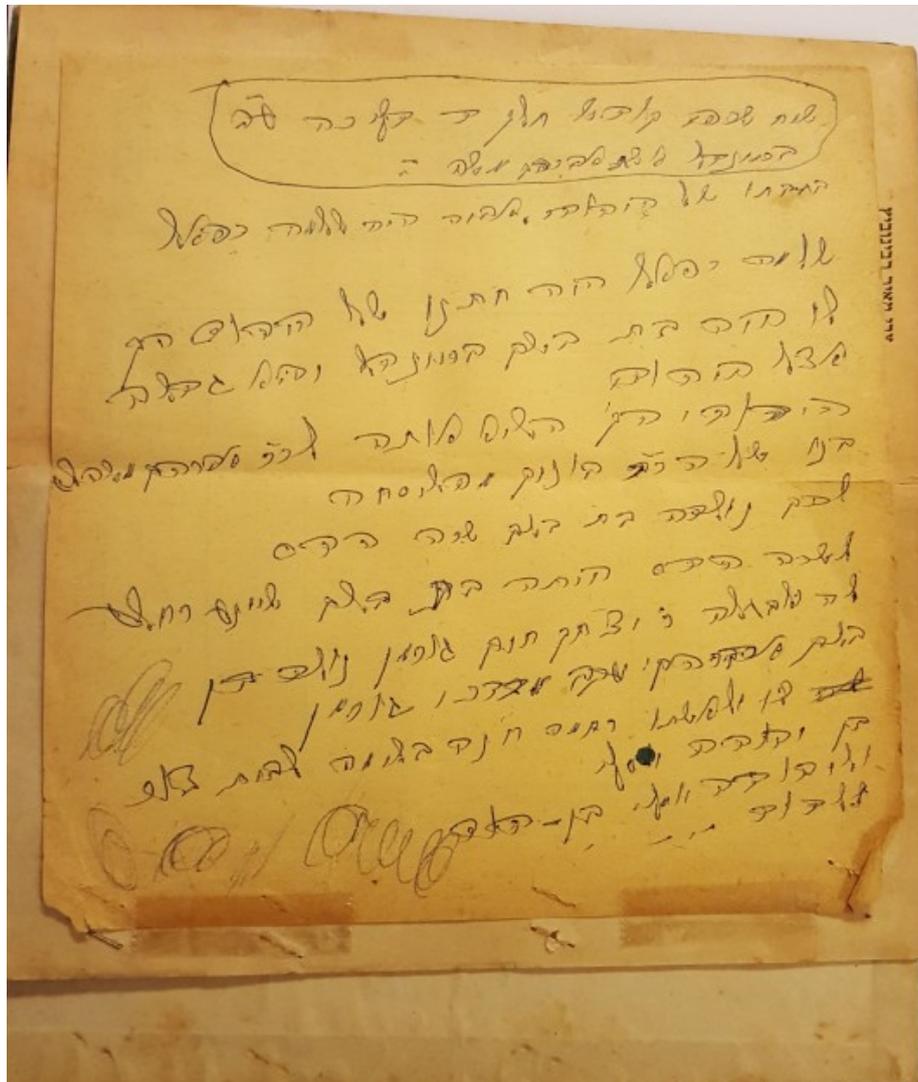
##### 5. The marriage of Sura Rivka Gurman to Shmuel Zvi Dancyger

The marriage was registered and completed on 12/24 February 1870 in Pilica. Personally present was [The Rebbe ADMO”R] Yechiel Danziger, the rabbi of the local community, and Shmuel Hertz Dancyger, a 20-year-old single, the son of Yechiel and Reizela Mindla, daughter of Yosef, the Dancyger couple, who live in Felitza, and Sura Rivka Gurman, 18, daughter of Yaakov Ben Chaya [Translator note: Son of Chaya??? A few lines down, he is registered as the son of Yechezkel, and I think that Ben Chaya is a mistake] and Feiga daughter of David, the couple Gurman, who lives in the city of Pultusk.....

The matter of "Ben Chaya" fits in with the letter of Israel Yitzchak Gurman, saying that the Gurmans are called "Fin de Chaykes" [From Chaya in Yiddish] after the grandmother Chaya. In other words, the family was called "of Chaya." The same Chaya is known in the history of the town of Pultusk as one of the first Jews to settle in the city, probably before or immediately after the Jews were allowed to live in the city in 1806.

