

Bulletin

Igud Yotzei Sin

Association of Former Residents of China

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English Supplement



THE SYNAGOGUE BUILDING IN TIANJIN

The Tianjin Synagogue Building has been approved as a State-preserver monument of architecture to be owned by the Tianjin Municipal Government



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THEMES OF THE DAY

T. Kaufman

Forum in Harbin

An International Forum on the China-Israel economic cooperation, to be held in Harbin in June

An international forum on augmenting economic cooperation between China and Israel is currently planned to be held in Harbin on 14-17 June, 2007. The Forum will also deal with establishing business relations with the economic circles in Jewish communities around the world.

The Forum was initiated and is being organized by the Academy of Social Sciences of the Heilongjiang province, headed by its President, Prof. Qu Wei, who is well known for his activity in commemorating the Jewish past in Harbin.

The Israeli participants of the Forum will include the Israeli Ambassador in Beijing, Mr. Yehoyada Haim, former ambassadors of China to Israel Messrs. Chen Yonglong and Pan Zhanlin, Prof. Xu Xin of Nanjing University, and delegates of Igud Yotzei Sin and the Israel-China Friendship Society. Also arriving from Israel will be Mr. Amram Olmert, formerly economic attaché of the Israeli Embassy in Beijing. Yossi Klein and Ronnie Veinerman will head the Israeli delegation. The Mayor of Givatayim, the twin city of Harbin, will represent his city.

We wish the Forum a successful session.

The book "The Jews of Harbin Live on in My Heart" by Teddy Kaufman has been translated into Chinese and will be distributed among the participants of the Forum.

Izya Nadel (Izhak Oren)

Izya Nadel (I. Oren), one of our oldest and closest compatriots from Harbin, passed away in Jerusalem on February 11 at the age of 88.

Izya – a writer, a poet, a journalist and a translator, stands in the first row of the former Jewish residents in China. He was born in an ardent Zionist family, whose essence of life was love for Jewish and Zionist values. Many of us owe Izya's father, a first rank Zionist activist and a teacher, the fact that we came to Israel with a working knowledge of the Hebrew language. Izya's life in Israel was that of a true classical Zionist halutz. He came to British ruled Palestine in the early 1930's, served in the British army, and was active in the Jewish underground (I.Z.L.) He spoke with pride of having dug the Jerusalem sewer channel system and of being at the same time the first "Chinese" student in the Hebrew University.

Much later, he combined his literary work with the struggle of Russian Jewry by becoming one of founders of the then "underground" Russian language broadcasts of "Kol Israel" – "Golos Izrailia" and the chief editor of the "Hebrew Encyclopedia" translated into the Russian language. Izya was also an active participant in the Igud Yotzei Sin effort in commemorating our "Chinese past" by often lecturing on various cultural subjects, his participation ever being colorful and engaging.

Izya was an exceptionally amicable person, full of humor and empathy. He will never be forgotten by anyone whoever met him.

People and Events

Peter Berton reaches 85

On June 11 our compatriot from Harbin Professor Peter Berton celebrated his 85th birthday. Prof. Berton (Zaika Berstein) was a well-known violinist in Harbin. He graduated from the Wasseda University in Tokyo, and the Columbia University in New York. He is internationally known as an expert on Japanese history and culture.

Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Peter Berton and his family.

A happy event in the Bar-Yoseph family.

Another great granddaughter was born in the family of Eliyahu Bar Yoseph (Liolia Roisberg), z"l, formerly of Harbin. She was named Zoi. She is a granddaughter to Aliya and Dan Godard.

Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates the parents, the grandparents and the great grandmother of the new born baby.

A RECEPTION AT THE JAPANESE EMBASSY

A reception in honor of Mr. Ruit Mizuuchi, minister at the embassy of Japan in Israel, was held at the Residence of the Japanese Ambassador in connection with his departure from Israel after three and a half years of his stay in the country. Mr. Mizuuchi is now appointed as Ambassador of Japan to Austria.

Present at the reception were about two hundred guests, among them members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and wide circles of the Israeli public. Igud Yotzei Sin was represented by R. and T. Kaufman, M. and D. Friedmann and A. Fradkin.

KAUFMAN'S LECTURE IN JERUSALEM

On May 10, T. Kaufman delivered a lecture in Jerusalem on the history of the Jews of China. The lecture was given for a group of young Jewish people from the USA, who arrived in Israel according to a program of the Jewish agency. The lecture aroused great interest in the audience.

Dora Wainer reaches 80.

On April 26 our compatriot from Shanghai, Dora Wainer (nee Segerman) celebrated her 80th birthday.

Dora and her husband Joe of Shanghai, Tianjin and Harbin are generous contributors to Igud Yotzei Sin.

IYS congratulates the Wainer family and wishes Dora many happy returns of the day.

The Launching of the Sculpture «Valor in Flight»

Created by Artist: Varda Yoran

«Valor in flight ,valor in the sky ,valor in combat valor in rescue missions, valor in venturing into outer space that encapsulates the Israeli Air Force».

Sunday ,June 24th 2007 ,at 6pm

Israel Air Force Center, 15 Jabotinsky St. Hertzliya

RSVP to 09-9501637

Or by E- mail: info@ iatcenter.org

TAMARA FAIBUSOVICH - 85

On Sunday, March 4, "Beit-Ponve" celebrated the 85th birth day of Tamara Faibusovich, the widow of our compatriot Isaac Faibusovich who was born in Harbin. Tamara was presented with flowers, chocolates and a birthday cake. Tamara arrived in Israel 17 years ago from Krasnoyarsk. All the years since her arrival she has taken an active part in the activities of Igud Yotzei Sin, sorting out the collection of photos in the photo albums of the Archives of Igud Yotzei Sin and helping with the distribution of the "Bulletin". T.Kaufman warmly congratulated the heroine of the day and wished her much health and well-being.

Visit the Website of Igud Yotzei Sin **www.jewsofchina.org**

The website contains a wealth of information on

- ❖ The chronology of events of the Jewish presence in China
- ❖ Publications (transcripts of conference speeches).
Valuable material for researchers plus books
- ❖ Biographies ❖ Links to other sites of interest
 - ❖ The Harbin Huang Shan Cemetery
- ❖ Family search forum ❖ Photos (some rare photos published for the first time)

Dr. A. Kaufman, Camp Doctor- 16 Years in the Soviet Union

Chapter 10 Section C

One day I was summoned by one of the interrogators, whom I knew previously, when I was sent to his home to treat his child who was ill. I am brought to his home in the camp. For some unknown reason his home was called the “house of guile” and whenever the woman who works in his home as a servant, comes in to one of the camp's barracks all the inmates are stricken with fear; perhaps she came to fetch him to the “house of guile”. The interrogator shows me photographs of three women. I am not acquainted with any one of them, but the interrogator claims that I do know one of them, the one whose picture is lying between the other two.

“You know her well and so does she, she told us a lot about you”.

I still insist that I do not know the woman. He then asks whether I know a Mr. A.

“Yes I knew him. That was twenty years ago when he left Harbin to go to the land of Israel and since then I never heard of him”

“And did you know his daughter?” he asks.

“I do not remember”.

“Well,” says the interrogator, pointing at the picture “That’s his daughter – and she knows you very well”.

Strange, this woman went to Israel together with her father, how did her picture get to the MG”B, only God knows. I was never questioned again on this matter and up to the present day have never learned the reason.

Life in camp is becoming harder and harder every day, restrictions, constraints, abuses, shortages. A new directive was issued by the camp authorities: The wearing of private



clothing was forbidden and only the prison garb is to be worn. As punishment for those caught wearing private clothing the prisoner is put into solitary confinement for a few days and the only food he receives is 300 grams of bread and water daily.

The women are issued a shirt, a skirt and a coat. They, however, do not concede and insist on wearing private clothing and often an uproar erupts for this reason. The inspectors chase them then drag them to the “House of Guile” and to solitary confinement. In the barracks searches are carried out for private clothing and when found they are forcibly taken away. After some time it was decided by the authorities to sew numerals on to the clothing – on the hat, on the back of the pullover, the coat, the shirts and the trousers. The prisoner is covered from head to tow with eye attracting numbers of groups of four or five numerals each. If, God forbid, numerals are missing on one of the clothing items, the punishment is solitary confinement I did not sew any numerals on my clothing and

informed the camp commander that I will never agree to go outside the camp area to treat patients in the city if I’m forced to wear numerals on my clothing. The camp commander nodded his head without saying a word. Eventually they “decorated” only one pair of my trousers. Only in 1954 after Stalin’s death this “directive of numbers” was cancelled

Every evening after the head count of the prisoners all the doors to the barracks are locked by lock and key till six o’clock in the morning. The prisoners suffer from the heat, especially at night during the summer months, the windows are grated very densely, and each barrack houses approximately 800 people. The hospital barracks are locked too and even the doctor on duty is locked in his barrack and cannot visit the hospital during the night, only at midnight the doors of the hospital barracks are opened and the doctor on duty accompanied by the duty supervisor make the night rounds of all the other hospital barracks. After the rounds the doctor is returned to his barrack and the doors are locked again till the morning. The doctors mentioned this to the prison authorities many times about this restriction hampering them to render immediate aid to the sick due to the locked doors, but nothing helped, the answer always was “it is forbidden”! One night while I was the duty doctor, I suddenly heard knocks on the wall followed by loud shouting coming from the neighboring barrack: “Help! Some one is dying”.

I was locked in my barrack and could not go out. I too started knocking on

the door, the nurse started to shout and so did the hospital patients. The shouting continued for about half an hour until the duty supervisor, who was asleep in one of the further barracks, arrived. He opened my barrack and together with him I hurried to the neighboring barrack. I examined the patient and diagnosed that he had a strong inflammation of the appendicitis. I summoned the surgeon and the patient was operated on immediately. The next morning I reported on this urgent surgery during my session with the prison authorities (called by us the "five minute" hour-every morning the duty doctor had to report on all the happenings in the hospital during the past day, the number of new patients accepted, the number released, deaths and so on, these sessions were supposed to last five minutes but usually lasted an hour) and again I raised my request not to lock the hospital barrack doors. The director of the hospital answered me on this request "What can I do? My instructions are to lock the doors for the night" at the end of the session the director added:

"And if someone will escape who will then be responsible?"

Nothing changed and as in the past the doors remained locked every night with seven bolts. A week after this event the camp commander summoned me to his office, his daughter fell ill and he wanted me to go with him to his home. On the way I told him what happened at the hospital, he knew nothing of that incident and was surprised that the duty officer did not report to him about it, I replied: "Perhaps the duty officer did not know anything about what happened then, we were locked in our barracks and could not inform him about this".

The camp commander hesitated. I could feel that he too was not completely satisfied with this "ban"! He offers a suggestion, that a duty officer be stationed near the hospital barracks during the night hours, then,

after further thought on this matter he said that he'll agree not to lock the hospital barracks on the condition that the duty doctors be responsible that no prison rules or regulations are broken. Contrary to other camps where I have been during my prison years, the hospital barracks were locked at night and many mishaps occurred because of that. Only after Stalin's death were the iron bars taken off the hospital windows and the duty doctors were not locked-in during the night hours.

Although I am responsible for the internal department and the children's hospital I have been "offered" or to be more exact, "ordered" to take charge of two minor wards in the surgery department, where the number of patients does not reach over 50. My first visit to these wards took place in the company of the hospital head doctor and two nurses.

While going through one of the wards we heard a heart-piercing scream, one of the women patients is calling me by my name and bursts into hysterical tears. I approached the woman, while my escorts look at me in amazement. She kneels on her bed and stretches her hands towards me weeping. Who is she? Her face is not familiar to me, I try to placate her but her emotion infects me too.

"Who are you?"

"Doctor don't you recognize me? I'm Valia K..." She answers and continues weeping. I tell her that I'll return to her in fifteen minutes. To the hospital commander I explain that the woman is the daughter of very good friends of mine and I know her since her childhood. The commander nodded her head in understanding. When I returned to Valia I found her in a calmer state of mind, she told me that she was arrested in 1947 for "espionage" and was sentenced to 25 years of camp. We met many times during her anguished life in the camp and even after we were freed. Valia was an accomplished pianist. In camp she was assigned

comparatively light physical duties and later she worked as a librarian in the woman's section and also participated in plays that were staged by the "drama circle" of the camp. In the hall of the education and culture section of the camp stood a piano, which was not used by anyone. The hospital surgeon and I approached the head of the cultural department and asked him that Valia be given permission to play on it. He agreed on the condition that no one except us is present when she played. Valia played for us various classical musical compositions and her playing made our lives more pleasant in the camp. Among the prisoners in the camp were some actors and musicians, including an opera singer from Kiev who was a very good mezzo-soprano, an operetta singer from Moscow, two drama actresses and a cinema "star" who used to play leading roles in Soviet movies. This intelligent lady was married to a well-known Soviet author. She even was once a member of a delegation of Soviet cinema actors to Czechoslovakia. On her return, however, she was accused of various offenses and sentenced to ten years in camp. Her husband, the author, who was in fear for his own skin severed all contact with her, never wrote to her nor sent her any parcels. His behavior depressed her very highly and I had many talks with her on this matter. But what could I do for her? In time a group of "self expression" was formed in the camp, with the permission of the camp authorities, of course, and plays and concerts were performed from time to time. One of the problems that hampered the activity of this group was that all artists were working at hard labor outside the camp either in the quarry or in a brick factory. One of the commanders of the women's section who formed a liking to this group and its activities asked me to employ some of the actresses and singers in the children's department and in this way they would be exempt from work outside the camp. With

the agreement of the commander of the children's section, a pleasant lady of Tatar origin, I was able to agree to this request. However, because of their lack of experience in handling babies and their frequent absences from work due to rehearsals I had to dispense with their services. In time I came to an agreement with the camp commander to employ them at lighter work outside the camp.

Chapter 10, Section D

One day five young woman doctors arrived at the camp, they just recently completed their medical studies at one of the medical schools. In the Soviet Union medical students receive a monthly allotment during the whole period of their studies, and in exchange for that, they have to serve for a period of three years in any place they are assigned to after they graduate. Women doctors who are married are not separated from their husbands and are usually assigned to work in the place where the husband lives. All graduate doctors are mostly assigned to work in labor camps of the M"GB.

