

HEBREW/YIDDISH TRANSLITERATION GUIDELINES
FOR USE IN
KREMENETS VITAL RECORDS, YIZKOR BOOK & MATZEVA TRANSLATIONS

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24 August 2009

As we gain access to more and more records from Eastern Europe, we increasingly face the problem of transliterating surnames and given names from Hebrew and Yiddish to English. Each volunteer or professional working on various translation projects seems to use his/her own favorite system to convert to English, names that were written in Hebrew and/or Yiddish in the original documents. For many of us, this is not a problem; we can make the mental adjustment to alternative spellings. And, for on-line databases, a Soundex system deals nicely with spelling variations. However, if several different translators work on a single document (like a Yizkor Book translation), the name of a person may be spelled differently in different parts of the document and this can create confusion. It often falls to translation project Coordinators to impose consistency on how names are transliterated to English. Consistent use of a single transliteration system by all individuals working on a given project mitigates the problems, and reduces confusion.

We developed the transliteration system described in this document to help the translators and researchers working with the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP. Our reasoning process may be useful to other translation project coordinators, even if others do not adopt the particular schema we used.

The Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP is affiliated with Jewish Records Indexing – Poland (JRI-Poland). CO-OP translators are working on 15,000 vital records of Kremenets uyezd (1870-1907), almost 2,500 pages of Kremenets and Vishnevets *Yizkor* books, more than 4,000 *matzevot* (gravestones) from the historic Jewish cemeteries of Kremenets, Vishnevets, and Yampol (Ukraine), and other documents relating to Kremenets and surrounding towns.

Initially, we focused on the vital records, handwritten in Cyrillic on one side of the ledger page, and in a combination of Hebrew and Yiddish on the facing page of the ledger. The Yiddish portions of these records are what Alexander Beider calls “non-standardized Yiddish”, the Yiddish spelling used before 20th century linguists, led by Max Weinreich, developed a conventional standard spelling system for Yiddish. The Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP is extracting names and other information from these records.

Selecting a Transliteration System

Many problems encountered when transliterating personal and place names stem from the lack of explicit vowels in printed and handwritten materials; other difficulties arise from

errors introduced by the scribes who recorded the data. The Nostradamus website (<http://www.nostradamus.net/transliteration.htm>) has a brief, but useful description of some such problems. The site includes references and links to transliteration systems used by major American Jewish organizations; the most important are listed below, in the section titled “Other Transliteration Systems”.

The *Transliteration Guidelines* we adopted help us maintain consistency from one translator’s work to another as each transliterates names that appear in the Kremenets-area documents. In developing these Guidelines, we were faced with a choice among several different approaches:

- A *letter-by-letter approach* using unique letters for each non-Roman letter would help the researcher work backwards from English to the Hebrew or Yiddish and Russian (Cyrillic) spelling. ANSI standard Z39.25-1975, “Romanization of Hebrew” is an example of this approach. It has two variations, a “General Purpose” and a “More Strict” system. The General Purpose system is a viable starting point for our purposes, although it presents some problems in working backwards. A summary of the ANSI Standard is on the Web at <http://theochem.weizmann.ac.il/home/~comartin/ivrit/ansi.html>. An affiliated web page explains the differences between the two ANSI approaches (see <http://www.weizman.ac.il/home/~comartin/ivrit/>). The full ANSI standard is not available on the Web, but can be purchased directly from ANSI.

The *YIVO transliteration system* for Yiddish can help resolve some, but not all of these problems, as shown below. The YIVO system is described at <http://www.ibiblio.org/yiddish/library/>.