After a while, more information was found about that Chaya, see below.

In order to continue our search, we established contacts with the Association of Pultusk Jews in Israel. They meet on Holocaust Memorial Day in the Cholon, Israel cemetery just south of Tel Aviv, where there is a monument to the residents of Pultusk who perished in the Holocaust, and they organize a tour of the city of Pultusk and the surrounding area every year. Through them we received names of Gurman families living in Israel and contacted them - initially by letters because not for everyone we had an e-mail or phone information. We met David Gurman in his home in Tel Aviv and he showed a page written by his father, Yehuda Yosef Gurman:



6. A record of the Yehuda Yosef Gorman family

It turns out that this is another branch of the Gurman family from Pultusk. The text states that Avraham Moshe, the son of R' R' Simcha Bunim, married Brandley (in 1826, in the birth record of her son Zvi Mordechai, her name is written as "Fajga Brandley Bonhardt"), the granddaughter of Yaakov Yitzchak Rabinowitz "the Holy Jew". They had a daughter named Sara Hudes [Hebrew: Hadas], who was known to have married a man called Fishel (the name Sara Hudes is not mentioned in Hassidic literature, only "the daughter of the RRA" M" – Initials of Rabbi, Reb Avraham Moshe"), and she had a daughter named Shajna Rachel. Shajna Rachel married Yitzchak Haim Gurman, and they had a son named Avraham Yaakov Mordechai who is the father of Yehuda Yosef who is the father of David Gurman from whom I received this record.

This family branch is shown in the drawing of the family tree (Fig. 4) in gray color. The branch match the written in Chasidim's books. But we have not yet found a connection between Bunim Gurman, the grandfather of our grandmother, and R' R' Simcha Bunim.

Another branch of the Gurman family was found by communicating with Moishe Miller of New York. He is researching his family tree and has found several generations of ancestors of his wife:

- 1 Yakov Gurman
- .....2 Chaya Hena GURMAN b: 1855 in Pultusk, Poland d: abt. 1920
- .....+ Yehoshua Moshe KON b: 1846 d: 24/1/1899 Lodz, Poland
- .....3 Devorah KON b: 1875 Pultusk, Poland d: 01/2/1927 Lodz, Poland
- .....+ Simcha Menachem ZAND b: 1873 Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Poland d: Perished in Holocaust abt. 1940
- .....4 Yisroel Yitzchok ZAND b: 12/4/1893 Lodz, Poland Residence: Lodz, Poland d: Perished in the Holocaust Abt. 1942 -  
deported from Lodz Ghetto to Chelmno on Sep 8, 1942
- .....+ Leah HEBER b: 11/8/1897 Lodz, Poland d: Perished in the Holocaust abt. 1943
- .....5 Mordechai (Motel) ZAND b: 21/3/1920 Lodz, Poland d: 01/12/1995 New York, NY, USA
- .....+Broncia BRAUN b: November 20, 1918 in Rypin, Poland d: November 01, 2011 Kew Garden Hills, NY, USA
- .....6 Lala ZAND b: Antwerp, Belgium
- .....+Joseph (Yossi) KOSCHITZKI b: 01/7/1947 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany d: 06/11/2010 Thousand Oaks, CA, USA
- .....7 Chaya KOSCHITZKI b: Brooklyn, NY, USA
- .....+Moishe MILLER

## 7. Gurman – Kon – Zand – Miller family

Moishe hired a researcher in Lodz, and the tombstone of Yakov Gurman's granddaughter was located. She is Devora Zand, nee Kon, daughter of Yehoshua Moshe (Sziye Mozes) Kon and Chaya Hena Gurman:



## 8. Devorah Kon gravestone

Here is buried an important and modest women

Her ways she directed in the way of Torah

Her husband hart trusted her

With all her body and soul

Wanted to do the wish of God

She was a branch of a trunk of glory

[In the song above, the first letters of the lines are chiseled a bit larger and create the name "Dvorah" in Hebrew. The lines are structured to have the same number of Syllables to become a song]