One of the young woman doctors who arrived at our camp hospital was assigned to be the director of the children's ward and the hospital adjacent to it. The Camp commander of the Sanitary Department wanted the new doctor to learn and be proficient in children's medicine as there was a shortage of children's doctors in the camp hospital and she wanted me to be available for the young doctor when ever she will be in need of help or advice, as she was inexperienced in treating children and all this new doctor wants is to learn and gain experience. The director of the Sanitary Department always treated me very decently, she appreciated my work and once even had my name entered into the "honors list" of exceptional workers. I willingly agreed to carry out her request and to assist the new doctor, but my willingness to assist did not come to pass. The

young and inexperienced doctor started to behave in the children's ward in a dominant manner and tried to impose her authority on all the workers in the ward, the household workers, the nurses and even on me – she was a free person while we all were prisoners and were obliged to carry out her orders. Because of the heavy work burden I used to start my work early in the morning beginning my rounds in the children's hospital at 6 O'clock, my new superior, however, insists that I do not start my rounds without her. But as she was not punctual and used to come to the hospital very late, I did not wait for her arrival and made the rounds without her. In these circumstances our relationship started to deteriorate with misunderstandings and antagonism that increased as soon as she started to harass the experienced nurses and other workers in the ward whom she began to change with other workers more to her liking. On days when she did come in time to join me in my rounds of the ill children I explain to her my diagnoses and the medical treatment needed for each case. I noticed, however, that she did not take a big interest in the medical side of her duties; in some cases she cancelled the treatment, which I decided on some patient, which increased the antagonism between us. I informed her that if this will continue I will relieve myself of all responsibility of treating the patients, my threat deterred her and she never cancelled my treatments again. One day she informed me that she intends to fire all the workers in the ward and hire new ones in their place, she asked me to choose possible candidates from among the patients who recovered but on the condition that they should not be Estonians, Latvians or Poles but only Russians. I had a feeling that the reason that she did not include Jews among the undesirables is because she knew I was Jewish. Her reason for this change was to cleanse the hospital

from "foreign elements". I informed her firmly that because I was a part of a national minority I couldn't take part in her plan, which has a very strong smell of discrimination against other nations. On hearing this she became confused and immediately left the room. This matter was never brought up again. This young doctor was a member of the Komsomol and six months earlier was even accepted into the Communist party which was a source of big pride to her and she bragged about this very often.

Several days later the director of all the camps in the central region directorate visited our camp. When he visited the children's ward he inquired about the food the children received. The cook, who was a prisoner told him that it is already a week that the children are not receiving any milk, when he inquired further into this matter it was revealed, what we already knew for a long time, that the products that were destined for the children's ward do not arrive in their full quantity to their destination and on the way part of the items are skimmed off for the use of the people of authority in the camp. The director was astounded by what he heard and assigned me to a new duty:

To personally receive in full the daily food rations that were intended for the children

"And not one gram less".

But, even after this visit, the various commanders in authority did not stop skimming off their usual part from the rations destined for the prisoners. The food that was allotted to the prisoners was quite adequate but when it reached the people for whom it was intended to the quantity was much smaller.

Although the life in the camps is very hard, from time to time you come across some humorous incidents too. Although the wall separating the women's sector from the men's is very high, the movement between the two sectors does not stop, especially during the night hours. One evening

I was summoned to the “house of guile”, there in the room of the new “Ophir” who is already infamous in the camp for his cruelty, I see a young girl. The “Ophir” tells me that after she disappeared from her barrack for two days and the searches for her did not reveal her whereabouts anywhere, she was discovered just now by one of the overseers while she was trying to climb the wall from the men’s section back to the women’s section. The young girl denies vehemently that she was in the men’s section. The “Ophir” summons me to examine the girl to determine if she had sexual relations, I was amazed by this unusual request and explained that I cannot assert such a thing.

“Well, from her outward physical appearance?” he asks

“According to her outward appearance” I answered, “She looks perfectly normal, a little excited perhaps, but who wouldn’t be in your office comrade commander”

“Did she drink vodka?” asks the “Ophir”.

I moved nearer to the girl.

“Breath!” she breathed.

“No, there’s no smell of alcohol from her mouth”. At this point my medical diagnosis ends. The “Ophir” sentences her to twenty days in solitary confinement.

One day the mothers rebel, they demand that the restrictions on visits to the children’s ward be lifted and that they should be allowed to visit their children during all the hours of the day with no time limits. The breast feeding mothers remained in the children’s ward after the breast feeding, entering the children’s sleeping quarters picking the children up from their cots, hugging them to their breasts and no one can do anything to stop this, it is not easy to take a child away from the mothers arms. The next day when this rebellion of the mothers reaches its maximum proportions all the highest authorities were summoned to the children’s ward including the “Ophir” himself. The mothers continue their insubordination. The commander,

trying to placate the mothers, offers to add another day during the week for mothers to visit their children. One of the mothers, a courageous woman, steps forward and shouts at the “Ophir”:

“Are you the owner of my child? I gave birth to this child, I fed the child with my milk! The child is mine and not yours!”

The “Ophir” however answers her in a calm voice but with resolution:

“No the child is not yours but belongs to the state. The state is taking care of the child while you are a plain criminal, who broke the laws of the country, you are an enemy of the country and the child is not yours”

One day, during the rounds of the hospital, the head of the directorate of all the camps of the area noticed a sick woman covered over the head with a blanket lying in a complete state of exhaustion.

“Who is she?” asks the commander

“She is one of our nurses who is sick,” replies the surgeon

“What is she suffering from?”

“She was hospitalized two days ago, she is pregnant and is having severe pains, and she is under my supervision”.

The commander approaches the woman yanks the blanket roughly from her, the woman covers her face with her hands and bursts into tears.

“In what month is she?” Asks the commander.

“Sixth” replies the surgeon

“And how long is she working in this camp?”

No one answers. The commander insists on a response. The director of the sanitary department answers:

“She’s here for the second year”

The commander shouts at the director:

“What’s going on here? What is this a factory for children?”

Turning to the patient he shouts:

“Who is the child’s father?”

The woman is silent, the commander orders her removed from the hospital and to fire her from her job.

“Nothing will happen to her nor to her bastard, you hear me! Remove her at once” he orders the midwife and me. We remain silent. We knew who her husband was – the father of the child she was carrying, He was recently transferred to another camp. There are many prisoners in camp who, just for being released even for a very short period, from the heavy daily toil in the camp swallow various items in order to be taken to the hospital and operated upon, some swallow spoons, knife handles, broken glass. The reasoning behind these acts are of course simple, when he is brought to the hospital moaning and writhing in pain he is immediately operated upon and in most cases the “foreign objects” are found and removed. After such an operation in the stomach cavity he is hospitalized for about two weeks in the prison hospital. And even after the hospitalization he is released from hard work for several weeks. In 1950 incidents of swallowing various objects turned into a daily occurrence. The surgeon and I were called one day to the “Ophir”, when another swallower was brought on a stretcher to the hospital, and announced to us:

“I forbid you to operate on him, do not dare to do so... let him die like a dog!”

“May be just this once we will operate,” I suggest, “ Then we shall announce to everyone that operations shall stop effective immediately”

The Ophir started raving at me:

“You are too lenient with the scum, I forbid you to operate on him, return him to his barrack”.

We had no other choice but to do as he ordered.

As soon as this ban on performing surgery on the “swallowers” became known across the camp the swallowing stopped. The prisoners, however, never stopped causing various injuries to them selves.

(From the Hebrew by Benny Tzur. to be continued)



Portrait of Misha Kogan
by artist L. Smushkovitch

To the Misha Kogan Social Aid Fund

US \$ 20.000

In memory of my dear brothers
and sister

**Asya Kogan
(Tokyo) July 2007**

8



Borya Kachanovsky



Leva Kachanovsky



Misha Kachanovsky



Sofia Shifrin

**Leva, Borya, Misha, Sofia !
I love you and always miss you.**

Asya

Members of the Tribe Thriving in China

By Amiram Barkat

In a controversial appearance at the recent American Jewish Committee centennial convention in Washington, author A.B. Yehoshua predicted that Diaspora Jews would move to China if it were to become a world power. Dr. Avrum Ehrlich, a professor at the Center for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies at the University of Shandong, says that this process is actually already under way.

"The Jewish community in Hong Kong is thriving," he explains, "and there are at least 3,000 Jews now living permanently in Beijing alone." There has been a continuous Jewish presence in China during the last 200 years, starting with Sephardi merchants who arrived there along with the British, and continuing with Russian Jews who settled in Harbin (one of whom was Ehud Olmert's grandfather). During World War II many German refugees sought shelter first in Shanghai - one of the only places in the world that was open to Jews at the time.

China's modern history is dotted with Jewish figures like Morris ("Two-Gun") Cohen, a Polish-born adventurer who served as a liaison between the Taiwanese government and China's communist leaders. Another was Israel Epstein, the Warsaw-born Marxist author, who died last year after being honored by all Chinese presidents from Mao to the present Hu Jintao.

Ehrlich says he regrets the fact that current relations between Israel and China are limited to the military and economic spheres, without any significant cultural dialogue. Among the many Israeli and Jewish businesspeople he has encountered

recently in China, he says, are ultra-Orthodox kashrut supervisors. "It appears that the whole kashrut industry, the manufacturing of chemicals and raw materials, has moved to China," he explains.

Ehrlich himself owes his current position to the economic boom in the world's most populated country. In 2004, the 38-year-old Australian-born Israeli was on a trip to visit his brother, who runs a factory owned by the family near Shanghai, when he heard about the university center for Jewish studies in the province of Shandong, relatively close by. Ehrlich made contact with the staff and offered to lecture on Messianism.

"I was offered a full professorship right after I finished," he says proudly. The unexpected move to China was not so drastic in light of Ehrlich's somewhat chaotic life beforehand: He immigrated to Israel at the age of 16, studied at four different yeshivas and was ordained a rabbi at the Tomchei Tmimim yeshiva in Kfar Chabad. Later he altered his course in life and studied at the pluralistic Shalom Hartman Institute and at Bar-Ilan University. He finished his doctorate, on Hasidic leaders, at the University of Sydney.

"I found there's great disempowerment in Israel," he explains. "That's why I looked for a place where I could make a difference."

The center in Shandong was established 10 years ago by one of the local professors. According to Ehrlich, in 2004 the center was given a mandate by the Chinese government to set up a curriculum for Jewish studies in China. "It means bringing scholars from all over the

world, translating all the Jewish classics and organizing seminars and other activities," he says.

Ehrlich made up a list of 25 Jewish classics for translation, including the Mishna, the Kuzari and the Zohar, as well as writings of such notables as Maimonides, Herman Cohen, Rabbi Kook, Ahad Ha'am and Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan. He smiles when asked about the quality of the work, which was done by local students.

"I could say my job is to try and limit the damage," he says ironically.

"They (the Chinese students) have been ordered to do it, so they do it, even if they'll be correcting these translations for the next 20 years."

At least eight of China's 300 universities are now offering courses in Jewish studies. Ehrlich estimates about 100 students nationwide study Hebrew each year in comparison to five a year in the 1990s. He says the Chinese see studying the Jews as essential to understanding the underpinnings of Western thinking.

"They see the Jews as mavericks of Western thinking and ideology," he says. But the strongest driving force behind the interest in Jews is not cultural or intellectual, he says, and he noticed it when he first came to China, while looking at the books on the airport book stands. "I saw many books with titles like 'How to be a Jewish millionaire.' I later understood that when most Chinese speak about 'Jewish wisdom,' they mean what they see as the phenomenal Jewish prowess in making money. I don't see this as a negative thing, because I hope it might be an entree for them into other areas as well."

"Haarez"

Searching and Researching

Efrain Zajdband

I would like any information you have about my father, David (Dawid) Zajdband, born in Lodz (Poland) and lived in Shanghai from 1939 to 1945. Email: efrain_z@yahoo.com Address: Directorio 2595 1-F (1406) Buenos Aires, Argentina

Adi Orian

This is a plea for your assistance in finding some information about my family. I am the granddaughter of Luba Urian (or Orian) of the Yelkin family, and the daughter of Micha (Mishka) Urian.

I would appreciate any information, about anyone of my family, since I know nearly nothing.

If you have any information whatsoever, please send it to me by one of these means:

austen@pob.huji.ac.il or POB 24033, Mt. Scopus, 91240, Jerusalem or call me at 054-4482903. You may also send it to the wonderfully helpful Teddy at the Igud. Thank you all in advance.

Lessy Ashkenazi Kimmel

I have just discovered this means of contacting people from the past. It is rather an eerie feeling that one gets in seeing one's name and going back to the past.

The ship I was on was the Wooster Victory, and we passed through Cape Town in December of 1949. I remained in Israel till 1955, when I emigrated, with my parents to Canada, where I have been living since then. My parents are both deceased. I am married, have three daughters, all of whom live in the greater New York area. One of them is married, and we have two grandchildren, a boy of 13, and girl of almost 11. I would love to hear from you and learn about your life from 1949 till today.

Email: earl.kimmel@sympatico.ca
Address: 1103-6795 Korczak Crescent
Cote Saint-Luc, QC H4W 2W7
Tel.: (514) 484-9039

Karen Spiegel Sroussi

I am looking for the email address of either Monika or Gitta Bayer. My aunt Felizia Vera Sarne spoke of them when I visited her in Australia a few years ago. Evidently she taught them or looked after them when they were in Shanghai. She got too emotional when I tried asking further questions. I came across an article just now on the web by Sonja Mohlberger who after years managed to find them. I would appreciate if someone has some information for me or also if anyone remembers my aunt Felizia (Faye) Sarne.

Email: ksroussi@bgu.ac.il
Address: P.O.B. 1344 Metar, Israel
Tel.: 050-7551029

Liat

I'm looking for someone who knew the Feingolds (Lola, Boris, Shurik & Vera) / Sterns (Notik & Nina) from Harbin.

Would also love to hear about Dodya.

Email: liatiko@017.net.il
Tel.: 03-6726008

Betty O'Harren

My Grandfather Eliezer Polonsky died in Shanghai in January 1911. He was born in Russia in 1861. I have a picture of my father [Montague/ Monya] and his mother Berta at his graveside. I'm searching for my father's family too.

Email: boharren@yahoo.com
Address: P.O. Box 1887,
Lehigh, Fl 33970

Moshik Toledano

I am looking for ANY information about my grandfather Heinrich Kopilevitch and the family of my grandmother-

Gisia Stirkin- Kopilevitch-Glazer :
The Stirkin Family. They were from Manchuria, Hailar and Harbin.

Email: moshik@yji.org.il

Address: 111 Weitzman St. Tel Aviv
Tel: 052 6039111

Dick Goh

I am searching for someone who knew the location of the old house of Mr. Paul N. Titov in Harbin before World War II. The Titov family use to supply water and coal at most of the Siberian Railway Station up to to the last railway station close to Incheon, South Korea.

Email: dickgdl@yahoo.com

Address: 1734 U.P. BLISS, SanVicente,
Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel: +63-9272144288

Roslyn Blumenthal

Hi: I just came across this site and wanted to let you know that Frieda Lerner was my mother! I would be so interested in speaking to anyone that might have known her and her family from Dairen, Manchuria. Please contact me as soon as possible. Hope to hear from someone soon!