- *Formal phonetic transliteration* often uses linguistic symbols to indicate the way words would sound. Most non-linguists would have difficulty interpreting these phonetic symbols.
- A less formal *phonetic approach* tries to indicate how the name “sounded” at the time it was recorded, without using esoteric symbols. This approach requires some historical and linguistic knowledge. Fortunately, historical guidance is available from Alexander Beider’s research and publications.
- Use the *Biblical transliteration* of given names. Unfortunately, several systems of Biblical transliterations exist, but none help with surnames and place names.
- Use *modern Israeli Hebrew*. Modern Israeli Hebrew, which derives from Sephardic Hebrew, deviates significantly in pronunciation from the names recorded in 19th and early 20th century East European records. These records use Yiddish and Ashkenazic Hebrew. For a summary of the modern Israeli Hebrew system, see

Chapter 2 of “*A reference grammar of modern Hebrew*” by Edna Amir Coffin and Shmuel Bolozky; Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Evaluation of the available approaches leaves only two viable choices: *letter-by-letter* and a simplified *phonetic* system, but, as we will show below, these two approaches are incompatible. This incompatibility arises because the phonetic approach introduces letters that are not present in the original document. On the other hand, a strict application of the *letter-by-letter* approach has proved difficult, primarily because some English letters have more than one representation in Hebrew/Yiddish. Of the two, the *letter-by-letter* approach is preferable, but not perfect, because it can help researchers re-create the original spelling. As a result, the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP uses a transliteration system based on (but not identical to) the ANSI Standard.

Unfortunately, neither the “general purpose” nor the “strict” ANSI standard covers all situations encountered in the Kremenets records and documents.

- Most handwritten entries in the vital records of Kremenets lack explicit vowel markings. The ANSI standard does not provide sufficient guidance for the insertion of vowels in the recorded names.
- The Kremenets vital records are written in a mixture of Hebrew and Yiddish. Some names use Yiddish letter combinations that are absent from the ANSI standard: *double vav* for /v/, *vav-yod* combination for /oy/, *double yod* for /ey/ or /ay/, *aleph* for /a/ or /o/, and *ayin* for /e/.
- The “strict” ANSI standard uses characters unfamiliar to most laymen: underlined /h/ for *chet* (or, sometimes an *h* with a slash through the upper stem), /c/ for *kaf*, underlined /s/ for *samech*, /ph/ for *feh*, underlined /z/ for *tsadi*, and /q/ for *kuf*. It also uses /t/ for both *tet* and *tav*, and a reverse apostrophe for *ayin*.
- The “general purpose” ANSI standard remedies most of these problems, but uses the same Roman letter to represent different Hebrew letters: /v/ for *vet* and *vav*, /ch/ for *chet* and *chaf*, and /s/ for *samech* and *sin*, and both /tz/ and /ts/ for *tsadi*. It also uses /th/ for *tav*, but has no representation for *ayin*.

The transliteration system developed for Kremenets records combines the ANSI “general purpose” and YIVO systems to deal with these problems. Nevertheless, some transliteration problems remain.

- A *double-yod* with a *patach* (a horizontal line below the double yod) under it is pronounced /ay/, as in *aisle*. A *double-yod* without a *patach* is pronounced /ey/ as in *freight*. The *patach* is not written in most of the Kremenets records, however, even where it would be expected.
- The absence of the *dagesh* or the *mappik* and other indicators of sound in the records means that translators can not differentiate between *bet* and *vet*, *kaf* and *khaf*, *peh* and *feh*, *shin* and *sin*, and *vav* as a consonant or a vowel.

- The absence of vowel markings means that translators can not be certain what vowels to insert in the transliterations, except /e/ for *ayin* and /i/ or /y/ for *yod*.

Alexander Beider's book, *A Dictionary of Ashkenazi Given Names* (Avotaynu, 2001), helps us deal with these phonetic issues. It provides us with a consistent pronunciation and spelling schema for 19th century southwestern Ukraine. The phonetic system inferred from Beider's research also can be used for surnames and place names.

Thus, with a few exceptions, our *Guidelines* are based on the ANSI Z39.25-1975 General Purpose Standard for Hebrew, YIVO's transliteration schema for Yiddish, and Alexander Beider's book, *Ashkenazic Given Names*. Even so, we are unable to "work backwards" unambiguously from English to the original Hebrew/Yiddish that appears in the records. This is because some Hebrew/Yiddish characters are represented in our system by the same Roman letters: /v/ for *vet* and *vav*, /k/ for *kaf* and *kof*, /s/ for *samekh* and *sin*, and /t/ for *tet* and *tav*.

