

This book codifies the history of a not very big but rather old Sephardic family – Passy. The Passys were chased out from Jerusalem in 2nd c. A.D., heading to the Old Kingdom of the Biblical Queen of Sheba. In 10th c. traveling through various deserts they settled in the Atlas Mountains, in the city of Fez (because of its famous University) wherefrom their family name El Phasi (“from Fez”) transformed later to Passy.

In 13th c. they moved to Spain (Andalusia, Catalonia or Aragon). After the 1492 expulsion of the Jews from Spain the Passys were doomed to vagrancy throughout Western and Central Europe taking various roots around the continent until they reached (late 18th c.) the Bulgarian lands, then within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. The next massive Jewish emigration from Bulgaria was in 1948 when many of the Passys returned back to Israel, thus completing – after 18 centuries – the full circle of their migration around the Mediterranean.

The documental story “Passy from Fez” described by Antoaneta Zorkova traces the lives of seven generations of descendants of Solomon Passy who was born around 1770 in Italy and later in 18th c. settled in Plovdiv (Philippopolis). Among them there were merchants, lawyers, scientists, philosophers, inventors, politicians, physicians, military men, businessmen, musicians, travelers and last but not least – enlightened educators, devoted to the Jewish motto “Tikun Olam” – “Repair the World!”

They were not spared the all – Jewish fate of persecution and life risk. Sometimes they were luckily saved – as during the attempted deportation to the crematoria of the Nazi Concentration Camps, foiled by the Bulgarian people in March 1943. Not all of them though had such luck... Isaac Nisim Passy, aged 33, from Plovdiv, was deported from France and tragically murdered in the gas chambers of the Sobibor Concentration Camp.

As the book reveals – the Passys were not only saved but also brave life – saviors themselves whenever they could stretch a hand to others in need. Nowadays most of the Passys traced in the book are in Israel, while others are in Bulgaria, USA, Europe, Argentina...

In Bulgaria, in the 2020s the name Passy is documented as the most recognizable Jewish name. This is due to several distinguished Passys – their stories are in this book. One of them is Dr. Solomon Passy – a visionary statesman and mathematician, fourth generation civic leader, freedom fighter against the communist regime in the 1980s, Foreign Minister (2001-2005), founder of the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria, innovator and inventor.

He is among the pioneers and architects of modern European Bulgaria. He initiated the Bulgarian memberships in NATO and the EU in 1990 as an MP and accomplished both goals as Foreign Minister some 15 years later.

It was him also to initiate this genealogical study and wrote for it an autobiographical and philosophical essay, on his and his family’s wanderings. It is entitled in Solomon’s trade mark chutzpah style “The Book of Passy” ranking it along with the Books of the Old Testament.

This text is yet another audacious attempt of his to repair the World through examining the chronotopes of his genetic memory: Bulgaria, Morocco, Israel, The Kingdom of Sheba, Ethiopia, Auschwitz, Berlin, Barcelona, Libya, USA, Yemen, São Tomé and deserts, deserts, deserts....

Solomon also lists the seven major (in his view) Jewish “Repairs” to the World, extracted from the Bible – the monotheistic Constitution. He questions the righteousness of God and His faithfulness to the Covenant with the Jewish people.