Email: a1catsmeow@aol.com
Address: 9022 N. 53rd Avenue
Glendale, Arizona 85302
Tel.: 623-931-7992

Peter Buening Berlin

I am looking for photos of Dr. Abraham Kaufman and Rabbi Aron Moshe Kiselev (Harbin) for a friend of mine in Hamburg, a former inhabitant of Harbin. When I mentioned these two names, which I had read on your internet-pages, he really got excited (unfortunately he is not able to speak fluently any more); since then I have searched for photos of these two amazing men, but could not find any. Would you be so kind and help me?

Email: peter.buening.gmx.net
Tel.: 0049-151 153 95495

P. Lambert

I am interested in finding relations of the above; any name is possible as it seems to have been changed sometime.

Family were furriers in UK Father was a trader in Shanghai

Email: philip.lambert@tiscali.co.uk

Address: 99 Evelyn Drive, Pinner

Tel: 02084282797

Leon Wiernik

I am seeking any information on my Uncle Moshe Wiernik (or Wernick) who lived in Shanghai during the war. After the war he moved to Chicago USA and became a Rabbi. In later life he moved to Israel and was the head of a yeshiva in Jerusalem. He had one son named Aryeh-Shmuel whom I am unable to contact. Last I heard was that Aryeh-Shmuel Wernick lives in Zfat, Israel.

Email: leon901@tpg.com.au

Address: PO Box 370, Lindfield 2070, Australia

Tel: 61-2-94166247

James Hannun, Director

European Emigrant Heritage

I am a professional genealogist visiting Shanghai in research of the Frohman/Frieman and Melamis families. I am interested in engaging the services of an experienced Jewish-Chinese genealogist on a paid basis to help in the research and analysis of these families. I am writing to your association in the hope that you may help me locate a suitable person for this position. This project requires someone who is available a good number of hours per week. The work will be at research facilities in either Israel or the US, and require strong case analysis abilities.

Our subjects are a Russian Jewish couple, David/Dan Froman/Frieman and Olga Melamis. There were in Harbin in 1914, where their daughter Sprincey was born. We are in Shanghai now researching their deaths here in 1920-1962. Perhaps you have researched these families

in the past five years? If you know of someone who is available to discuss the above, please send me his/her contact information and I will call them to discuss it further. Thank you for any help you can be.

Email:hannun7@yahoo.com

Mobile Phone, China (+86) 134-0202-0593

Christophe Marie

France

My greatgrandfather Ludwig TOCKUS left Hamburg in 1926 to China with his wife Kathe ABARBANELL. In 1933, Ludwig arrived in Tunisia but without his wife. I suppose that Kathe ABARBANELL died in China. How could I check this assertion?

Thank you for any information or advice.

Email: jankriss@wanadoo.fr

Leanne Minny

Sydney, Australia

My family comes from Hong Kong, Shanghai and Harbin from the mid 1800's to late 1940's. I have photographs and memorabilia from these times. Do you have any information on any of the families I am researching (list below).

Surnames are AARON, ABRAHAM, BENJAMIN, DAVID, FELLER, GATTON/GAHTAN, GOMERSALL, ISAACS, JONAH, JACOB, MINNY/MINNEY/MANI, MOOSA, MYERS/MEYERS, NISSIM, RUBAIN, REUBEN, SASSON, SHIBBETH, SOLOMON/SULIMAN,

Email: mlminny@optusnet.com.au

Tel: 0402 894 783

Meron family

We are looking for people related to this family and for people who know more details about their history. My mother's former name was Tatiana Zemina, born in 1938 in Harbin to Esther (Esphir) Zemina. My mother and her cousin Elle (Usa) are the only relatives we know about.

Email: shahaf@shamir.org.il

Tel: 04-6947037 052-6216018

Yves Berna

M.A. Sinology

I am working on my PhD study at the University of Mainz about the political background of the escape of European Jews to China, especially on the role of the Germans and the pressure they put on the Japanese government to create the Hongkew ghetto. I furthermore take an interest in the role of Ho Fengshan, the consul at the Chinese embassy in Vienna, in issuing visas to those Jews who left Austria for Shanghai.

Another question I would like to pursue is if there have been any citizens of Luxembourg who had travelled to Shanghai.

As I am coming to Israel at the beginning of March, I would like to ask you if you know where I can find relevant information for my PhD thesis. I already know about the archives of Beth Hatefutsoth and Yad Vashem.

I would really appreciate if you could help me in my endeavor to find relevant information about these two questions.

Email: yves.berna@education.lu

Tel: 00352 589138

"Bulletin" in 2007

Four issues of the "Bulletin" are to be published in 2007:

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No393 (dedicated to Rosh haShana holiday) to be out from press on August 20th 2007, articles and advertisements accepted not later August 1st 2007,

No 394(the Hanuka holiday issue) to be out from press on November 20th 2007.

Articles and advertisements accepted not later than November 10th 2007

Seminar in Harbin

By Avigdor Shahan

Greetings! I am still excited, shaken, and moved by the conference in Harbin, in the Heilongjiang region. I want to share this experience. I have rarely experienced such a lofty state of spiritual and national exaltation as I did at the international conference initiated, organized and attended by the Association of Former Residents of China in Israel on the history of the Jews in Harbin.

The conference included four days of meetings between former Harbin residents and their descendants in Israel and the Diaspora, senior officials in the local Heilongjiang government, academics, and senior and politically influential Chinese economic officials, journalists and guests, who came together from all over the world to remember the Jewish community in Harbin. Thanks are due to China for hosting the Jewish community there for 50 gloomy years, while the countries of the world were condemning, oppressing, and murdering the Jewish people.

For the four days of the conference, June 16-20, 2006, our Chinese hosts made every effort to make the city a pleasant place for their guests. Their speeches constantly extolled the greatness, intelligence, wisdom, and eternity of the Jewish people, as known to them through the Jewish community in Harbin. It was moving to hear senior Chinese officials repeat over and over that they had summoned the conference in order to study the wisdom of the Jewish people through the descendants of Harbin Jews from all over the world, and in order to penetrate the international Jewish community.

Even if our Chinese hosts slightly exaggerated our power and understanding, it is important to know how we, members of the Jewish

people, appear to the ancient and great Chinese people that lives at the opposite end of our continent, and which is winning a place of respect among the world's powers.

It is amazing to realize that the Association of Former Residents of China in Israel organized such a complex meeting and variegated program with character and distinction, and without mishaps or disruptions. It ended as it began, with celebration and ceremony, and with Jewish national pride that glorified our people. You, Teddy, closely supervised the entire conference to the last details, with praiseworthy prudence, experience, and command.

I felt a holy tremor during the visit to the synagogue, where an exhibit and a series of pictures about Jewish life in Harbin following the founding of the city were displayed. The city was actually founded by a group of Jews fleeing the horrors of pogroms in Czarist Russia, murders by Petlyura, and finally the cruel Communist regime, which persecuted any trace of Jewish heritage. Here in Harbin, in a remote corner of the world, the spiritual, moral, and practical greatness of Jewish leadership was revealed, together with their organizational talents and pragmatic understanding. They founded an entire Jewish community, with all of its institutions, in order to serve the members of that community: synagogues, elementary and high schools, a splendid retirement home, a soup kitchen, cultural and sports centers, and diversified cultural activity. It was a miniature Jewish state in the midst of a Chinese ocean, built without any outside help. They did it themselves, among themselves, within themselves, and with no one

else. The theme that dominated the life of this community, so remote from any other Jewish community, was Zionism in the spirit of Jewish tradition.

At a gathering in the synagogue, where Chinese dignitaries, officials, and representatives from Harbin made speeches, you declaimed clearly and lucidly in your deep voice, in the three languages you command: Hebrew, Russian and English. You answered the compliments about the Jewish community voiced by leaders and prominent citizens. In this atmosphere of spiritual uplift, I felt the fluttering of the wings of the divine presence that seemed to shelter the conference. The very walls whispered their thanks that this prodigious undertaking on the part of the leaders of a distant Jewish community finding refuge from persecution, rape, and murder had not fallen into forgetfulness and obscurity.

At the conference, I saw Israelis, people who arrived from Australia, the United States, and other far-off countries, who, in the presence of the exhibits and photographs of the daily life of the Jews in the Harbin community displayed on the walls of the synagogue, were moving their eyes from the sight and shedding tears.

We visited the former Jewish community center that served as a high school, where even the walls spoke Hebrew. The walls, engraved with Stars of David, bore witness to these conversations in the language of the Bible. Between these walls, you explained in detail about the problems facing the community leaders. In listing the names of the community leaders and activists, you spoke of them as if they were specks of gold,

lest, G-d forbid, one of them should be neglected and go unmentioned. You spoke of the lengthy discussions by the community leaders, among whom were your father, Dr. Avraham Kaufman, who led the community for many years, and your mother, Dr. Berta Schwartz-Kaufman of blessed memory, who shared with him the burden of community activity. Perhaps the solution of the riddle of the Harbin community and its social and spiritual success is its leaders, who were able to overcome natural differences of opinion. However, your review in the exhibit and in the "Bulletin", the publication of the Association of Former Residents of China in Israel, stresses the wonderful unity of the community and its leaders, despite its many shades of opinion. This stands out in particular, because you, Teddy, the leader of the community, although you do not belong to the Beitar political group, emphasize at every opportunity the Beitar movement in its full glory, its activity, and its wonderful contribution to the community and the spirit of Zionism that permeated it.

Furthermore, due to the superb organizational capability of the Jewish community leaders in Harbin, they even succeeded in enlisting the Russian and Chinese populations in several of their enterprises and organizations. To this day, those populations remember it with love, praise, and appreciation.

In the academic symposium on Jewish tradition and the daily spiritual and cultural life of the Jewish community in Harbin, the lecturers and specialists from around the world who took part stressed that its living spirit was the Zionist idea and the hope and struggle to found a Jewish state in the land of Israel. All the lecturers, Chinese and Jewish, noted that this community was an example and paragon in Jewish and general history of the organization of a community in a foreign land,

behaving almost like a miniature country. When the shofar sounded for the ingathering of the exiles, this community rose as one man, at the peak of its achievement, and immigrated to the promised land of the Jewish people – the land of Israel. In my opinion, the large amount of material accumulated in these lectures at the Harbin conference should be combined, edited, and printed as resource material for future generations.

More than anything else, dear Teddy, the visit to the cemetery of the Jewish community in Harbin thrilled my soul – when the children of the community fathers attending the conference, and their children, visited the graves of the fathers and loved ones. I will never forget the sight of one of the Israeli families, who was unable to find the tomb of their loved one. You ran around, bending over the graves in the pouring rain, holding in your hands the list of graves. You did not let up until you found the grave. This is the kind of Jewish leader that the Jewish community in Harbin engendered.

When I was by myself, after returning from the conference, I calculated that your father, Dr. Avraham Kaufman, who had the "privilege" of becoming a Prisoner of Zion, spending 15 years in a labor camp on the Russian steppes; your mother, Dr. Berta Schwartz-Kaufman; and you, Teddy Kaufman; have jointly led the community of Harbin and those who immigrated from there to Israel and the rest of the world for 80 years. Fate, or the master of Jewish history, desired that the leadership of this community be placed in your loyal hands. The master of this community's history will bear witness that you performed your task loyally, as you were charged with doing, with flair, restraint, and great love.

At the conference, your wife Rasha, sat in the row behind me. She was short in stature, calm, and modest, with smile of wisdom

and understanding on her face. I wondered how many thousands of hours this tiny woman waited in expectation of your return from your public activity, while you were busy organizing annual conferences for distributing scholarships to students, assisting the needy, helping the disabled, supporting the helpless, and initiating other activities on behalf of the community. How much sacrifice, generosity, and nobility there is in the silent smile of this tiny woman!

For this "rectification," you, the leaders of the Harbin community for all its generations, including your parents, Dr. Avraham Kaufman of blessed memory and your mother; you and your wife, who have lived through the 80 years of the Harbin community – I wish you eternal blessings!

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China today

By Wu Wei

Clay Figurines

(“China and the World Cultural Exchange”)

Recently a Beijing art and handicraft gallery, “The Tang Dynasty Pavilion” held an opening exhibition of clay figurines by an amateur sculptor, Zhang Yujun, a man in his forties, who silently moved amongst the spectators, without being known to any of them. The show was based on the theme of the classical opera *The Tea House*. When the visiting hours were over and the crowd of art lovers left the gallery, Zhang and I sat down in a cozy corner of the spacious hall and talked over a cup of green Jiu long tea.

I, as an art critic of the Cultural Exchange, wanted to know more about Zhang’s approach to sculpture and his technique of working in clay. Q.: How is it that an artist without any professional training or background could produce such an array of sophisticated clay images. And that – in a fortnight.

A.: Because I like to sculpt.

Q.: But this alone is hardly sufficient to obtain such great results. Tell me more.

Zhang’s story was fascinating. He was born and grew up in a narrow Peking lane (hutongs). Even as a child, he seemed to be different from other children: he never asked his parents to buy him toys. He created them with his own hands. He modeled miniature clay lions after the big stone ones standing at the gate of his fang tzu (house). He modeled clay soldiers, battle junks. He modeled anything he saw – at home or in the street. After graduating from middle school, he began studying calligraphy and painting. And, especially, he

studied looking and training his sight memory never to forget what he saw. Focusing on portraits, he could scrutinize people’s faces for hours, and later reproduce them on paper, and then – in clay. He studied the play of light and shadow and the gradation of their brightness and depth. In time it became a part of his self to look and remember. At first he used to sketch his portraits from nature. Then he began to compose his own images in various positions and expressions. He never tired. For him it was to play in clay.

“I felt that in sculpture I could create much more vivid images than on a flat surface, like paper or silk, and I went for it,” says Zhang.

His early clay figurines were primarily of neighbors in his hutong, food vendors, bird watchers, cricket keepers, traveling fortune-tellers. He showed his work to his family and friends, and, seeing their enthusiastic appreciation, finally decided to offer some of the figurines for sale. The result was beyond all his expectations. Zhang quit his job as a government petty official, rent a studio in Wang Fu-jing, capital’s prestigious shopping area, and took clay modeling as his profession.

His skill increased, Zhang decided to take “a great leap” into the future and to realize his great dream: to depict the famous classical opera, “The tea House”, in clay. He became a permanent visitor of local tea houses and restaurants, sketching and modeling and photographing other visitors, furniture and utensils. At last he felt psychologically ripe and technically prepared to begin to work on his masterpiece – a clay version of one of the scenes in the opera.

“The important difference between

acting and sculpting,” says Zhang, “is that drama depicts the characters, emotion and thoughts by speech and action, whereas sculpture speaks in gestures, postures and facial expressions, imprinted on clay by the hand of the sculptor, coordinated with his mind and heart.”