Details of the Kremenets System

The following sections present the transliteration system that our group has developed for Kremenets translations. Note that these are *guidelines*, not "rules". Transliteration from handwritten Hebrew/Yiddish to English has more exceptions than rules. Note also that I am not expert in any aspect of transliteration. I am learning as we go. So, in all likelihood, you may know transliteration principles unknown to our team. We rely heavily on the opinions of our translators/transliterators and others; as Coordinator, my role is more as an arbiter of our guidelines than a transliteration expert. I simply try to maintain some semblance of consistency.

Kremenets Transliteration System: The Alphabet

Our *Guidelines* for transliterating Hebrew/Yiddish to English begin with the letters of the Hebrew and Yiddish alphabets.

Aleph without kamets. Transliterate this as /o/ if it has *kamets* under it. Transliterate as /a/ if it lacks a *kamets*. Exceptions to this "rule" exist in our Given Names lists. (See the description of these and other name lists later in this document.) The exceptions are based on how the name sounded, as indicated by Beider's book and by transliteration of the Russian side of the ledger.

Bet/Vet. Transliterate as /b/ if it is the first letter or if it has a *dagesh*, or if it follows a "closed" syllable (usually a syllable that does *not* end in a vowel). Transliterate as /v/ if it is *not* the first letter and lacks a *dagesh*, or if it follows a vowel, or appears at the end of names. For example, the name *dalet-bet-vav-resh-heh* is Dvore; the *bet* is translated as a /v/. Since we also transliterate double *vav*, (*vav-vav*) as /v/, we can not always work backwards from English to the Hebrew or Yiddish spelling that appears in the records. Further, sometimes an internal *bet* is transliterated as /b/, as in the

name *dalet-aleph segol-bet-resh-yod-shin*, Dobrish. When vowel markings are absent, we usually can determine whether an internal bet is /b/ or /v/ by examining the name on the Cyrillic side of the vital records ledger.

Gimel. Transliterate as /g/.

Dalet. Transliterate as /d/.

Heh. Transliterate as /h/, unless it appears at the end of the name. Using guidance from e-mail correspondence with Beider, we transliterate a *final-heh* as /e/, corresponding to the Yiddish pronunciation in western Ukraine. This means that we transliterate both a *final-heh* and a *final-ayin* as /e/. As a result, we can not “work backwards” from English to the Hebrew or Yiddish spelling that appears in the records.

Vav. For given names, use /o/ or /u/, depending on how the name sounded, as indicated by Beider’s book. By examining the Cyrillic spelling on the Russian side of the vital records ledger, we usually can determine whether the letter should be /o/ or /u/, since the Cyrillic alphabet uses different letters for each vowel.

Double vav. Transliterate as /v/, not /w/, except where context or common usage requires a /w/. Consequently, the name *vav-vav-alef-kof-mem-alef-nun* is Vakman, not Wakman.

Vav-yod combination. Transliterate as the diphthong /oy/.

Zayin. Transliterate as /z/.

Zayin-shin combination. Transliterate as /zh/, as in *measure*.

Chet/Khet. Transliterate as /ch/, a guttural sound, as in Chanuka. More formal systems transliterate this as /h/ with a dot under it, or as an underlined /h/. Both of these versions, however, are difficult to type in standard American practice. Although Beider transliterates it as /kh/, we use the ANSI General Purpose Standard which transliterates *chet/khet* as /ch/ to differentiate it from *khaf*, which transliterates as /kh/.

Tet. Transliterate as /t/. Because we also transliterate *tav* as /t/. As a result, we can not work backwards from English to the Hebrew or Yiddish spelling that appears in the records.

Tet-shin combination. Transliterate *tet-shin* as /tsh/ to differentiate it from *tsadi-apostrophe*.

