THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

The Full Family Pack

Eight research profiles, one family, told person by person.

This pack gathers every profile from ceceliamargules.org/family.html into one document. Each profile stands alone and can be assigned to a different student, or read in order as one family's full story: two grandparents who did not survive, three children (one who survived and two who did not), the father who stayed silent, the daughter who turned memory into music, and the generation after her.

RESEARCH PROFILE · THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

Salomon (Shlomo) Bick

Cecelia's grandfather

YEARS	Born 1894 · Died 18 May 1942
STATUS	Died in the Łódź Ghetto

Salomon Bick was the father of the family. In the studio portrait taken in Łódź before the war he sits with his wife and children in good clothes, in a photographer's studio, in a city that held one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe.

In April 1940 the Germans sealed the Łódź Ghetto. Salomon died inside it on 18 May 1942, at the age of 48. He was not shot and he was not deported. He died the way tens of thousands died in Łódź, of hunger, cold and disease, inside a closed quarter of his own city.

"Died in the Łódź Ghetto, 18 V 1942, aged 48. Remembered in mourning. His daughter, Sara."

From the memorial stone, in Polish

HOW WE KNOW

A memorial gravestone was raised for him by his daughter Sarah, the only member of his immediate family to survive. A rubbing of that stone is in the family archive, and the Polish inscription carries his name, his birth year, the date of his death and her name as the mourner.

RESEARCH PROFILE · THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

Tziporah Bick

Cecelia's grandmother

YEARS	A mother in Łódź before the war
STATUS	Perished in the Holocaust

In the 1936 photograph from a family outing in the forest, a surviving hand later inked the word MOTHER directly onto the print above her, so that whoever found the picture would know exactly who she was.

Her name is preserved in the family's own identification of that photograph. It does not appear in any published record found in research for this archive, which is true of most of the people murdered in Łódź.

"She spoke incessantly about her parents and siblings who perished in the Lodz ghetto and Auschwitz."

Cecelia, about her mother Sarah

HOW WE KNOW

The annotated 1936 forest photograph in the family archive, with identifications given by Cecelia Margules. The fate of Sarah's parents is stated by Cecelia Margules in The Jewish Press, "Word Prompt: REGRET," 17 July 2024.

RESEARCH PROFILE · THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

Sarah Bick Berkowitz

Cecelia's mother

YEARS	Łódź Ghetto · Auschwitz · Bergen-Belsen
STATUS	The only one who survived

Sarah was the eldest of the children. She lived through the Łódź Ghetto, then Auschwitz, then Bergen-Belsen, and she was the only member of her immediate family to come out of the war alive.

She did not stay silent. She wrote two memoirs: "Where Are My Brothers?", published in New York in 1965, and "In Search of Ashes", published in 1984. Her daughter Cecelia, then a teenager, contributed poetry to one of them.

She also went into schools and spoke. Cecelia has described accompanying her and hearing her speak eloquently to a spellbound audience about her tragic experience and loss.

In 1989 she and her husband sat for a recorded oral history that is now held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"She never forgot and she never allowed the world to forget."

Cecelia, about her mother

HOW WE KNOW

Sarah Bick Berkowitz, "Where Are My Brothers?" (Helios Books, New York, 1965) and "In Search of Ashes" (Shengold Publishers, New York, 1984). USHMM oral history with Morris and Sarah Berkowitz, 18 September 1989, RG-50.165.0004.

Yankele (Yaakov) Bick

Sarah's brother

YEARS	A boy in Łódź before the war
STATUS	Did not survive

In the 1936 forest photograph Yankele sits with his parents and his sisters. Above him the family later inked a single word: BROTHER.

His sister Sarah titled her first book with a question rather than a statement: "Where Are My Brothers?" Twenty years after liberation she was still asking it, in print, in New York.

He is remembered in the family's yahrzeit observances, the yearly moment when a name is said out loud so that it is not lost. Beyond the annotation on that one photograph, the family archive does not record how or exactly when he died, and this profile will not fill that gap with a guess.