For his masterpiece, Zhang chose a scene, where 13 characters are shown in poses so eloquent, that the stunned spectator finds himself almost physically, participating in their mute conversation at separate tables. The setting and props are sketchy and simple, so as not to interfere with the main attraction – the clay actors.

“What are your plans for the future, Mr. Zhang?”

He does not give a specific answer, but we can easily guess.

(Edited by Emmanuel Pratt).





An Israeli Visits Kaifeng

by Gavriel Cohen

My name is Gavriel. I am 23 years old from Tel Aviv, Israel. After finishing a three-year army service I decided, as is fairly popular among young Israelis, upon finishing their army service to go traveling for a few months. I decided to travel to the Far East, choosing China as my primary destination. It's a complicated and interesting country, possibly now more than ever, and I ended up spending over five months traveling there.

I started my travels in Beijing, where I landed in mid-November. About a week later, on a day train to the city of Datong, an important historical Buddhist center, I decided to go to Kaifeng, which I knew to be the ancient capital of China and the home of China's oldest Jewish community. Having not prepared for this, having no real knowledge about the city, I spent quite some time trying to find out as much information as possible. I read a couple of guidebooks, which were helpful in information about the city itself – tourist sites, accommodation, etc. – and which had very little information about the Jewish history there. I remembered having read an article or two and having watched a TV program or two about the subject in the past, but I had only a vague recollection of those. I thus turned to the Internet. The net proved itself, as always, to be a good source for information. Some of the sites I found were actually promotional sites – some for books, some for companies arranging Jewish history tours in China. Of all the sites containing a good historical

background on the subject, two noteworthy ones are those of the Sino-Judaic Institute (<http://www.sino-judaic.org>) and Beit Hatfutsot (<http://www.bh.org.il>). Each of those websites contained an interesting in-depth account of the city's Jewish history.

I thus arrived in Kaifeng in late November of 2005 with some knowledge about the city's Jewish and other history. I was however, faced with a question that seemed almost impossible to answer – I had some knowledge about the Jewish history in the city and about the city itself, but absolutely no clue about real Jewish life in modern day Kaifeng. How do I begin exploring this in a place this in a place where I don't speak the local language and don't know anyone who can help me?

I contacted Rabbi Anson Laytner of the SJI through the institutions website. He replied quickly, providing me with the details of his contact – Prof. Zhang Qianlong, head of the institute of Jewish studies at Henan University. I tried to contact her and kept looking for something that could help me find a way to contact today's Jewish descendants in the city. I spent the next 3 days walking around town, seeing the local tourist attractions and trying to find out as much further information as possible on the Internet. Finding the information regarding Jewish life nowadays turned out to be quite difficult for than one reason. As I mentioned, information about modern Jewish life in Kaifeng is hardly available on the

internet. But suppose I did find it – what would I actually be looking for? I knew that there was no religious aspect to Jewish life in modern day's Kaifeng and I hardly expected to find any organized Jewish establishment there. I didn't even know if I would find anyone who speaks English – pretty important, considering the fact that I don't speak any Chinese... To top it all off, the best information I could find about independent visits to Kaifeng were very discouraging posts on internet forums – threads started by people seeking the same information as me were answered only by people who had come out of Kaifeng disappointed at not finding any trace of the alleged Jews there. I thus spent the first days of my visit to Kaifeng reading discouraging reports and seeing the city's main tourist attractions. I found it to be a very pleasant, laid-back city. The city obviously lacked a very important feature that characterized the other cities I'd been in before – tourists. In 5 days I spent in Kaifeng I only counted 3 other foreigners in the entire city, of whom I spoke to 2. The lack of foreigners was a refreshing change and meant that I got a more impartial impression of the day-to-day life led by the city's inhabitants, regardless of annoying tourists. One thing that stood out was the city's night market, which is the nicest most authentic one I've found in China. The very prominent Muslim population is very nice and inviting. Though the Muslims at the local mosque spoke no Arabic, they were quite happy to meet someone who

did and responded with surprise and interest. And they make the best food in town (with no pork on the menu). The “Iron Pagoda” was nice though unremarkable. Longting Park was a pleasant place to spend an afternoon. The Shanshangan guild hall was nice too. The old synagogue’s well was exactly what it was said to be – a well in a boiler room, attended by Chinese laborers. All of these sites were nice, though not enough to justify a special trip to Kaifeng.

I also saw the municipal museum, a boring gray group of exhibitions in a boring gray building. The exhibition about the Jewish history was a little underwhelming and less than what I expected. A museum worker took me up to the forsaken 4th floor of the museum, and opened the door leading to the exhibition. When he turned on the lights it was made quite clear that the place is not visited too often. It was quite dusty and dark. The exhibits are all located in one room, it seemed that the adjacent smaller room was being prepared to display some more exhibits though none were on display at the time. The items on display were all in Chinese, as were the signs accompanying the various exhibits, of which very little, if at all, was translated into English. Only based on my prior reading did I realize the importance of these items. This being said, the visit to the museum was definitely worth my time as it enabled me to visualize some of the thing I read about.

Here it would be interesting to mention a coincidence that occurred a few weeks later, in Xi’an. I was waiting for a friend in his hotel. While waiting I started talking with an Australian woman who worked in China as an English teacher. She said she had a friend who was very interested in Kaifeng’s Jewish history, and that this friend had decided to take it upon herself to translate all of the exhibits in the above mentioned exhibition into English. It was quite a funny coincidence that I happened to

meet another person who’d actually been to Kaifeng, let alone come to know such interesting and pleasant information. That conversation was brief and lasted only 10 minutes and I did not get any more information on that matter. I don’t know if her friends’ intentions were serious or if they were carried out. This was in December and quite some time has passed – it would be very nice to go back and see the entire exhibition accompanied with comprehensive English translations and explanations. If it has not yet been done – it’s definitely a task worth undertaking. On the morning of my third day in Kaifeng, I met Jason – a local tour guide/tricycle driver who spoke English and offered to take me around town. I tried my luck, telling him that I wasn’t interested in going around town but only in meeting some of the city’s Jewish inhabitants. I was fairly surprised when he said that he could arrange that. He said he knew some Jews and could take me to meet them on the next day. I immediately agreed and we set a date for the next morning.

When I met Jason the next morning, we got right to it. I got on the tricycle and he started pedaling towards the old synagogue. Jason is not his real name, only the English name he chose for himself as many Chinese do for nowadays, to make communication with foreigners easier. He is a self-thought English speaker and speaks relatively good English. He is a devout Christian and so on the way he kept reciting full passages from the New and Old Testaments in English with great pride. He told me about some other foreigners that he’d taken around the city, of whom many were Jews, interested in meeting other Jews. He thus came to know a few Jews around town. After I told him that I’d already seen the old synagogue well, we turned into what later turned out to be “Teaching the Tora Lane South”. This narrow alley way, built in the old traditional Chinese style,

is very close to the place of the old synagogue. This is where the Jewish community was centered in the past and where some of the Jewish descendents still live today. This is geographically speaking very close to both the center of the walled city and to the place of the municipal market – a location that seems to indicate some importance, as it was given to the Jews by the authorities with the intention of making it their home.

Within the lane, we stopped by just another house and got off the tricycle. In the front courtyard there was a sewing circle of three elderly women. Jason turned to one of them, introduced me to her and told her why I was there. She said hello. She left the sewing circle and invited us into her house. The house was made of one room which had in it a kitchen, a bed, and a table at which we sat. The house seemed rather old and gloomy, and was spotted with Judaica – hanukkiot (Hanukkah candelabras), hamsot (“no evil eye” hands), Hebrew signs, drawings of the old Jewish synagogue etc. I even spotted a mezuzah on the doorstep.

We talked for a while. The conversation was held in English on my part and in Chinese on her part, with Jason the tricycle driver translating. She turned out to be Han Chinese and not Jewish by origin. This woman’s late husband was a prominent figure in the Jewish community and died only shortly before my arrival. She had accepted her husband’s religious beliefs and now believes in one god, according to Judaism. And also refrains from eating pork.

She has five daughters, whom she considers to be Jews – though if she was Jewish and not her husband, she would not consider them to be such. It was interesting to find out that in Chinese culture a child’s religion is decided according to his or her father’s religion (like in Islam) as opposed to Judaism where the child is considered Jewish if the mother is Jewish. This

(Continued on page 18)



(Continued from page 17)

raises the obvious halachic (Jewish legal) problems in recognizing these people as Jews. None of the people I talked to knew that in Judaism it's the mother's religion that determines the child's and no one seemed to care too much.

On the wall were pictures of her late husband and his family. She claimed the menorah and mezuzah were centuries old. It was obvious, going by the amount of Judaica objects and pictures and English and Hebrew on the walls, that she was visited by other foreigners before us. And indeed she said the house was frequented by foreigners – especially Jews – who came to meet her (and her husband, in the past) quite often. She said that she is in touch with other Jews in Kaifeng, but not in contact

with Jews from outside Kaifeng. She claimed that in her family, like in other families in Kaifeng the Jewish identity results in almost no religious customs – they don't take the tendons out of the meat like people used to do and they don't conduct any religious ceremonies such as Bar Mitzvahs, Births or weddings.

Before we came into her house Jason warned me that this woman is a little weird. I kept asking questions, about Jewish life in general and her family's life in particular. At some point with no prior warning she asked us to leave. She tried to sell me some of the artifacts she had in her house just before that. I thought I asked too many questions, Jason said she expected me to give her some money or something. This way or the other we were told to leave and so we

did. Indeed a weird weary old woman. It seemed like this woman was used to meeting foreigners and was expecting some sort of payment for her hospitality – not exactly the warm welcome I was expecting. Moreover this made me feel like she was beyond any interest in meeting foreign people, like she was at a point where her entire interest was in taking advantage of the opportunity to sell something and get money or gifts. This made me feel a little uncomfortable and not particularly welcome, even before we were told to leave. I had come out of this encounter thinking that Jews are truly assimilated in Kaifeng – that marriages and trade

relations have brought them to be a fully equal part of the local society. And yet it was weird to see just to what extent this household was keen on showing that it was different – with the amount of Judaica artifacts on her walls, with the silent statement of having a mezuzah on her doorstep. I thus didn't know exactly what to expect from the other Jews in Kaifeng, when we left “Teaching the Torah Lane South” and headed out to meet another Jewish family that Jason is acquainted with.

(to be continued)

Readers are requested to notify the editor whether any personal names have been incorrectly spelt.

Thank you

Our Family Love Story

Rivka Sue Newman

I was born in Chongqing in Szechuan Province, China. Chongqing is located in the southwest of China. The city is encircled by two rivers and many mountains. It is a beautiful city in mainland China.

“Chongqing” has a long history. It was the capital city in China during World War II. My parents moved to Chongqing when they studied geology there. They married and made a home in Chongqing. My parents were geology teachers. They told me the knowledge of diamonds, gems and beautiful natural stones. Eventually, they led me to design and make jewelry.

The name of Chongqing means double joy and celebration in Chinese. I grew up in Chongqing. I have had a cheerful character because of the good name of Chongqing. Chongqing was famous for fog and rain. I couldn't have outdoor fun on the bad weather days, so I developed a hobby reading books. I wanted to live a meaningful life and fulfill my purpose in the world. Not only I wished to read thousands of books, but also I wanted to travel thousands of miles. I dreamt to see the world.

My grandmother's hometown was in Kaifeng, the northern capital city where Jews lived in China in the history. There was a fascinating story about my grandmother's ancestor. Long-long time ago, we had a Jewish ancestor from the Middle East who carried diamonds and precious stones crossing through the Silk Road to trade diamonds at profits in China. During the golden age of Kaifeng, it was the richest city in the world. Chinese Jews had built synagogues and Jewish communities in Kaifeng. Later Kaifeng Jewish communities were perished because of constant famines, Yellow River flooding and wars. My grandmother fled from Kaifeng when Japanese army invaded China in the beginning of the World War II.

My grandmother passed away many years ago. She came to my dream and told my Jewish ancestor's story. I

decided to follow my dream searching for vague Jewish root.

I was raised by Chinese culture. I knew little about Israel or the Jewish people before I went to Israel. I went with my father to the library in order to research the subject of Jews and Israel. We were amazed by the incredible accomplishments in Israel. My father said, “This is a wise people, go and learn from them.”

In August 1999, I left China to Israel. I had studied Jewish history and Torah in Jerusalem. I became to love Shabbath the seventh day of rest every week. I had celebrated Jewish holidays with Jewish families, dipping apples into honey and eating Matzot on Pesach... My Jewish soul was revived. After I had learned Judaism in Jerusalem a few years, I decided to be a Jew for the rest of my life. I converted into Judaism under the auspices of The Orthodox Rabbinate Beit Din (Jewish Religious Court) in Jerusalem. Coincidentally, like my legendary Jewish ancestor I had worked in diamond Jewelry business in Israel Diamond Exchange Center.

When I studied Torah, I liked Rivka and Yitzhak's love story in Bible. I wish I will have a good Jewish husband like Yitzhak. He will be my best friend. We can share life together. I chose my Hebrew name “Rivka”.

Sue is my Chinese name. My parents named me “Sue” with good wish and hope. The word of “Sue” in Chinese means a pretty girl who does not depend on her beauty; she works for her brilliant future. “Sue” would like to be a beautiful lily flower growing and blossoming quietly. This is Rivka Sue's story.

I moved from Israel to America because I met my soul mate Geoffrey Newman. His Hebrew name is Yitzhak. We married and made our home in Connecticut. My husband and I love and complete each other. We have a beautiful young daughter. Our home is filled with music, books and happiness.

Rivka Sue & Geoff's Story

Rivka Sue was working in the Israel Diamond Exchange Center, and traveling to the Far East on business. Geoff studied Chinese in Columbia University, and was their first exchange student to Beijing University in 1980. After graduating, he lived and worked in

Beijing, Hong Kong, and then Tokyo, working for United Technologies. UTC brought Geoff to work in Fuel Cell in Connecticut in 2000.

When Rivka Sue traveled to Beijing and HongKongondiamondjewelrybusiness, people in the Jewish community in both places recommended that Rivka Sue and Geoff should meet each other. Geoff went to Jerusalem, met Rivka Sue; they fell in love and then not long after got married in Jerusalem on June 28, 2005. Then they came back to Connecticut together.

Geoff continues to work in fuel cells for United Technologies, and Rivka Sue is a jewelry designer.

Our Daughter Miriam Minyi Newman

Our daughter Miiram Minyi Newman was born in Hartford Connecticut in April 5th, 2006 (Hebrew calendar: Nisan 7th, 5766).