Single yod. Transliterate as a consonant (/y/) if it appears as the first letter of a name. Transliterate as /i/ if it appears in the middle of a name. Distinguishing between a handwritten *yod* and *ayin* at the end of a name sometimes is difficult because of handwriting variations in 19th century vital records. Usually we transliterate this end-of-name character as /e/. However, exceptions appear in our Given Names lists. These exceptions depend on how the name sounded, as indicated by Beider, and by the Cyrillic spelling on the Russian side of the vital records ledger. A notable exception occurs when an end-of-name character that looks like a *yod* actually is an abbreviation for *-yod-heh*. This abbreviation sometimes is used to avoid writing the name of G-d. In these cases, we transliterate an end-of-name *yod* as /-ye/.

Double yod. One may transliterate yod-yod several ways. From Yiddish, in the absence of explicit vowel marks, transliterate *-yod-yod* as /ay/ or as /ey/ (preferred). From Hebrew, in the absence of explicit vowel marks, transliterate *-yod-yod* as /ya/, /ye/ or /yo/. For given names, we can reduce our uncertainty about which vowel to use by consulting Beider's book, "A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names". For surnames, in the 19th- and early 20th-century vital records, the Cyrillic spelling on the Russian side of the ledger indicates how the name was pronounced when the record was created, and therefore gives us clues for transliterating it.

For example, consider the given name, *feh-yod-yod-bet-yod-shin*. Consulting Beider's book, we would transliterate this name as Fayvish, not Feyvish. Similarly, the name *bet-resh-yod-yod-nun-ayin* is Brayne not Breyne. For some given names, Beider indicates different pronunciation (and therefore different transliteration) for different geographic regions. In those cases, the Cyrillic spelling in the Russian side of the vital records ledger indicates how the name should be transliterated in the geographic region where the ledger was created.

For Hebrew/Yiddish surnames in the vital records, in the absence of explicit vowel markings, we rely on the Cyrillic spelling in the Russian side of the ledger. For example, we would transliterate the surname *bet-ayin-resh-nun-shin-tet-yod-yod-nun sofit*, as *Bernshteyn* or as *Bernshstayn*, depending on whether the Cyrillic spelling for the final vowel is *ey* or *ay*). In most cases, in the Kremenets records, we transliterate this name to *Bernshteyn* because the final Cyrillic vowel in the Russian side of the ledger is *ey*. Many other examples are in the given names lists and Indexed Concordance that we have created from the Kremenets documents. Those lists are available at <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets/web-pages/transliteration.html>

Kaf/Khaf. Transliterate as /k/ if the letter has a *dagesh*, or if it is the first letter of a name, or if it follows a closed syllable, as in *mem--lamed-kaf-heh*, Malke. Otherwise transliterate as /kh/ to differentiate it from *chet*. When transliterated as /k/, it will not be possible to "work backwards" since we also transliterate *kof* as /k/.

Lamed. Transliterate as /l/.

Mem. Transliterate as /m/.

Nun. Transliterate as /n/.

Samekh. Transliterate as /s/. We also transliterate *sin* as /s/, and, as a result, we cannot work backwards from English to the Hebrew or Yiddish spelling that appears in the records.

Ayin. Transliterate as /e/. Recall that we also transliterate a *final-heh* as /e/, and a final *yod* as /ye/.

Peh/feh. Transliterate as /p/ if it is the first letter, or if it has a *dagesh*, or if it follows a closed syllable. Transliterate as /f/ if it is *not* the first letter and lacks a *dagesh*, or if it follows a vowel. However, there are exceptions. For example, the name Fayvish, which was cited earlier in this document, often is written without a *dagesh* in the first letter. In these cases, we use Beider's book and examine the Cyrillic name in the vital records ledger to determine a preferred transliteration. In addition, sometimes there is a horizontal line above the letter. This indicates it is a *feh* and should be written as /f/.

Tsadi. Transliterate *tsadi* as /ts/, not /tz/, *except* for certain surnames where common English usage requires a /tz/ ending. Thus, transliterate *kaf-tsadi* as Katz, not Kats. But transliterate the name *yod-tsadi-khet-kof* as 'Yitschak', and the patronymic ending *-vav-bet-yod-tsadi* as /-ovits/, not /-ovitz/.