Daughter of the famous Chasid

R' Yehoshua Moshe HaCohen his memory be a blessing

Brother-in-law of the holy Admo"r of Alexander

author of the book "Glory of Shmuel" [Shmuel Zvi Dancyger]

Passed away aged 52 years, 28 Shevat 5787, May her soul held in the bundle of life

The ADMO"R Shmuel Zvi of Alexander is known to have married Sura Rivka Gurman, daughter of Yaakov Abram Gurman of Pultusk, Poland – see Fig. 5 above. And here we find that Yehoshua Moshe HaCohen, father of Dvorah, was a brother-in-law of the Admo"r. But how was he a brother-in-law? As will be shown, Yehosua Moshe Kon and R' Shmuel Zvi Dancyger married sisters – Chaja Hena and Sura Rivka.

On JewishGen, Moishe also found the 1916-1921 Lodz Registration card for Devora Kon's mother, Chaja Hena Kon. The Kon family was known to have been in Lodz, as supported by the death record of Devora Zand's father, Yehoshua Moshe, who passed away in 1899. Chaja Hena KON's Lodz resident card, dated 25 Jul 1919, accurately portrays her as a widow, born 1855 in Pultusk, to her father, Jakob Gurman.:

259

**Personenblatt. — Karta meldunkowa do spisu ludności.**

Zuname *Kon*  
Nazwisko

bei Frauen auch der Geburtsname u meżatek i nazwisko ojca *ur. Gurman*

Vorname *Chaja*  
Imię

Vorname des Vaters *Jakob*  
Imię ojca

Stand oder Berufsstellung *wdowa*  
Stan lub zawód

geboren am *1855* in *Pultusk*  
Urodzony d. w

Kreis *p. Warszawski* Religion *mojz*  
ziemi Wyznanie

Staatsangehörigkeit *polka*  
Przynależność państwowa

Ständiger Einwohner von *Pultusk*  
Stały mieszkaniec

Zugezogen am *25.7.1919*  
Przybył w d.  
von *Warszawa*  
z

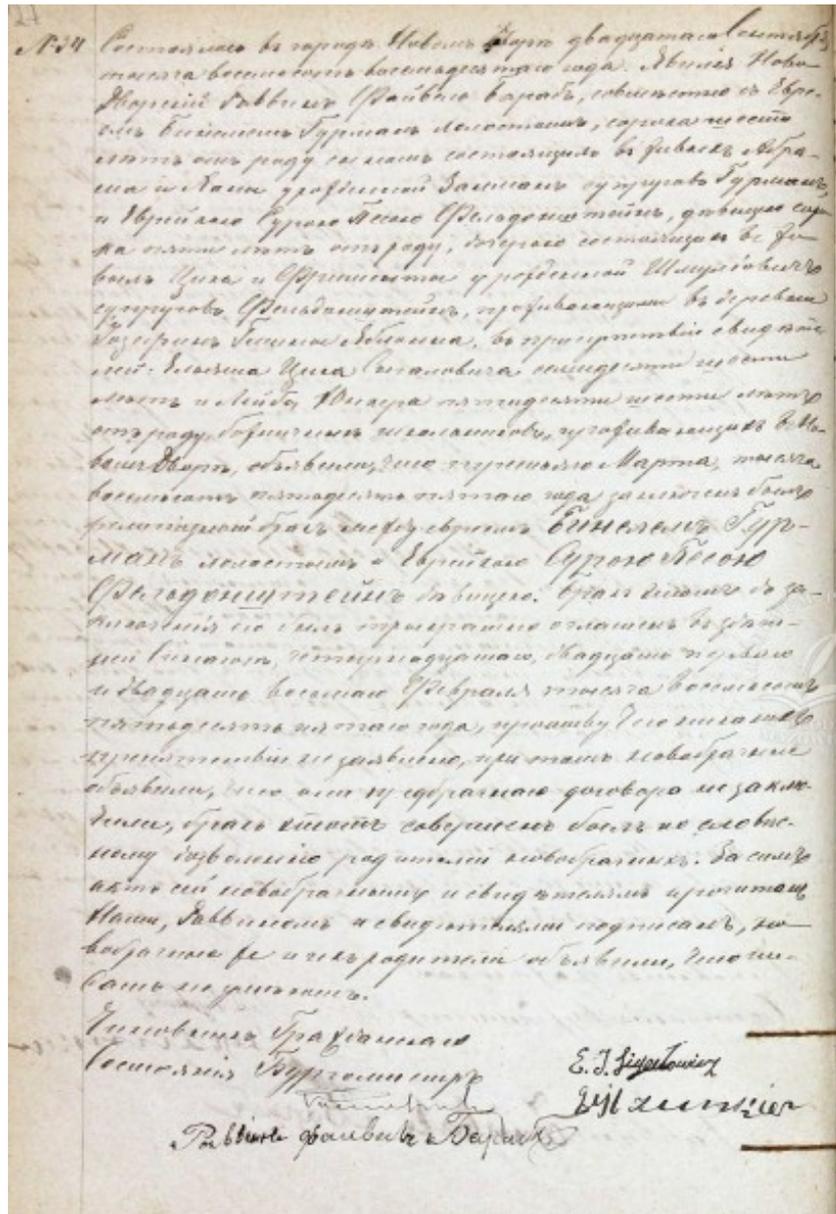
Tag des Umzuges Dzien prze- prowadzki	Wohnung (Strasse oder Platz) Mieszkanie (ulica lub plac)	Haus- Nr. doma	Steuer- bezirk Dziel- nica pod- atkowa	Bemerkungen Uwagi
<i>25/7/19</i>	<i>Polnoce</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>V</i>	
	<i>Solna</i>	<i>8</i>		