We named her Miriam Minyi Newman. Miriam is her first name in Hebrew and English, in order to honor our four grandmothers and great-grandmother. In the memory of Rivka Sue's grandmother, Wen Zhen, who came from Kaifeng and inspired Rivka Sue during difficult times with the vision of family ancestor's who had come to China from Israel long ago, and inspired her to make the journey to Israel in search of knowledge. We named our daughter middle name: Minyi in Chinese, and means “peace, joy and goodness for a beautiful smart girl”.

Miriam Minyi Newman is growing well with lots of love and good care. This is our Newman family story.

In China, a Growing Interest in All Things Jewish

By Paul Mooney

It's a Friday night in the capital of the eastern coastal province of Shandong, and a group of several dozen young Chinese university students gather for dinner at an apartment just a few blocks away from the campus of Shandong University. Save for some hummus, the dining table is weighed down with Chinese food. But this is not your typical Friday-night meal in China. First, the gathered students bow in prayer, covering their faces with their hands as candles are lit. Then, led by M. Avrum Ehrlich, a former rabbi and now a professor of Judaic studies in the School of Philosophy and Social Studies at Shandong University, the group sings songs and recites prayers together as several participants crane their necks to read the Hebrew script in shared books. The male students wear yarmulkes. One even wears a T-shirt emblazoned with a large blue Star of David.

Mr. Ehrlich finishes the ritual blessings over the wine and the bread, and offers a toast. At last the students take their seats and begin to eat, as the room fills with animated conversation. All but two of the guests at this weekly celebration of the Jewish Sabbath in Mr. Ehrlich's apartment are Chinese students of Judaism at Shandong University. Mr. Ehrlich, a 37-year-old professor from Australia, is one of the first foreign academics to teach Hebrew, Bible, Talmudic thought, and the Kabbalah in China. His ambitious plan is to put this sleepy provincial university on the map as an international center of Judaic studies.

Part of Mr. Ehrlich's pedagogy is to immerse his students in rituals central to Judaism. Thus he holds this weekly gathering at his apartment – complete

with chopsticks.

"It's sort of a fusion Chinese Shabbat," he quips. Pop into any of the classrooms in the building that houses the School of Philosophy and Social Studies on Shandong's tree-shaded campus and you are likely to see students reading the Bible in Hebrew, conjugating Hebrew verbs, thumbing through the Talmud – a centuries-old collection of Jewish law and commentary – or debating the similarities between Judaism and Confucianism.

The enthusiasm for studying Judaism expressed by Mr. Ehrlich's students reflects a growing interest in that religion elsewhere in China as well, both in academe and in popular culture. Along with Shandong, 10 other Chinese universities now offer courses in Jewish studies.

Although Judaism is not one of China's five officially recognized opiates of the masses, as Lenin described organized religion – Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism, and Roman Catholicism – the study of its history, ritual, cultural influence, and language is on the rise here.

Buried Roots, New Shoots

Little Chinese interest in Judaism was apparent until recently. The triumph of Maoist Communism after World War II was a major obstacle to studying the topic. China's Communist leaders have traditionally looked on religion with disdain, and religious studies in general have been a risky endeavor. But the country does have a long and rich history of contact with, and interest in, Jews and Judaism. A small Jewish community thrived in the city of Kaifeng, in eastern China, for 700 years. (Some of the Sinicized descendants of

those early Jews remain there today.)

In the early 20th century, Chinese intellectuals, who were keen to see China modernize, looked to the Jewish experience for inspiration. In the 1920s, Yiddish literature provided an example for the development of vernacular Chinese. And Sun Yat-sen, father of the Chinese Republican revolution, praised the Zionist movement as a model for popular independence. During World War II, Shanghai, Harbin, and Tianjin served as refuges for thousands of Jews who fled into China from Europe.

The political and cultural reopening of China in the late 1970s opened the gates for the study of religion in general, and Judaism in particular, at many universities, such as the one in Jinan. But one of the most prominent Chinese scholars of Judaism says he stumbled into the field by accident. Xu Xin, 56, director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, was a Red Guard during the disastrous Cultural Revolution (1966-76). He was in high school when the Cultural Revolution began, and at the age of 18 was sent to the countryside to work for two years. He entered Nanjing University in 1973 as a worker-peasant-soldier and graduated three years later. As academic life returned to normal, Mr. Xu focused his attention on post-World War II American literature. He was particularly attracted to American Jewish writers – especially after Saul Bellow won the 1976 Nobel Prize for Literature.

"I never thought I'd focus on Jewish literature," says Mr. Xu. "There were a hundred Chinese professors doing Bellow, Malamud, Roth and Singer, and I was just doing a small bit."

The Jewish Observances

But in order to understand those writers, Mr. Xu says, he realized that he would have to learn more about Jewish culture. So he dug into Jewish studies, taking off in 1986 to live with a Jewish family in the United States. He knew nothing about Jews at the time. He thought Hebrew was a dead language. Mr. Xu had not even met a Jew until 1985, when an American professor, James Friend, turned up at Nanjing to teach English literature for six months. The two scholars hit it off, and Mr. Xu was invited to teach for two years at Chicago State University, where Mr. Friend was chairman of the English department. During the first year, Mr. Xu lived with the Friend family, at their home in Lincolnwood, Ill.

During his first week in the United States, he attended a bat mitzvah. He then worked his way through the Jewish calendar, observing Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, and other Jewish holidays with friends and relatives of the Friends. When Mr. Friend died of a heart attack in 1987, Mr. Xu attended a Jewish funeral as well.

The journey had a major impact on him. "When you live with someone every day for a year, you see their life and way of thinking," he says. "I lived with a Jewish family and went through all the traditions and rites. I felt the traditional Jewish way of thinking and philosophy could provide many valuable lessons for China."

For instance, he recalls learning the Jewish concept of tzedaka, or charity and justice for those in need. Jewish law commands Jews to give tzedaka according to their ability. Charity is a concept that is basically alien to most Chinese, says Mr. Xu. He tells of his surprise when Jewish friends readily donated money to some worthy cause. "They were middle class," he says, "and I asked them why."

He also marveled at Jewish friends who regularly read the Talmud and the Torah "just for the love of learning," comparing them with his Chinese colleagues who, he says, learn just to

pass exams or get better jobs. "How many Chinese scholars read Confucian classics every day?" he asks.

At the end of his trip abroad from China, he jumped at the chance to go to Israel. "My visit to Israel was just 10 days," he recalls, "but it shook me." Among Chinese people, he says, Israel is usually thought of as a war-torn country, but he was surprised by its modernity. Before heading home, he went to a bookstore and spent his remaining money on books about Judaism. "I didn't buy my wife a gift," he says laughing. "I just bought books."

Finding Structure

Upon returning to Nanjing in 1989, as chairman of the English department, Mr. Xu set up the China Judaic Studies Association with the help of prominent American Jews. He met like-minded Chinese scholars who had studied in Europe and exchanged ideas with them. "We had a saying," he says. "Without understanding Jews, you can't understand the Western world". In 1992 he established the Jewish-studies center at Nanjing, the first of its kind in China. Since then, Mr. Xu has studied the Talmud at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Yiddish at Columbia University, and Hebrew again at the Ulpan Akiva, or Hebrew school, in Netanya, Israel. He has also done two stints at the Center for Judaic Studies at Harvard University, and has compiled a lengthy CV of scholarly works in English and Chinese, including monographs, scholarly articles, and translations. Most impressive among them is his translation of the abridged version of the Encyclopedia Judaica, with 800-plus pages and more than 1,600 entries.

Some 300 undergraduates at Nanjing enroll each year in "Jewish Culture and World Civilization," an elective course. Although only a handful of students are in the Jewish-studies center's graduate and Ph.D. programs, Mr. Xu says he has more students applying than he can accept. "My students are excited because they've never heard these

things before," he says. "They never thought they could view life in this way." Each year one Ph.D. candidate goes to Israel to study Hebrew.

The center, which is run out of a small space on the Nanjing campus, is scheduled to move in November to the Glazer Center for Jewish Studies, which was built with donations from American and British Jews. The new building will provide much-needed space for classrooms; the collection of 7,000 books, which is still growing; an exhibition room; and a conference room.

Fu Youde, a professor of philosophy at Shandong University, relates a similar tale of an accidental discovery and a rapid growth in interest and academic enterprise. Mr. Fu, who is China's leading expert on George Berkeley, the 18th century Irish philosopher, was invited to work on a project to translate the works of Baruch Spinoza, the 17th century philosophy of Jewish background, into Chinese.

He knew nothing about Judaism at the time, so in 1992 he traveled to the University of Oxford to study Hebrew, the Talmud, the Bible, Jewish history, and Jewish ethics. He moved on to London, where he continued his studies for one more year at Leo Baeck College, an institution of Jewish learning.

Mr. Fu never finished his ambitious translation project, but like Mr. Xu, he came away convinced that China had a lot to learn from the Jewish tradition. "I came to realize the importance of Jewish culture, and that it could play an important role in the future of China," he says.

When he returned to Shandong in 1994, Mr. Fu established the Center for Judaic and Interreligious Studies, a project he says the university readily supported. The center is now developing a library and research center, with books coming in from individuals and libraries all over the world. On a recent afternoon, Noam Urbach, a Hebrew teacher from Israel, stands in his office going through

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

boxes of donated books, brushing off dust with his hand as he separates them into stacks.

Piquing Interest

The program at Shandong is recruiting students from all over China and hopes to attract international students as well. It has held international conferences, playing host to international scholars who have included Elliot R. Wolfson, an expert on Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism. Last July the Shandong center held a summer program in Jewish studies that attracted students in various disciplines from around the country. Shandong's Mr. Ehrlich says the program is translating dozens of academic works and Jewish classics, along with 15 books by American Jewish writers, including *The Chosen*, by Chaim Potok, and *This is My God*, by Herman Wouk.

Zhang Can, a graduate student of Mr. Ehrlich's, became interested in Judaism as an undergraduate studying philosophy. This month she plans to go to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for a year, where she will do a comparative study of the Chinese and Jewish diasporas. She will return to Shandong to complete her Ph.D.

Ms. Zhang has been studying Hebrew for a year, and Mr. Ehrlich is proud of her. He pulls a Hebrew-language book off a shelf, hands it to the young woman, and asks her to read. As her finger moves deliberately across the page, she slowly says the words aloud, translating into halting but fluent English the biblical story of Jacob.

Ask Mr. Ehrlich about China's growing fascination with things Jewish, and the talkative former rabbi ticks off a number of theories. He agrees with Mr. Xu that Chinese students and scholars feel that studying Jewish history and philosophy is an excellent starting point for understanding the fundamentals of Western civilization. But he also believes that among Chinese people, "the sense of affinity with the Jews because of a shared notion of suffering is very strong." Mr.

Ehrlich points out that in the 1970s, as China was emerging from the Cultural Revolution, the *Diary of Anne Frank* sold 40 million copies in that country. Chinese readers apparently identified with the plight of the young Jewish girl. The book may have "served as a canvas for observing their own condition," he says.

Chinese citizens can also benefit from adopting the Jewish notion of critical but constructive self-examination, says Mr. Ehrlich. "Many Chinese are fascinated with the absence of censorship, the liberal criticism heaped on Jewish protagonists, the lack of uniformity in thinking and practice, and the high degree of innovation exuding from the Jewish experience," he argues. "They are curious about how the Jews can remain united without consensus, without obsession with land, and without homogeneity of any sort."

A look at the list compiled by Mr. Ehrlich of some 50 scholarly articles written in China about Judaism over the past decade offers an idea of where Chinese interest lies: "The Reason Why There Are So Many Outstanding Jews"; "From the Success of Jews to Chinese Education"; "An Analysis of the Factors Behind the Cohesiveness of Jews."

Such interest has spilled over into Chinese popular culture, says Mr. Ehrlich, although there the books tend to be not only more superficial but, in some cases, anti-Semitic. In the past year alone, he says, at least 10 books have been published in Chinese with titles like "The Secret of the Jews" and "How to be a Jewish Millionaire". Mr. Ehrlich is quick to emphasize, however, that the Chinese are not anti-Semitic, and that the Chinese stereotypes are "more complimentary than contemptuous."

Model of Reform

Shandong's Mr. Fu is quick to draw similar connections. He argues that of all peoples, the Jews have been the most successful in dealing with the challenges of modernity. "The

goal of Jewish reform ... was to retain Jewish cultural identity by preserving Judaism while accepting modernity and merging into Western society," he says. He sees the Reform movement in 19th-century Judaism as a model for China. The movement's goal, he says, was to transform the Jew into a European, integrated into Western culture, who at the same time would remain faithful to his religion. "The Jews have modernized themselves materially," he says, "living a modern life in Western countries on the one hand, and they have maintained their cultural identity – namely their Jewishness – on the other."

As China has transformed its economy into a market system, Mr. Fu continues, Chinese people have grown perplexed about who they are. "Most Chinese do not know what their cultural identity is and how to keep it," he says. "In short, they have lost their 'Chineseness' and are soulless."

Mr. Fu sees Confucianism, the social philosophy that shaped the thinking and behavior of Chinese for centuries, as playing a role similar to that which Judaism played for Jews. Although many Chinese do not deem Confucianism a religion, Mr. Fu argues that Chinese are thirsty for religion and a spiritual way of life, and that the country is a "hotbed for Confucianism to take root, sprout, and grow up." Indeed, Confucianism has enjoyed a revival in China in recent years, with scholars dusting off the writings of the man once vilified by the Communists for his "feudal" thinking, and universities offering courses in what is known as *guoxue*, or national studies.

For the time being, however, scholars such as Mr. Ehrlich, Mr. Fu, and Mr. Xu are focusing on training the next generation of scholars both to examine Jewish studies and to see its connections to Chinese traditions both ancient and modern.

(From *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 11, 2006)

Legends of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng

(continued from the previous issue)

16. The Twelve Golden Calves

One year, Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) was on his way back to the capital after making an inspection tour to South China. When he arrived in Kaifeng, he decided to tarry for a few days to visit the city that had been the capital of the Song Dynasty. The municipal officials were elated and felt deeply honored. They tried their best to please the emperor during his stay. They showed him the Dragon Tower, the forbidden city of the Song emperors, and the Xiangguo monastery, served him the best food the town could offer, and prepared tributes of every kind. But they had no idea what the emperor would like best.

One evening, after a banquet, the emperor suddenly had a yen to take a walk through the city and see the local streets and life at first hand. As he approached Earth Market Street, where the Yehuda Silk Mill was located, he saw a place full of lights. The emperor loved silk products. When he learned that he was standing outside a silk mill, he delightedly asked to visit it.

The front hall of the silk mill served as a very large shop. It opened full on the street, and above the doors long silk banners waved in the wind. Upon these was the name of the mill in Chinese characters. The hall was

resplendent with multicolored silk and satin, which were hung on all the shelves.