Tsadi-apostrophe. Transliterate as /tch/, as in *Tchaikovski*, to differentiate it from *tet-shin*. This conforms to the ANSI "general purpose", which allows /tch/ and /tsh/ for *tsadi-apostrophe*.

Kof. Transliterate as /k/.

Resh. Transliterate as /r/.

Shin or sin. Transliterate as /sh/, unless there is a documented reason to use a single /s/. Thus we transliterate the name *bet-ayin-resh-nun-shin-tet-yod-yod-nun* as *Bernshteyn*.

Tav. Transliterate as /t/.

The Kremenets Transliteration System: Name Endings

Some name endings require special mention.

Name ends with -lamed or -nun. In the vital records, when there is no vowel immediately before a final *nun* or final *lamed*, insert /e/ or /a/, depending on known English usage, and on the Cyrillic final vowel on the Russian side of the ledger. This deviates from YIVO standards which suggest that no vowel should be placed before

the final /n/ or final /l/. For example, transliterate the surname *gimel-vav-resh-nun* as *Goren*, not *Gorn*; and transliterate the given name *resh-khet-lamed* to *Rachel*, not *Rachl*. In each example, the YIVO standard would write these names without the final /e/.

Name ends with -alef-lamed. Transliterate as /-el/ unless a vowel is explicitly indicated. For example, the given name *shin-mem-vav-alef-lamed* is *Shmuel*.

Name ends with -yod-lamed. Transliterate as /-il/. For example, the given name *shin-yod-yod-nun-dalet-yod-lamed* is *Sheyndil*.

Name ends with -alef or -yod-vav. Many names in the vital records end in what looks like a yod, followed by either a short or long slash, top right to bottom left. If the slash is long, we have interpreted the *-yod-slash* combination as a handwritten *-aleph*, transliterated as /-a/. If the slash is short, we have transliterated the combination as /-ye/. Exceptions to these guidelines appear in the CO-OP's given names graphics files. Transliterations in the graphics files take priority over these interpretations.

Name ends with -heh. Names ending in *-heh* are particularly problematic. Beider indicates that in the areas of western Ukraine names ending in *-heh* probably were pronounced as if they were spelled with an /-eh/ or /-e/ ending, and he suggests using /-e/ to transliterate a final *-heh*. This would be consistent with 19th century Yiddish pronunciation, but differs from Sephardic and modern Israeli pronunciation, where the final *-heh* would transliterate as /-a/. We follow Beider's advice and use the /-e/ transliteration. For example, the male given name *mem-shin-heh* is *Moshe*; the female given name *bet-lamed-vav-mem-heh* is *Blume*.

Toponymic surnames ending in - samech-kof-yod. Transliterate as /-ski/, not /-sky/.

Other Common Names

The name alef-bet-resh-heh-mem sofit. Transliterate this as *Avraham* or *Abraham* depending on whether or not there is a *dagesh* in the *-bet-*. If the *-heh-* is not present, transliterate as *Avram* or *Abram*.

The name dalet-vav-dalet. Transliterate this as *Duvid*, not *Dovid* or *David*. However, if a *kamets* is explicitly written under the first *dalet*, transliterate the name as *Dovid*.

The name yod-ayin-kof-yod-bet. In the handwritten records, distinguishing between a final *-yod-bet* and a *-vav-bet* often is difficult. If the vowel is clearly a *-yod* transliterate the name as *Yakiv*. Otherwise transliterate it as *Yakov*. Do not

transliterate it as Yaakov with a doubled /-a/ ... unless there is clear indication that the /-a/ is doubled.

The name yod-tsadi-chet-kof. Transliterate this as Yitschak. If there is a *kamets* under the *-chet-*, then transliterate as Yitschok.

The name lamed-yod-bet. Transliterate this as Leyb.

The name mem-alef-yod-resh. Transliterate this as Meir.