### 9. Registration of Chaja Hena Kon nee Gurman as resident of Lodz

Kon is a Russian version of Cohen, as there is no H in the Russian language. HaCohen means **The Cohen** in Hebrew. As per his tombstone in Lodz, his family name was HaCohen. Now we understand that Yehoshua Moshe HaCohen KON married Chaja Hena, a sister of Sura Rivka, both daughters of Yakov Gurman. That means, he and the Admo"r were brothers-in-law due to being married to sisters.

Therefore, Yakov Gurman listed in the first line of Fig. 7 is the same Yakov Abram Gurman of Pultusk, father of Chaja Hena and Sura Rivka.

The Polish researcher that helped our research found a marriage registration of Bunim Gurman, in which his parents were listed as Abraham and Chaya Gurman.



10. Marriage registration of Bonim Gurman and Sarah Pesia

Record number 34 of marriages in the city of Nowy Dwor in 1880: was held in the city of Novi Dwor on 20 September 1880. Present were Rabbi Fajwel Baharav, the rabbi of the Jews in Nowy Dwor and Bonim Gurman, a bachelor at the age of 46, the son of parents who are alive: Avraham Gurman and Chaya daughter of Zalman, And a Jewish woman Sarah Pesia Feldenstein, a single woman aged 45, the daughter of parents who are alive, Yitzhak Feldenzstein and Frimata Daughter of Shmuel, who live in the village of Yuzfin in the Yablona region. The two sides announced that a religious marriage between the Jewish bachelor Bonim Gurman and the Jewish single woman Sarah Pessia Feldenzstein took place on 13 March 1855. The couple announced that no financial agreement had been signed between them. The record was read to us and signed by the witnesses.

That is, the religious marriage took place 25 years before the official marriage with the state, and until then they were regarded by the law as bachelors! Since we found that the couple's daughter,

Bila Gurman, had married in the same city a few months earlier, we assume that the groom's parents did not want a bride whose parents are legally not married, and demanded that the bride's parents marry before the authorities. The town of Nowy Dwor is close to Pultusk in the north. Also a possibility is that they did marry formally, but as the record burned in the Pultusk fire of 1875, it did not count.