When he was informed of the emperor's presence, Yehuda hastened from the inner hall to welcome him. "Please forgive me, Your Imperial Majesty, but we did not know of your

emperor was very impressed by the super-quality of the silk produced at Yehuda's mill.

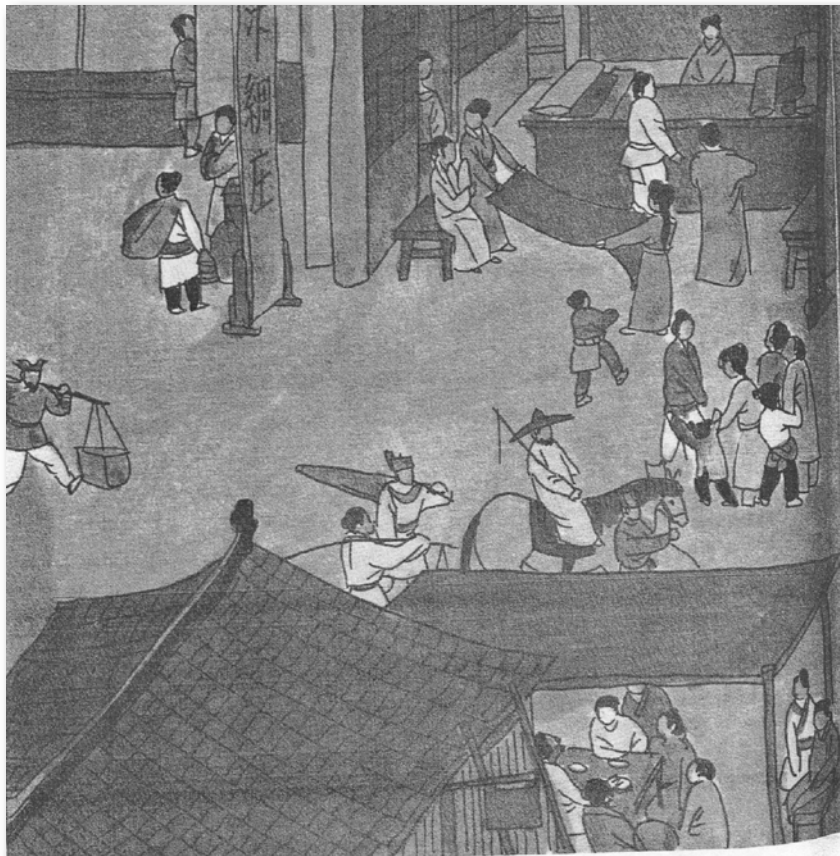
"Marvellous! Superb! He said over and over. Before he left, he wrote a testimonial inscription for Yehuda's enterprise: "Number One Silk Mill in the World".

The municipal officials were overjoyed by the emperor's delight with the clothing produced by Yehuda's silk mill. In future, they would never have to worry about what to send him as tribute. They immediately ordered twelve bolts of yellow brocade as a tributary gift for the emperor and the royal family.

Yehuda realized that from his dream of twelve golden calves to his discovery of twelve gold ingots he had reached the ultimate experience, the honor of having twelve glorious bolts of the silk

he produced being bestowed on his emperor. From that day on, the yellow brocade made in the Yehuda Silk Mill became more precious than gold, and was a permanent article of tribute from the officials of Kaifeng to the Qing emperors.

With its prosperity and further expansion, the Yehuda Silk Mill began to play a very important role in the economic development of Kaifeng. It became one of the city's main sources of revenue. Thus the Jewish contribution to the city was once again of benefit to its people.



coming and for that reason failed to welcome you from afar", Yehuda said humbly.

"That's all right", said the emperor. "We did not inform you in advance. Are all these your products?" The emperor's attention was focused on the silk.

"Yes, I made it all", replied Yehuda.

"Please show me some of your finest".

"Surely, Your Imperial Majesty".

Yehuda took the emperor to the choice commodities room and showed him his finest products. The

Manchuria - My City

Riva Basin

***Dedicated to my Husband
Sema
To whom Manchuria
belongs as well.
And to our children and
grand children
With Our Love***

I was born in Manchuria, a province of northeast China, with borders with Siberia and Mongolia, in a little remote city named Manchuria. In this remote part of the world, at the beginning of the century, a group of Jewish immigrants from Russia settled, among whom were my parents, all escaped from the Tsarist dictatorship and the virulent anti-Semitism that was rampant in Russia. In this period of time Russia and China were building the East China Railway that connected Siberia with Port Arthur and was a source of employment for the population. In spite of the harsh weather conditions, where the winter temperature went down to -40°C , plus other physical adaptation difficulties, the Jewish community commenced to build its institutions. In a short period of time the Synagogue, the Jewish School, the Mikve, the Chevra-Kadisha, and a kosher food store were established and the Jewish community life flourished. Manchuria looked beautiful under the white blanket of snow, which sometimes reached a depth of 2 meters, and in clear weather the sky was covered with thousands of sparkling stars. The yard of every house was decorated with a snowman that melted only when spring came. Near every house a large pile of snow was heaped together and water was poured over it, which froze immediately turning the snow into ice. On this heap the children used to slide down with their sleds, which was a happy and healthy sport. Also among the winter pastimes, ice-skating was very popular.

The Hebrew language was taught in the Jewish school while the rest of the subjects were taught in the Russian language, the teachers were Russian,

refugees from the Russian revolution, most of whom were very highly educated. The graduates of this school were accepted into the Russian College without any entrance exams.

As strange as it may sound for that period of time, various group classes were held in this school. Ballet and physical exercises were managed by a German gentile who was adopted by the community. He was a wonderful person and all the children loved him and participated in his group classes with pleasure. In addition to his two group classes that he was managing he also organized a choir. During the L'G Baomer holidays picnics were organized in the Manchurian country side and I am at a loss for words to describe the beauty of this country side, a kaleidoscope of flowers of all the colors imaginable.

The school library had books in the Russian and the Yiddish languages that serviced the entire community, during holidays, like Purim, Chanukah and others the parents used to organize festivities and the pupils of the school participated in plays. The winter days were very short and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon the family used to gather around the "samovar" drinking tea and home made bakery items. The children used to prepare their lessons; mother was busy with handwork and father with reading books. In the evening the whole family used to gather around the table and father used to read to us books in Yiddish; Shalom-Aleichem, Mendele the bookseller, and so on.

Permit me to return to the railway line. I do not intend to go into the economics and other aspects of this project, but to mention the importance this railway played in the lives of the settlers in Manchuria. The railway station was a source of attraction for sightseeing trips, a place to meet people and spending time. The train, arriving from Russia used to bring tourists, refugees, and business people. The arrival of those

people caused much interest among the local residents. Some of those who arrived remained in Manchuria, and many continued their journey to Central China, USA, and a part of the Jews to Palestine. In the hearts of many maidens of Manchuria lingered a hope to meet a bridegroom. As a child I once had a chance to enter the first class department of the train. Up to today I remember the red velvet seats, the luxurious carpeting on the floor and the crystal chandeliers. My entrance to the train occurred in a special event, the management of the railway presented a free ticket to an elderly Jewish person, 90 years old, in order to visit his ailing son in Russia.

In the vicinity of the Railway Station a theater was built. All the cultural life of the city took place there, all kinds of groups, ballet and the Harbin Opera performed there. There was another theater in the public gardens. A special place in my memory is reserved for this special place. In these gardens the summer camps for the children took place and in the evenings we used to dance on the dance floor dances like the waltz, polka, krakoviak and later the foxtrot to the music of a band of wind instruments. Up to today it is still not clear to me why a model of the Eiffel Tower was erected to a height 15 meters and copper water sprinkler in the image of Dionysus.

Most of the Jewish residents living in Manchuria and my father among them traded in furs. The furs came from animals that roamed in the steppes of Mongolia and in the forests. Twice a year in the winter and in summer my father used to hire carriage owners who were Chinese and Mongolian, which he loaded up with flour, tea, and textiles. These carriages used to travel into the interior of Mongolia and into the outer areas of Manchuria and used to return laden with furs. These furs came from wolves, foxes, squirrels etc. The furs were dried on wooden

frames. Sorted and then dispatched to Europe and America. As children we used to celebrate the return of this convoy loaded with furs, which used to arrive to our yard. In the yard we had a cowshed, chicken coop, a vegetable garden, and a play corner for the children. In the center of the yard there was a cellar that was used for keeping food cold in the summer. This was a structure built underground, in winter it was filled with ice blocks that were carved out of the local lake, the ice used to last through the whole summer and was used as a cooler. In the yard there was also a well. The water from the well ran into the water system of the house by way of water pipes with the aid of a water pump which was operated manually by hand. But the biggest area of the yard was utilized for the unloading and storing of the cargo that arrived.

Visualize to yourselves a long procession of carriages harnessed to horses and camels entering the yard, and our astonishment and amazement at the sight of the Mongolians that drove the carriages, who sometimes were accompanied by their wives and children. The Mongolian wives attracted much interest; they arrived pouches loaded with silver and coins. In a successful season, father used to distribute to us children Mongolian silver coins. My father was the owner of an American car "Chandler". This car was one of the few cars, in whole of Manchuria. After my period in Manchuria I always looked for a car manufactured by "Chandler", but up to this very day I never found one. Two people were needed to start the engine of the car; the driver pressed on the gas paddle and the "helper" rotated the crankshaft, when the car finally ignited and started to move, the noise was something terrible. Father took us several times, in this car, to visit Mongolian villages, that were situated close by, the din it made caused the Mongolian children to run away shouting "Satan".

The Mongolians excelled at hospitality. They used to invite us to a tent that was made of a woolen material, and treated us to a Mongolian bitter tea

that was poured into flat wooden cups. The trips to distant areas of Mongolia was entailed with many dangers, gangs of Chinese, armed with rifles (These robbers were called "Hunchuzi") used to attack the convoys of horse or camel driven carriages and used to rob them in the style of the "Wild West". Sometimes the robbery used to end up in murder.

An interesting instance which I remember, about a Jewish child aged 10-11 who was given a stolen horse to sell in the market place. The child was apprehended and sentenced to a jail term of 10 years. He was released from the prison at the age of 20 and was entrusted to the care of my father. The boy of course was not suited for a normal life and could not adapt himself to normal daily life. It is interesting, however, that in prison he learned Esperanto, as there were no books in other languages available in the prison.

In 1929 the Russians occupied part of Mongolia. At this exact time father was with a caravan in the area. He was arrested and placed in a Mongolian prison; his cargo and money were confiscated. After he was released from the prison, it was difficult to recognize this broken person.

Not all of the Jews in Manchuria traded in furs; some had factories for processing furs and also sewed fur coats for the local population. In addition to this there were Jews who had shops in the commercial center, this was actually just one street and was named after Pushkin (Pushkinskaya Ulitsa). It had all kinds of stores: Stationary and books, shoes, textiles, haberdashery and others. Some stores belonged to Jews, some to Chinese. Other Jewish residents of Manchuria were tailors, Shoemakers, bakers, owners of carriages and so on. Opposite our house lived a Jewish tailor (he was in no way "Pierre Cardin"), and worked at repair jobs, in Yiddish we called him "latutnik" from the Yiddish word "lates"- patches. This tailor had 10 children eight of who died from various illnesses and epidemics, his wife lost her mind and he remained alone with two children, completely helpless. My mother took the smaller

child, who was eight years old, to us and he grew up with us.

In 1933-34 The Russians sold the railway to the Chinese and offered to anyone, so desiring, to return to Russia. This tailor had relatives in Russia and decided to join his relatives. The parting from his child was very difficult, and as happened with many others all traces of the tailor were lost, as if the earth swallowed him up.

I feel obliged to say a few words about the Chinese population living in our immediate area, they were good people, kind hearted and took part in our Jewish life. The merchants with whom our parents traded were reliable and honorable people, all deals were finalized with a handshake and concepts like promissory notes or checks were not considered.

All the Chinese merchants were known by their sir names with the addition of "Mister": Mister Wong, Mister Lian, Mister Pow. The postman, Mister Ma used to wave a letter for us before he entered the house. He, of course, received a glass of tea and we had an interesting conversation. The teacher who taught the Chinese language in the high school was a kind and good person. Up to today I remember him with some compassion how the Russian roughneck students abused this kind person.

And, last but not least, The Chinese person who lived in our yard whom we called "Ivan". He was part of the family and performed many tasks in the house. He was responsible for the storehouse, the yard, draw water from the well in the yard; he was the one who took my brother and me to school holding us by the hands. On the way back home from school he used to take us into a Chinese theatre, which performed continuously from the morning to the evening. His devotion to our family was hard to describe. When my big brother left to study in Belgium it was Ivan's dream to visit him one day in Belgium. This eventful life in Manchuria continued till the Japanese occupation of the city, the Jews began to scatter among the various big Chinese cities. Our family settled in Harbin.

The Jews of China

By Carl Hoffman

Part One: Harbin

China. Just mention the word and the mind is flooded with images. The Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, pagodas, seated Buddhas and junks sailing languidly up and down the Yangtze River, Mao Zedong and the Long March. If one is of a more academic – or spiritual – frame of mind, perhaps Confucius, Mencius or Lao Tzu come to mind. Or perhaps it is acupuncture, tai chi, Chinese medicine or Chinese food. Whatever the imagination conjures when one thinks of China, one rarely if ever thinks of Jews. Perhaps no place else on earth seems less likely to have any connection with Judaism or the Jewish people than the land known throughout history as the Middle Kingdom

And yet, archaeological evidence suggests that Jews reached China in significant numbers in the 8th century, mostly as merchants from Persia traveling along the Silk Route. By the 12th century a Jewish community was already established in Kaifeng, then the capital of China, where a synagogue was built and an elaborate community structure was achieved. Slowly, absorbed by the surrounding population, the Jewish community at Kaifeng gradually faded away; by the 19th century only a few totally Chinese-looking individuals remained.

In modern times, however, from the late 19th century to the late 1940s, China played host to a large, thriving and vibrant Jewish community spread throughout the country but concentrated mostly in the cities of Harbin and Shanghai. Smaller groups of Jewish residents were also to be found in Tientsin, Mukden and Dairen. The largest group of Jews in China – indeed in all of East Asia

– made its home in Harbin.

Until the late 19th century, Harbin, a cluster of villages along the Songhua River, would not have seemed a likely place to establish a Jewish community, or any community composed of anyone but the area's native residents. Following the Russian invasion of Manchuria in the late 19th century and the Russo-Manchurian Treaty of 1897, Russia was granted the right to build a railroad in China to connect with its Siberian railway network. The new Chinese Eastern Railway was thus constructed from Russia to China, ending at Port Arthur. Harbin, designated as the railway's administrative center, soon became an international city as waves of Russian immigrants arrived, seeking opportunities in the developing region and booming new city.