The name mem-yod-chet-lamed. Transliterate this as Mikhel.

The name mem-shin-heh or mem-vov-shin-heh. Transliterate this as Moshe.

The name shin-resh-heh. Transliterate this as Sure, not Sara or Sarah.

The surname mem-resh-gimel-lamed-yod-vav-tav. Transliterate this as Margaliot.

Some final points

Double consonants. Don't use doubled consonants, unless they actually are doubled in the record. For example, transliterate the name *alef-vav-tet-yod-kof-resh* as Otiker, not Ottiker, unless a documented reason exists for doubling the consonant.

Always transliterate heh as h, even if it sometimes is silent. For example, transliterate the given name *aleph-heh-resh-nun* soft as Aharon, not Aron or Aaron

Place Names. Use the "Native" name as given in JewishGen's ShtetlSeeker, <http://www.jewishgen.org/ShtetlSeeker/loctown.htm>. This is the "local official name approved for use within the US Government by the US Board of Geographic Names (BGN)". Thus, the proper "native" spelling in English for our shtetl is *Kremenets*, but the Yizkor Book uses *Kremeniec*, *Krzemieńca*, *Kremenitz*, and *Kremenits* in different places. The Yiddish and Hebrew spellings are *kof-resh-ayin-mem-ayin-nun-yod-tsadi* and *kof-resh-mem-nun-yod-tsadi*, respectively.

Applications of the Guidelines

We have applied these Transliteration Guidelines to the various translation projects that the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP has developed. These include translating the vital records of Kremenets Uyezd (1870-1907), the Yizkor Books and Booklets published by the Kremenets Organization of Emigrants, more than 4,000 matzevot in the Jewish cemeteries of Kremenets, Vishnevets, and Yampol, and other genealogically important resources that relate to the Kremenets area and its Jews. We have produced several documents that display the variations we have found in individual given names, place names, and keywords. They are:

- Surnames: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Male Given Names: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Female Given Names: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Town Names: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Keywords, Occupations, & Social Classes: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Causes of Death: Hebrew and Russian, and their transliterations from the Kremenets vital records;
- Kremenets Indexed Concordance of Personal Names and Town Names: English transliterations of surnames found in various Kremenets documents, along with a locator for each name.

Except for the Indexed Concordance, these files contain actual images of the Cyrillic and Hebrew/Yiddish names and words extracted from the vital records and revision lists, along with the English transliteration or translation for each. All of the files are available on the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP website (<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets>), or from me (rondocor@earthlink.net).

A Note to Translators

As you transliterate names from the Kremenets vital records, Yizkor Books or other documents, please check your work against the names in our Master Surname Index and Given Names Lists. These will help you decipher and transliterate the handwritten names in the vital records. Names in these lists have been extracted from the records and books. Note that in the Master Surname Index, only the **bold-face** names have been edited to conform to these Guidelines. Unedited names appear in regular print and may not conform to the Guidelines since they have not yet been proofread. As new extractions are done, more names will be added. Also, as you work, you will encounter names that are not on the lists. In that case, please use these Guidelines to transliterate them.

References to other transliteration systems

Several sets of “standards” are available for transliterating non-Roman alphabets to English, a process called “romanization”. Here are references to some of the most important for Hebrew and Yiddish to English.

ANSI Z39.25-1975: Romanization of Hebrew is the US National Standard for transliterating Hebrew to Roman characters. Available at, <http://theochem.weizmann.ac.il/home/~comartin/ivrit/> and <http://theochem.weizmann.ac.il/home/~comartin/ivrit/ansi.html>

ALA/LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts (1997). These tables were approved by the American Library Association and the Library of Congress for cataloging purposes. They are not suitable for our purposes because they employ special characters. They are available at www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/roman.html.