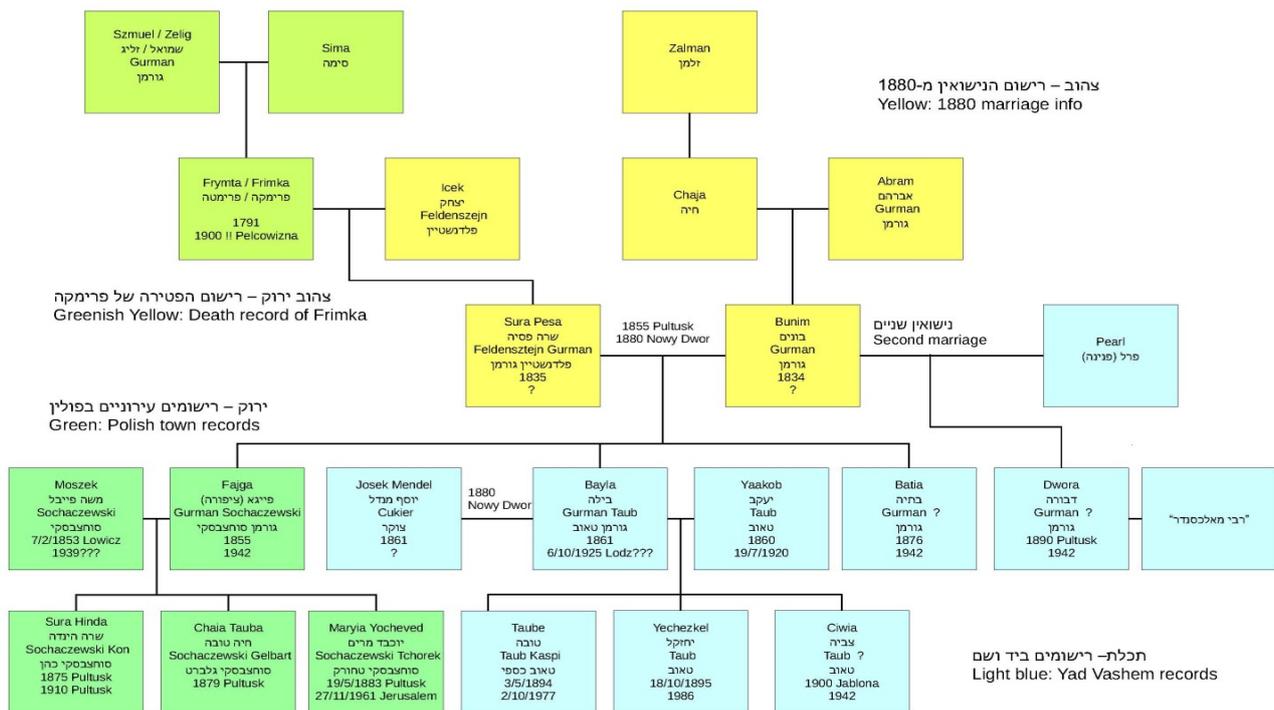
According to the marriage record, it was found that Bunim Gurman was born in 1834. If we remember that Simcha Bunim died in 1827, it is possible that Bonim Gurman was the first grandson or great-grandson to be born after the death of Simcha Bunim, and is therefore named after him.

It is also possible that Abraham is the brother of Yehuda Gorman (in the green highlight in Fig. 4, above)

In addition, it can be assumed that Yitzchak Haim Gurman (in gray, drawing 4) is the brother of the Nathan brothers, Dov Ber and Yaakov Avraham Gorman (in green, drawing 4)

But the big problem - the fire in Pultusk in 1875 - stops research in the city records. As noted, all records in Pultusk before 1875 have disappeared, and probably burned in the Great Fire that destroyed the city that year.

But there are other sources of information. As noted above, we found a memorial record at Yad Vashem regarding Fayga Gurman Sochaczewski, written by Tova Caspi, who describes Fayga as "the mother's sister." The listing was found in search of the name "Sochaczewski". Please look at the family tree Bunim and Sura Pesa Gurman in Pultusk as you continue reading:



משפחת גורמן בפולטוסק Gurman Family in Pultusk

### 11. The Gurman family in Pultusk



In a search in a web page that holds many photographs of graves<sup>3</sup>, we have found the photograph of Tova Caspi's gravestone bearing the names of her parents, Jacov Taub and Bella.