Many of these immigrants were Russian Jews, some helping to build the new railway, others escaping the pogroms that rocked Russia from 1881 to the early years of the 20th century. Like the earlier wave of Jewish immigrants who had found their way to China along the Silk Route to Kaifeng, the Russian Jews simply followed the construction of the railway to Harbin. In 1903, the Jewish population had reached 500, many working as shopkeepers and contractors supplying the railroad. A Jewish cemetery was established the same year. At the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, many demobilized Russian Jewish soldiers settled in Harbin, followed by refugees from the pogroms of 1905-1907, bringing the Jewish population of Harbin to 8,000 in 1908. A synagogue was constructed and completed in 1909. A Jewish community center and a Jewish hospital followed, along with

a Jewish elementary school in 1909 and a Jewish secondary school in 1910. The number of Jews in Harbin swelled with the addition of refugees from World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the resulting Russian Civil War. By the mid-1920s, the Jewish population peaked at roughly 20,000 – a minority within a larger minority of foreigners in the city.

From the first, Jews were active in the development of their new home. Virtually all of the city's first shops were opened by Jews. A Jewish businessman opened a sugar refinery in 1908, the first of its kind in China. Jewish traders began exporting edible oil in 1914 along with soy beans shortly after. In the years that followed, Jewish entrepreneurs established businesses involved with mining, metallurgy, wine making and the production of clothing, candy and cigarettes. Members of the Jewish community opened the first modern banks, hotels, cafes and publishing companies, not to mention beauty parlors and tailor shops. By the mid-1920s, largely due to Jewish enterprise and initiative, Harbin had come to be known as the "Little Paris of the East" with a symphony orchestra and a highly acclaimed school of music, both predominantly Jewish. As might be expected, there were some 20 Jewish newspapers and magazines, all published in Russian except for the Yiddish *Der Vayter Mizrech* ("The Far East").

Jewish life in Harbin flourished throughout the 1920s. The community grew exponentially in size while numerous new religious, cultural and political organizations were established. A large new synagogue was constructed. Zionism – outlawed in the Soviet Union but transplanted

to Harbin – was a particularly vital feature of Jewish life at this time, with a full spectrum of organizations ranging from left-wing Labor Zionists to the right-wing Revisionists. Zionist youth groups such as Betar, Maccabi and Hashomer Hatzair were very active, with several groups of young people emigrating from Harbin to Israel. The prosperity and growing importance of the Harbin Jewish community was reflected in the fact that no fewer than three international Zionist conferences, with delegates from all of the Jewish communities in the Far East, were held in Harbin during the 1930s.

The community received two shocks however – the first in 1928 when the Russians, preoccupied by their Civil War, famines, political turmoil and the death of Lenin, turned the Chinese Eastern Railway over to the Chinese government. An economic slump ensued, inducing many Jews to leave Harbin for greener fields in Shanghai and Tientsin. The second, ultimately more catastrophic shock came in 1931 with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, after which Harbin became part of the Japanese-administered puppet state of Manchukuo. Jewish life in Harbin regained most of its momentum in the first years of Japanese occupation. The community's business interests were scarcely disturbed or interfered with and their various religious and cultural institutions continued to flourish. Zionist organizations, particularly Zionist youth groups, were active during the 1930's. With the outbreak of World War II, however, Japan had to deal with the almost unrelenting pressure from her Nazi German allies to make life difficult for Harbin's Jews. The Japanese, who never quite understood the Germans' anti-Semitism and remained largely uninfected by it, placated their German allies by imposing minor restrictions on Jewish political activities, closing down newspapers and canceling public events.

Violence against Jews, however, did not occur nor were they segregated from other foreign residents as in Shanghai.

In the years following the war which saw increasing political turmoil, civil war and the Communist takeover of China, most of Harbin's Jews left China. A few remained through the 1960s when the last members of the community passed away. One Harbin Jew, Israel Epstein, remained in China, having fought in the Communist Revolution, serving in China's Parliament and advising Chinese leaders.

Many Harbin Jews emigrated to Israel, including the father of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Yaacov Liberman, former chief of staff of Menachem Begin's Herut party and author of the book *My China*, and Teddy Kaufman, President of the Association of Former Jews from China, a worldwide network of "Chinese Jews" and their families. Last September, Kaufman presided over a reunion in Harbin of over 100 former residents, their children and grandchildren along with Chinese scholars of Jewish history in China. Yaacov Liberman expressed the sentiments of the gathering by thanking the Chinese people for providing Jews with a home and haven through a century of pogroms, two world wars, Stalin and Hitler. The Chinese government, in turn, has announced a major campaign to renovate many of the Jewish buildings left behind by the community and preserve the heritage of Jewish life in Harbin.

Part Two: Shanghai

Teddy Kaufman, President of the Israel-China Friendship Society, recently hosted two visitors from *Esra Magazine*. Although well into his eighties, he nonetheless greeted Pat Zuckerman and myself at the entrance to his apartment with a young man's handshake and a boyish smile. From his small apartment in Ramat Gan – heavily ornamented with Chinese objets d'art, Kaufman serves as the

nerve center of an international network of former Jewish residents of China. Teddy Kaufman was born and raised in the northeast Chinese city of Harbin; his wife is from Shanghai. His memories of China span the decades of the 1920s, '30s and '40s, years of vibrant communal Jewish life followed by invasion, war, occupation, more war and revolution. With alert, sparkling eyes, Kaufman began his reminiscences of Jewish life in China by telling us, "The Jews in China were a lot like the Jews of South Africa. Each of these Jewish communities was a foreign minority within a larger foreign minority, surrounded by a very much larger native population".

This was certainly true of the Jews of Harbin, even more so of the Jews of Shanghai. Shanghai was an ancient coastal settlement at the mouth of the Yangtze River that gradually grew in size and importance. By the time of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) Shanghai had become China's principal center for the manufacture of textiles as well as a rising business center. It was during the succeeding Ch'ing or Manchu period (1644-1912), however, that Shanghai became a major seaport and trade entryport. Following the Opium Wars and a series of treaties and agreements between the aggressive colonial powers of the West and a weak China, Shanghai became a colonized city, carved up into foreign "concessions" and open for business to one and all. Shanghai thus became a magnet to a colorful influx of businessmen, traders, missionaries and adventurers from all over the world. Not surprisingly, many of these, especially businessmen and traders – along with a few of the adventurers – were Jews.

Soon after the Hong Kong British trading house of Jardine Matheson arrived in Shanghai and began to do business, several Jewish families from the Indian city of Bombay came hard on their heels. These Jewish

families who traced their descent from the Sephardi community of Baghdad, brought names – Sassoon, Kadoorie and Haroon – that were to resonate loudly through the next several decades of Shanghai’s history. As soon as the Sassoons, Kadoories and Haroons settled into Shanghai and established their businesses, they began to attract large numbers of Jews from Bombay, Baghdad and Cairo. These new arrivals also began to do business – some as employees of the three prominent Jewish families, others as independent entrepreneurs. A number of the new arrivals purchased large tracts of real estate throughout the booming city. The Kadoories alone were said to own upwards of 1,900 buildings. All of these Sephardi Jewish families contributed more than their share to the building of Shanghai and the establishment of its commerce during the early decades of the twentieth century.

In addition to building the city, these Sephardi families set out to develop a thriving Jewish community in this Chinese coastal city at the mouth of the Yangtze. Shortly after the turn of the century the first Jewish day school was established by Nissim Ezra and Silas Haroon, followed a few years later by the construction of a magnificent synagogue, Ohel Rachel, built by Sir Jacob Sassoon in memory of his wife Rachel. The Jewish community proclaimed itself an organizational entity in 1910 under the leadership of David Abraham, who remained its head for the next thirty years. A particularly colorful figure during this period was Silas Haroon who was a favorite among the Chinese for his philanthropic support of Chinese causes and institutions. Married to a Chinese woman and an admirer of the Buddhist religion, Haroon contributed heavily to Buddhist schools and charities. When Haroon and his wife realized they were unable to have children, they adopted over a dozen children of

various nationalities and gave each \$1,000,000 as a “start in life”.

The Sephardi Jews were soon joined in much larger numbers by Russian Jews fleeing Czarist pogroms throughout the Jewish Pale of Settlement. Settling mostly in Harbin and Shanghai, the Russian Jews numbered upwards of 8,000 in Harbin by 1908 and in Shanghai they soon outnumbered the Sephardic Jews. Their numbers virtually doubled after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Unlike the Sephardim, most of the Jews from Russia arrived largely destitute with little more than the clothes on their backs. Most became shopkeepers of one sort or another while a few became bakers and milliners.

As in Harbin, the Jews found a home in Shanghai. In a 1920 letter to one of the leaders of the Jewish community, no less a personage than Dr. Sun Yat-sen, founder and first president of the Republic of China, wrote, “All lovers of democracy cannot help but support the movement to restore your wonderful and historic nation which has contributed so much to the civilization of the world and which rightly deserves an honorable place in the family of nations”.

During the 1930s Shanghai became one of the few ports of refuge for Jews fleeing from Nazi Germany. An open city that required no passports, visas or other documentation, Shanghai provided a home and haven to some 30,000 Jews before the Nazis and the war stopped the flow of Jewish refugees. Madame Sun Yat-sen led a delegation from China that met with the German Consul in Shanghai to lodge a strong protest against the Nazi’s treatment of Jews in Germany, and numerous protest rallies were stage in the city protesting Germany’s persecution of the Jews.

Following Japan’s invasion of China and occupation of Shanghai in 1937, the Japanese imposed no special restrictions upon the city’s Jewish population. Although nominally allied with Nazi Germany, the

Japanese were at best mystified by the Germans’ anti-Semitism which they neither understood nor paid much attention to. Jews could move about the city freely and live wherever they wished. Many chose to live in the Hongkew district, a crowded Chinese neighborhood where the Jewish residents soon established a thriving community with newspapers, theatrical groups, orchestras and cafes. Shelters and soup kitchens were established for those in need.

In 1940 these Jews were joined by the thousands of Polish Jews saved by Chiune Sugihara, Japanese Consul in Kovno, Lithuania. Against clear and strict orders from Japan’s Foreign Ministry, Sugihara – often called the “Japanese Schindler” – issued some 10,000 transit visas to Jews desperately trying to escape the Nazi Holocaust. Many of these refugees, including the entire Mir Yeshiva, spent the war years in Shanghai’s Hongkew district.

Throughout the war the Japanese continued to resist the relentless pressure from their German allies to impose the “Final Solution” on Shanghai’s Jews. In 1942 one Gestapo official, Joseph Meisinger, later called the “Butcher of Warsaw”, arrived in Shanghai on a German U-boat with plans to round the Jews up on Rosh Hashana, load them onto ships, sail them out to sea and starve them to death. In a masterful display of bureaucratic obfuscation, the Japanese “compromised” by declaring the Hongkew district the “Hongkew Ghetto”. The city’s Jewish residents were troubled no further, and the Butcher of Warsaw left Shanghai without harming a single Jew.

Following the war, reports of the Holocaust in Europe horrified the Jews of Shanghai, many of whom had fled Europe and left family members behind. This, along with increasing political turmoil in China – as fighting between the Communists

and the Nationalist government spread throughout the country – induced most of Shanghai’s foreign community to leave. The new State of Israel became a powerful magnet for many of Shanghai’s Jews. The last Jewish wedding in Shanghai took place in 1951. Virtually all Jews had left by the following year.

Despite the departure of the Jewish communities of Shanghai and Harbin, relations between China and the Jewish people have been maintained. Against pressure from the Nationalist government and the U.S., the fledgling State of Israel voted in favor of U.N. membership for the People’s Republic of China. Israel established full diplomatic relations with China in 1992, and trade between the two nations is extensive and brisk. Jews have returned to China in the post-Mao years, re-establishing a Jewish community in Shanghai along with one in Beijing.

In 1998 the municipal government of Shanghai conducted an extensive renovation of the Ohel Rachel synagogue. With almost 1,000 seats in its main sanctuary, it is the largest remaining synagogue in the Far East. Ohel Rachel has been visited by a succession of the world’s dignitaries, among them Germany Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Bill and Hillary Clinton. Shanghai also boasts a center of Jewish Studies which conducts classes in Hebrew, produces films and television programs, and conducts tours of Jewish sights in Shanghai. Construction of a Jewish Center to contain a library of several thousand books and archives of the Jews of China was planned.

China is one of the few countries in the world in which Jews were never persecuted. With a booming economy and turmoil elsewhere in the world, China may yet again become a thriving center of Jewish life.

(From “Jewish Communities”, Esra, Nos. 127-128, January-March, 2005)

Jewish Tales: Key to Chinese Success

By Tali Raveh

A series of Chinese children’s books called *The Secret to the Jews’ Success* portrays Jewish legends alongside morals.

Beijing: The Chinese have been asking themselves why so many Jews are so successful, and they believe they have found the answer. That answer is being presented in a children’s series of 10 books called *The Secret to the Jews’ Success*. Each book tells a short Jewish tale alongside the moral of the story, teaching the Chinese how to succeed in life.

One of the tales tells the story of a large farm where a young Jewish worker is also employed. The young Jew works very hard and completes his work within two hours. When coming to receive his pay, the other workers complain that they had spent the entire day working while the Jew had only worked for two hours. The owner of the farm says he is not interested in the hours of work but rather in the production. The moral of the story is that the Jews succeed due to their perseverance and hard work, and therefore it is recommended to follow in their footsteps and not be lazy.

Another tale unfolds the plight of a young man whose disappointed father bequeathed all he had to his servant, while the son is allowed to choose just one thing. Turning to his rabbi for an explanation, the son is told that his father did the right thing because had the father not bequeathed his property to the servant, the servant may have never shown him the will. The rabbi also tells him that the one thing he should choose is the servant – this way everything will ultimately be his. The moral of the story is that the Jews are smart because they respect their elders and take advantage of their knowledge.

Another tale reaches the conclusion that the Jews’ developed thought

processes that enables them to resolve problems by analytical thinking. Yet another story tells how the Jews do not take any work lightly; how they cooperate with each other and how they are willing to sacrifice themselves.

Professor Aaron Shai, a lecturer on East Asian Studies at Tel Aviv University, says he is not in the least bit surprised by these books. “The Chinese have always held us in high esteem,” he says.

Jews first settled in China after the destruction of the First Temple. In the 19th century Jews also arrived from Iraq and became highly successful. At the turn of the 20th century a wave of anti-communist Jews arrived in China from Russia following the Bolshevik Revolution, among them was the Prime Minister’s family. In the 30s, Jewish refugees such as Saul Eisenberg who fled the Nazi regime, came to China and went on to become very successful.