> *"Where are my brothers?"*
>
> **The title Sarah gave her first book, 1965**

HOW WE KNOW

The annotated 1936 family photograph, with identifications given by Cecelia Margules; Sarah Bick Berkowitz, "Where Are My Brothers?" (Helios Books, New York, 1965); the family's own memorial observances.

Mira

Sarah's sister · Cecelia's aunt

YEARS	A child of Łódź
STATUS	Did not survive

Mira did not survive. She never grew up, never married, never had children of her own.

She was one of approximately 1.5 million Jewish children murdered in the Holocaust. For most of those children there is no photograph, no grave and no name that anyone still says out loud.

Mira has a name and a melody. Her niece Cecelia, born after the war into the space Mira left, wrote her a song. Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach recorded it in 1990 on the album "Harmony: Songs of Cecelia Margules." Thirty years later Dudu Fisher sang it again alongside Carlebach's archival voice, in a film made in her memory.

> *"Mira was her name. From the town of Łódź she came."*
>
> **Opening line of Cecelia's song, recorded by Shlomo Carlebach**

HOW WE KNOW

Song credits and the description of Mira as Cecelia's maternal aunt: the "Mira" film, 24Six. Album: "Harmony: Songs of Cecelia Margules," Cecelia Productions, 1990. How and when Mira died is not stated in this profile until the family's records have been checked against the original documents.

Moses (Morris) Berkowitz

Cecelia's father

YEARS	Survivor · married Sarah after the war
STATUS	Survived, and stayed quiet

Cecelia's father was a survivor too. He married Sarah after the war and they built a life in New York.

Where Sarah spoke constantly, he did not. Cecelia has put the contrast in a single sentence: her father was mostly silent, while her mother spoke incessantly about the family she had lost. Both were survivors. They carried it in opposite directions.

In 1989 he sat with Sarah for a recorded interview for a study of survivors who rebuilt their lives in America. That recording is now in the archive of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"My father was mostly silent."

Cecelia Margules, The Jewish Press, 2024

HOW WE KNOW

USHMM oral history interview with Morris Berkowitz and Sarah Berkowitz, 18 September 1989, RG-50.165.0004. He appears as "Moses" in the Emunah honoree biography and as "Morris" in the USHMM catalogue.

RESEARCH PROFILE · THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

Cecelia Margules

Daughter of Sarah and Moses

YEARS	Composer · writer · Holocaust educator
STATUS	Carries the memory forward

Cecelia was born after the war into a family that had been cut down to one survivor on her mother's side. A great aunt Masha and an uncle Abe helped fill the void, she has written, "but it was lonely."

She first set out to become a nurse, then switched to an English degree and found her way into writing, interviews and poetry. As a teenager she contributed poems to her mother's book.

She has also written honestly about the weight of it. Worn down by hearing the same losses again and again, she once cried out at her mother: ENOUGH. She has never stopped regretting it, and she has spent her working life making sure the stories are told anyway.

Her answer was song. Shlomo Carlebach recorded her music in 1990. In 2011 she produced "Rainbow in the Night," filmed in Kraków and at Majdanek. With her husband Rubin she supports the training of Holocaust educators in Israel.

"It was a childhood like no other, devoid of grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews."

Cecelia Margules, The Jewish Press, 2024

HOW WE KNOW

Cecelia Margules, "Word Prompt" columns in The Jewish Press, 2023 to 2026, including REGRET (17 July 2024) and MISTAKES (28 February 2024); Emunah honoree biography, 2020.

RESEARCH PROFILE · THE BICK / BERKOWITZ FAMILY

And After Her

Julie, Eli, and their children

YEARS	The fourth generation
STATUS	The family continues

Cecelia's daughter Julie and son-in-law Eli have children of their own.

It is worth pausing on the arithmetic. This family lost a father, a mother and at least two children. One daughter walked out of Bergen-Belsen alive. Four generations later there is a family again.

That is not a happy ending, because nothing returns the people who were murdered. But it is the reason the songs exist and the reason this archive exists.

> *A family reduced to one survivor now has great-grandchildren.*

HOW WE KNOW

Cecelia Margules, "Word Prompt: SONS," The Jewish Press, 7 May 2025.