13. The gravestone on Tova Caspi's grave

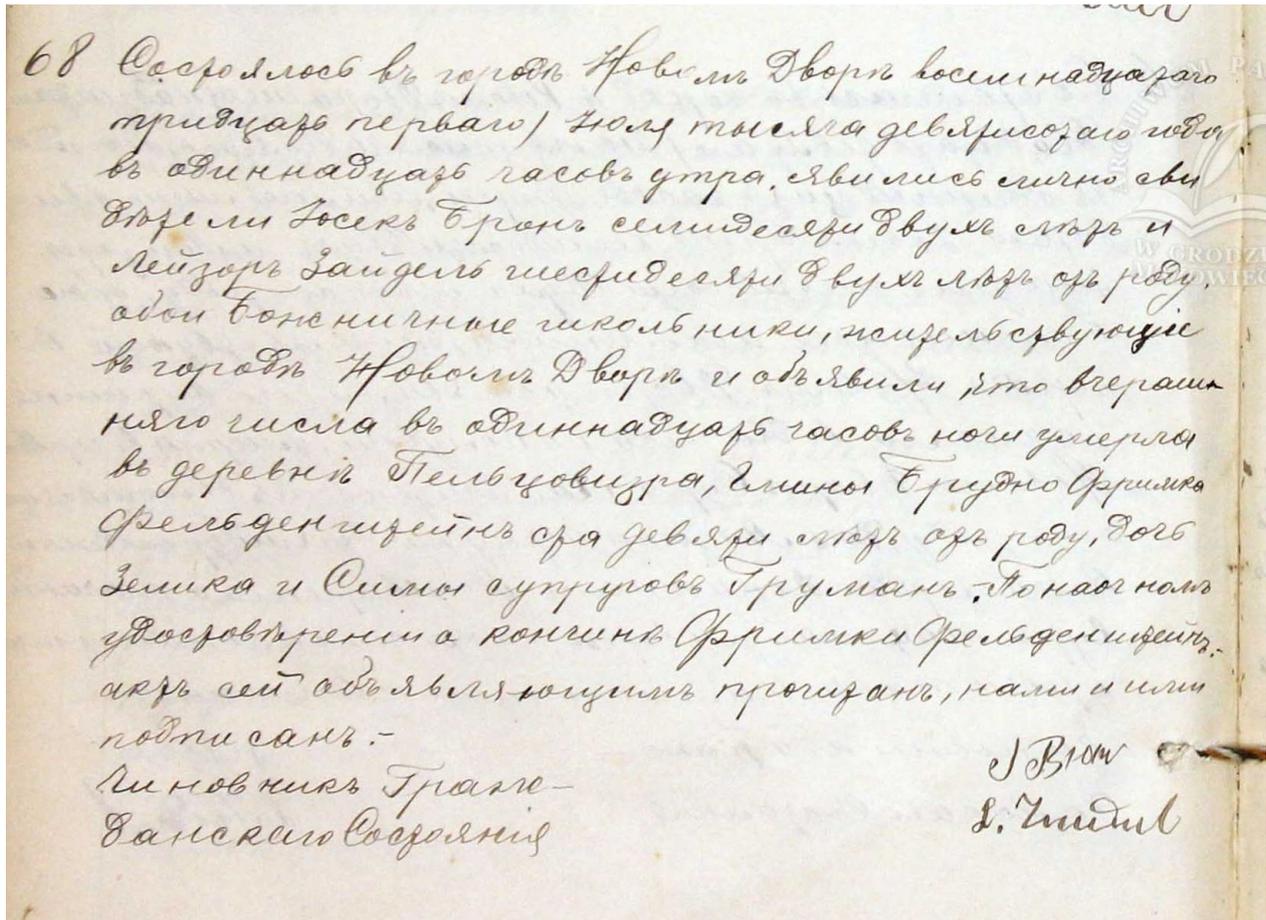
Yehezkel Taub, the brother of Tova Taub Caspi, is known as the last Admo"r of Yablon, and he organized the Chasidic aliya in which our family immigrated to Israel, buying land in Kfar Hasidim and Tivon, where the Chassidim settled. However, in light of malaria and the fact that they had no experience in farming, many left, among them our family. Yehezkel Taub emigrated to America, left the religion and became a successful construction contractor, and in the latter part of his life he returned to Israel and died in Israel. It is clear that he was the cousin of our grandmother Yocheved. Tova Taub Caspi lived in Kfar Hasidim and was married to Moshe Caspi. Their son Yaakov fell with the platoon of 35 in the War of Independence.