Axelrod, Shleyme. Yiddish transliteration (YIVO version). Mendele Vol 4.170. (7 November 1994). Mendele is an on-line forum for Yiddish literature and Yiddish language. Get more information about Mendele at <http://shakti.trincoll.edu/~mendele/index.utf-8.htm>. Axelrod's article presents Roman alphabet transliteration of Yiddish using the YIVO transliteration system. An adaptation of the article is available at www.ibiblio.org/yiddish/library (select the "alef-beys" link, then the "Yiddish transliteration (YIVO Style)" link). The *ibiblio* website, *Shtetl: Yiddish Language and Culture*, is run by Iosif and Shura Vaisman.

Corman, Debra Hirsch and Rabbi Hara Person (4 February 2005). *URJ Transliteration Guidelines and Master Word list*. This document presents the transliteration guidelines used by the Union for Reform Judaism. It is available at http://urj.org/_kd/go.cfm?destination=ShowItem&Item_ID=4029. (Or, go to the URJ website, click on the "Search" link, and search for "URJ Transliteration Guidelines.")

Hayon, Dr. Yehiel (January 1981). *Guidelines for Contributors to the Journal of Reform Judaism*. This set of transliteration guidelines preceded the set in the Corman & Person document listed above. These Guidelines are available at www.nostradamus.net/transliteration.htm. Scroll down the page to "Sample Transliteration Systems". The link to Hayon's Guidelines is the second item under "Reform Judaism."

ISO 259-2:1994(E), *Information and documentation – Transliteration of Hebrew characters into Latin characters – Part 2: Simplified transliteration*. This is the international equivalent of ANSI Z39.25-1975.

Romanization, Yivo-Style: A simplified version of the romanization (transcription) convention developed by YIVO (19Aug95). A JewishGen InfoFile from Mendele Yiddish Language and Literature Mailing List. V.4.170 (<http://sunsite.unc.edu/yiddish/mewais.html>). This document describes the YIVO transliteration system. The InfoFile is available at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/yidtran.txt>.

Sher, Barry Nostradamus. *Nostradamus on transliteration*. This document provides a good description of the problems that occur with different transliteration systems. It is available at <http://www.nostradamus.net/transliteration.htm>.

Sher, Barry Nostradamus and Amy Helfman (1997). *Conservative Judaism, Siddur Sim Shalom* (1998 Edition). This document presents the transliteration schema implicitly used in the 1998 edition of the *Siddur Sim Shalom* of Conservative Judaism. It is available on <http://www.nostradamus.net/files/xlit1.pdf>.

Vikner, Sten. *Der yiddisher alef-beys*. Department of English, University of Aarhus, DK-8000 Århus C, Denmark. This website illustrates the characters of the Yiddish alphabet and presents phonetic charts along with dialectic differences in pronunciation of the vowel system for Hebrew, YIVO transcription, Polish (central), Ukrainian (southeastern) and Lithuanian (northeastern). Available from <http://www.ibiblio.org/yiddish/library/>. The *ibiblio* website, *Shtetl: Yiddish Language and Culture*, is run by Iosif and Shura Vaisman.

In his description of problems encountered when selecting a transliteration system (Sher, Nostradamus on transliteration, above) Sher quotes "The One Immutable Law of Transliteration":

No matter what system you adopt, someone will come up to you and say, "I showed your transliteration to six different people and not one of them could pronounce it correctly. Here's a much better system that I've developed."

Although we cannot develop a "perfect" transliteration, one that will be universally accepted, perhaps we can apply consistent guidelines within each major translation project. We offer this article to the Jewish genealogy community with the hope that our experience with the Kremenets records will help others develop useful systems for their own projects. We hope also that, by understanding the problems and pitfalls of transliteration, individual researchers will be better able to locate the names of their ancestors. The Kremenets transliteration system is an evolving project.

I wish I could make this transliteration job easier by laying out firm "rules", but considering variations in handwriting styles, spelling errors in the records, and variations of the names themselves in different geographic areas and at different times, I don't see a way to simplify this. If you have any suggestions, I'm certainly open to considering them.

Please contact me (rondoctor@earthlink.net) if you have a good reason for deviating from these Guidelines. We will make adjustments if there is a reasonable justification for them.

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