Then the Polish researcher discovered two marriage records from the town of Nowy Dwor in the Yablona region. It turns out that the sister of our great-grandmother, Bila Gurman, married Joseph Mendel Zucker! We now estimate that Bila Gurman and Jacob Taub were married in a second marriage after they were widowed or divorced – the first of their three children were born 14 years after the first marriage of Bila Gurman.

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3 BillionGraves.org

Another search found a death record of Frimka/Frimta, the mother of Sarah Pesia, Bonim Gurman's wife:



68 Осролось въ городъ Новомъ Дворъ восемнадцато  
тридцать первая) июля тысяча девятисотого года  
въ одиннадцатъ часовъ утра, явилась смерно свѣ  
дѣтели Иосифъ Бранъ семидесяти двухъ лѣтъ и  
Лейзеръ Зайденъ шестидесяти двухъ лѣтъ съ роду,  
обое божественныя школьники, нашедъ съвѣдѣн  
въ городъ Новомъ Дворъ и объявили, что въ раш  
нско мѣста въ одиннадцатъ часовъ ночи умерла  
въ деревнѣ Фельковизна, имени Фримка Фримка  
Фельденштейнъ съя девяти лѣтъ съ роду, дочь  
Зелика и Симы супруговъ Гурманъ. По наогномъ  
уасовѣренію кончимъ Фримка Фельденштейнъ,  
акръ сей объявленіюцимъ произанъ, нами или  
подписанъ.  
Личовникъ Грама-  
Дансканъ Осроленіѣ

J. B. B. B.  
S. Z. Z. Z.

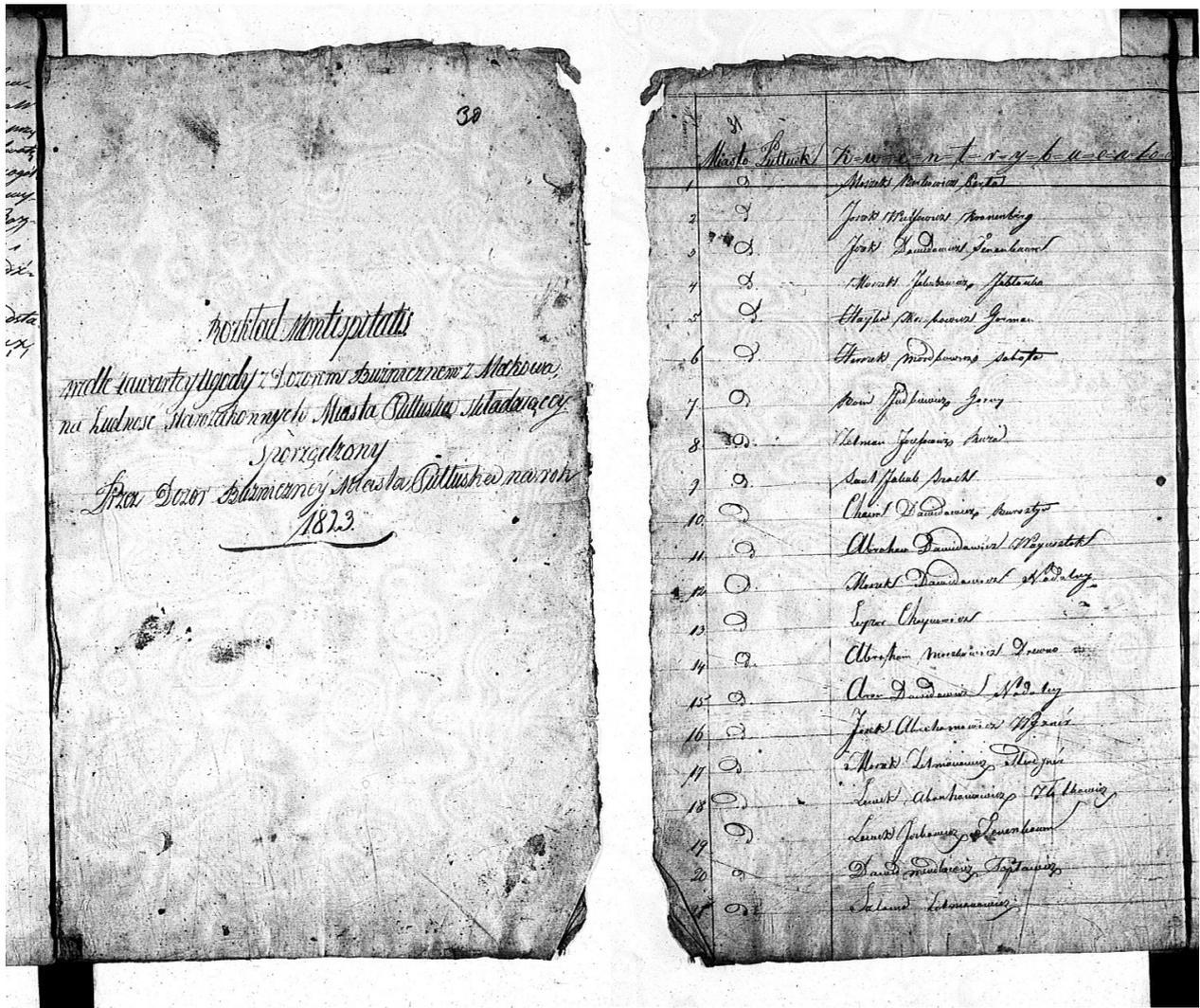
#### 14. Death registration of Frimka / Primta

**A record dated 18/31 July 1900 in the town of Nowy Dwor. Frymke Feldenstein, daughter of Zelig and Sima Gurman, died on 17/30 June, 1900, at the age of 109 (one hundred and nine years old!!!) in the Felkowizna neighborhood of the Brodno district**

According to this record Sarah Pesia Feldenstein Gurman was born when Frimta/Frimka was 44 years old, a possibility. But in light of the errors in the ages we found in other records, one can doubt the age of death.

Interestingly, Frimka's parents were also called Gurman. In other words, it is possible that the parents of Bunim Gurman and Sarah Pesia were relatives.

Information that came later in the study: A book that list Jews who paid taxes to the Jewish community in Pultusk was found. Interesting that tax records survived, while all town records were lost in the great fire.



15. List of taxpayers of the Jewish community in Pultusk in 1823

In line 5, Chaya Herszkovitz Gurman is listed. Obviously it was a widow named Chaya, because otherwise her husband's name would be written there. So we assume that this is the famous widow Chaya. Her father's name was Hersz (Herszkovitz = daughter of Hersz as is customary in writing names in Russia). It is clear that her last name was Gurman, but it is known that she had only daughters - and many members of the Gurman family from Poltosk claim that they descend from sons-in-law of that Chaya! So we assume that some or all of Chaya's daughter's grooms took upon themselves the last name of her late husband in order to have continuity to the name. It was quite common at that time when many people died at a young age.

In 2020 we were approached by a descendant of a Gurman family from Pultusk, who said that his family had a story that several grooms who married brides from the Gurman family took the name Gurman as a family name. So we have confirmation that our hypothesis about grooms taking the name is correct. From the information provided, a short family tree was built:

1 Szamo [Szlama?? Szamson??] GURMAN d. before 1823  
....+ Chaja Bat Hersz d. between 1831 and 1841 Paid tax as a widow in 1823  
.....2 Malka GURMAN  
.....+ Leib ??? → GURMAN  
.....3 Nosek [Mosek??] GURMAN b. 1825 d. 1891  
.....3 Bajla GURMAN b. 1831 d. 1886  
.....3 Chaja Sura GURMAN b. 1841 d. 1909  
.....+ Josef GOLDMACHER

16. A new branch of the Gurman family. The widow Chaja is listed in the second row.

The big problem is that changing the surnames, together with the absence of records from Pultusk dating before 1875, is probably an insurmountable barrier to the study of this branch of our family in the early 19th century.

In conclusion, perhaps temporary, there was no recorded connection of our family to R, R' Simcha Bunim. We assume, specifically according to the inscription on the tombstone of Yitzchak Aaron Sochaczewski [the brother of our grandmother Miryam Yocheved], stating that he is a descendant of the Admo"rim of Alexander, but not mentioning a connection to R' R' Simcha Bunim, that we must conclude that we are not descended from R' R' Simcha Bunim.

What we did find is a very large Gurman family. Many of them are descendants of R' R' Simcha Bunim.