Shai says the encounter with these successful Jews led to the Chinese admiration for them. Another reason for their admiration, he adds, is the similarity between the dispersion of the Jews and the Chinese around the world. Both communities are dispersed throughout five continents and both are highly successful in commerce, and are very particular about their children’s education. The similarity between the Jews’ family honor and the Confucius heritage also created admiration for the Jews. So far 5,000 books have been published in China and they are highly popular among Christian Chinese communities. Wai Wan, a high school teacher, says that had the publisher invested more in advertising the books, they would have been even more popular. Wan says the books are relatively more expensive than other Chinese children’s books.

Shanghai, a Far East Feast

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Published: October 9, 2005

To my dear Shanghai friends, I would like to share this article with you as I'm sure it'll make your mouth water, as it did mine, if not urge you to pack your bag, rush out to the airport and hop on the first flight to Shanghai... toute suite!! I'm sure you'll enjoy the food section of this article. Although the English vernacular used to describe the many eating delights may not be an accurate translation, I'm sure it won't be difficult for you to recognize some of the dishes which will bring back wonderful memories and tickle your taste buds to your heart's delight. I don't know about you but to me, this article is heaven sent.

To my friends who never had the pleasure of living or visiting Shanghai in the past, this too will inspire you to make Shanghai number one in your priority list of "MUST SEE and MUST DO" while you're still young enough to enjoy the culinary delights that awaits you. However, if you're at that stage in life where cholesterol, diabetes, heart problems, etc. are now a concern to you, then I suggest you still make that visit to Shanghai for that once-in-a-lifetime experience after which, if the lifetime comes to an end...what a way to go!!!

Enjoy this, my friends....

Joe Levoff

MADE for trade, the modern city of Shanghai came into being in the second half of the 19th century as a commercial link with the West. British, French, German and American traders settled there, eventually followed by White Russian refugees. They built a metropolis with Asia's first telephones, running water and electric power, a city of drugs, warlords, brothels and legendary riches. And like all expatriates everywhere, they brought their tastes in food with them. To this day, the Shanghainese have an appetite

for croissants and French pastry and for Russian borscht (luo song tang, or Russian soup, on menus) although many may well not know their precise origins.

China was submerged in Communist conformity, with gray tunics and shabby state shops supplanting the chic boutiques and throbbing dance halls that gave Shanghai its reputation as "the whore of the Orient." By all accounts, food, and especially restaurant food, took a back seat to ideology.

"Ten years ago, a good restaurant was one that paid you," said Don St. Pierre Jr., managing partner of ASC, China's leading wine importer, with only modest hyperbole. "Now we're on the verge of being a world-class restaurant town." Richard Bisset, another old China hand, said that 17 years ago, when he came to Shanghai, "the Western food here ranged from Kobe beef to prawn thermidor. Full stop."

Today, Shanghai is again one of the most galvanic cities anywhere, with foreigners once more pouring in to seek their fortunes and the port seemingly on its way to becoming the world's busiest. It makes an old-timer like me long to be young again and live there to share in its drama. For 13 straight years, it has maintained a double-digit growth rate, as the largely vacant landscape on the eastern side of the Huangpu River has been magically transformed into the steel-and-glass financial center called Pudong. With more than 2,000 flamboyantskyscrapers, Shanghai is now a vertical village rather than the low-lying city of the 1930's, much of it built by Jewish merchants of Iraqi or Syrian origin like the Sassoons and Kadoories. The only echo of the Sassoons today is a Vidal Sassoon (no kin) hairdressing salon. But the Kadoories, who control the Hong-Kong-based Peninsula chain, are building a luxurious hotel on the

Bund, the boulevard along the river.

The slightly pompous colonial buildings lining the Bund already house some of the toniest of the city's new generation of international restaurants, including the Michael Graves-designed Jean-Georges. Renowned chefs and obscure entrepreneurs from Britain, Singapore, Australia, the United States and elsewhere have flocked to Shanghai on the heels of the bankers and brokers, eager to serve you Italian, Japanese, Thai, German or Mexican food.

Foods from afar compete with heaping helpings of first-rate Chinese dishes, from Guangzhou, Sichuan, Hunan and of course Shanghai. Local river prawns, slow-cooked pork rump, hairy crabs (in season) (the famous Shanghai fresh water crabs that are available in Oct/Nov and cost a fortune if eaten in HK restaurants - CJ) and above all xiao long bao, the soup dumplings beloved in the United States, are all on offer in classic form.

The culinary renaissance is one reason, in fact, for Shanghai's re-emergence as a prime tourist destination, along with the city's refreshing green "lungs" - the many new parks and the thousands of palm trees in the former French Concession - its matchless new art museum, its Art Deco villas and office buildings, and the endless joie de vivre of its people. Gloomy, unsmiling and reluctant to make eye contact when my wife, Betsey, and I last visited the city a decade ago, they laugh and joke today, free at last to indulge in those old Shanghai pastimes, making money and spending it with abandon.

On the second morning of our most recent stay in Shanghai, we ran into Jean-Georges Vongerichten and his right-hand man, Daniel Del Vecchio, at the Westin Hotel's startlingly polycultural breakfast buffet. That happy accident led to a sampling of Shanghainese food

at its most down-to-earth at breakfast-time the next day.

Near the corner of Changle Lu and Xiang Yang Bei Lu, not far from the museum, where banners were incongruously heralding an exhibition about Versailles and Louis XIV, we each polished off a half-dozen steamed, pork-filled soup dumplings, the size of a silver dollar, with perilously fragile skins, without spilling too much of the scalding liquid on our shirts. Unlike most of the other stalls, the place where we ate these actually had a few tables and stools, and even a sign outside. Its name: Maxim's.

Thicker-skinned dumplings, sheng jian bao (I think these are known as san chi meu deu- CJ), fried cheek-to-cheek in shallow iron pans and then steamed, were dusted with chives and black sesame seeds. We followed instructions to dip them in the exceptional black Zhenjiang vinegar (with slivers of ginger-CJ). Eye-poppingly good they were, too, although Jereme (pronounced Jeremy) Leung, a member of our noshing group, speculated slyly that the frying oil had not been changed in years.

There were crepes at other stalls - delicate cong you bing (tsung yu ping-CJ), or scallion pancakes, and ji dan bing, a kind of breakfast burrito. To make that, a short-order wizard spread batter on a drum-shaped grill with what looked like a painter's spatula, broke an egg on top, added a dab of fermented soybean sauce and threw in some chives, coriander and mustard-plant leaves. The whole process took just a minute. Then he slapped either a salty cruller called you tiao (yu tiao-CJ) a piece of crisply fried bean curd skin across the finished product and rolled it up like a scroll. Mr. Vongerichten, in seventh heaven, pronounced it "the best breakfast in the world."

By that time, I felt fat as a Strasbourg goose, but my eating buddies insisted that we stop at a 24-hour noodle shop on Shandong Zhonglu, behind the Westin, to watch a particularly deft cook do his stuff. "No need to eat," said Mr. Leung, a Hong Kong-born Chinese.

"Just watch." Sure. We watched, all right, as a huge ball of dough was kneaded and rolled and tossed and hacked into ragged little squares that reminded Mr. Vongerichten, an Alsatian, of spaetzle, and twisted and stretched and flipped and folded into long, supple noodles. But of course I had to sample a bowl of beef noodle soup, lightly curry-flavored, before we left, and of course that spoiled my lunch.

Bao Luo, in the French Concession, is all you might expect a Chinese restaurant to be - big, raucous, smoke-filled, dingy despite the marble on the walls - and more. It's open until 6 in the morning, and it often features a parade of fashionistas in thigh-high white boots around midnight. Its menu provides a primer of home-style Shanghainese cooking, however bizarre the English translations (for example, "lima bean curd with crisp hell"). Cold dishes first - amazingly tender, custardlike tofu, a reproach to the flannel-like stuff often served outside China, topped with coriander and chili oil; ma lan tou, made from the crunchy stems of the boltonia flower (a member of the aster family that I grow, but don't eat, at my farm in Pennsylvania); "drunken" chicken, marinated in rice wine; and kaofu, bran cubes flavored by five-spice soy sauce. This is no cuisine for the squeamish.

Warm plates filled the table as six of us struggled to keep up. Ti pang, the fabulously fatty Shanghainese pork shank, was luscious as foie gras. (One of our six, Tina Kanagaratnam, a Singapore-born food writer, told me, "Shanghai girls say that if you don't eat the fat you won't have good skin.") Crystal river prawns, bathed in egg whites before stir-frying, and yu xiang qiezi bao, spicy caramelized eggplant, were among my favorites. Patrick Cranley, Ms. Kanagaratnam's husband, a fluent Mandarin-speaker from Baltimore, noted that this was originally a Sichuan dish, long ago adopted by Shanghai as its own. "Something in the Shanghainese character," he said, "helps them to absorb, adapt and flourish."

Having emerged intact from Shanghainese culinary primary school, we moved directly to postgraduate studies at an unprepossessing four-table hole in the wall called Chun, a block from the Jin Jiang Hotel, where Chou En-lai and Richard M. Nixon issued their momentous communiqué in 1972. Susan Shirk, the State Department's top China expert in the Clinton administration, recommended it, and Dingli Shen, the Shanghai-born, Princeton-educated executive dean of the Institute of International Studies at Fudan University, joined us there. He had never been before, he said, but by the time we finished a lunchtime feast, which cost less than \$8 a head, under the naked, unforgiving fluorescent bulbs, he assured us that he had never eaten better in his native city.

That didn't surprise us a bit. Not after Lan-Lan, the round-faced, T-shirt-clad 47-year-old proprietor, who resisted all attempts to discover her formal name, had brought out her wares: among other treats, more heavenly tofu, served with salted duck egg yolk and clam strips; thin-shelled river shrimp, roe still attached, steamed with ginger; whole pomfret braised in soy (with plenty of Shanghai's beloved sugar added) and the pièce de résistance, giant snails whose meat had been removed, then chopped, mixed with pork and spices and reinserted into the shells. I don't know which was better, the fragrant juices we sucked out of the shells or the meat we pried out with toothpicks.

"To be born in Shanghai is a great privilege," Dr. Shen mused. "You get better education, better economic opportunity, better health care, better everything than elsewhere in China." To which I added, "and some of the world's best food."

Soup dumplings are the province of specialists armed with minuscule rolling pins. The most famous of all are made at the three-story Nan Xiang restaurant, adjacent to the ancient Yu Garden, whose teahouse served as the inspiration for millions of pieces of "willow pattern" china. All the world

adores Nan Xiang, so reserve a day ahead, or resign yourself to a long wait.

Try in any case to wangle a seat on the third floor, the only place where the most scrumptious dumplings are served - those whose filling includes crab roe as well as the usual crabmeat, pork and scallions. Two things set great dumplings apart from ordinary ones: the quality of the "soup," or broth, which at Nan Xiang has the mellow richness of the best veal stock, and the texture of the dumpling skins, which at Nan Xiang are translucently, meltingly thin. Wobbling winningly in their steamer, these tidbits are rivaled in Shanghai only by those at Din Tai Fung, a branch of a legendary Taipei dumpling house, which also has an outlet in Arcadia, Calif., near Los Angeles.

In the rush to modernize, much of picturesque old Shanghai has been bulldozed, though not the junk shops of Fangbang Lu, where Betsey bought a crystal ball, perhaps in hopes of divining the future of this remarkable city, where communism and capitalism thrive alongside one another against all the odds. In Xintiandi, near there, renovated and reconstructed shikumen (stone-gated) houses have been grouped into a shopping, strolling and dining complex. Wildly popular with Chinese as well as with foreign visitors, it is Shanghai's first big stab at the adaptive reuse of old buildings.

They sometimes call Shanghai Shang-buy, and in Xintiandi you can buy minimalist handbags and sleek silk pajamas with jade buttons at Annabel Lee, velvet blazers and feathered hats at Xavier, and modern design from Scandinavia, Thailand, Italy and even China at Simply Life. You can drink coffee, nibble glorious pastries and buy hand-made chocolates at Visage. You can have a drink at TMSK, sitting on crystal stools at a crystal bar, or at nearby Zin (short for Zinfandel), a nifty wine bar.

Xin Ji Shi is the serious-chow champ of Xintiandi, whose name means "new heaven and earth." It may well serve the

best hong shao rou, or red-cooked pork, in town, made from cubed pork belly bathed in a sauce made from star anise, sugar and Shanghai soy sauce, which is considered China's finest. The décor may be upscale, nouvelle Shanghai, all burnished wood and smoky glass panels, but the cooking is traditional. Our meal at Xin Ji Shi was also memorable for a basket brimming with big, rosy prawns, roast chicken and dried chilies and for a bottle of 1993 Corton brought by Mr. St. Pierre, much less so for an eel dish totally overwhelmed by a sweet, sludgy sauce.

Hong Kong, in the form of the handsome glass-and-granite Crystal Jade dim sum emporium, is just a few steps away from Xin Ji Shi. All the southern Chinese favorites - including char siu bao (barbecued pork buns), shrimp-filled har gow and egg tarts, among many others - are prepared to order and served at once, not rolled through the dining room on carts. But this is Shanghai, so there are also more northern delights like crispy won tons with hot chili sauce and, of course, soup dumplings. All are light and delicate, altogether first rate.

You can eat modern Sichuan food at South Beauty's four locations and carefully made vegetarian dishes at Vegetarian Lifestyle's three. But if pressed for time, I would make a beeline for Guyi, which wins as many points for its chic décor, featuring photos of the Shanghai that was, and its smiling (indeed giggling) service from young women as for its delicious Hunanese food. Not every dish is a flamethrower, which is as things should be. Among the high spots of a meal that balanced texture, color and intensity of flavor with unusual finesse: a great heap of green beans flavored by smoky Hunan ham; a short-rib hot pot with ginger, garlic and chilies; and fried prawns on a skewer.

Unless you like to drink at altitude or crave a steak (in which case head for the upper floors of the Grand Hyatt Hotel, housed in the 54th to 87th floors of the Jinmao Tower building), there's

no real need to visit Pudong. Stay on the western side of the river and do your gawking and talking there.

For location, location, etc., you can't match Michelle Garnaut's groundbreaking M on the Bund, opened in 1999. With a heart-stopping view of Pudong's sci-fi skyline right there in front of you, as bold as a billboard, and the Bund's brightly illuminated buildings curving away to your left and right, M's seventh-floor terrace is as fine a perch as Shanghai affords. On balmy nights, moneyed visitors and local movers and shakers still throng it, with their champagne flutes or superbly made dry martinis in hand.

Ms. Garnaut, an Australian long resident in China, serves mostly old-fashioned European food, some of it made from prime local ingredients - opulent Chinese foie gras; crisp-skinned roast suckling pig; and (during their brief season) sensationally sweet peaches from Nanhui, like the ones often depicted on famille-rose porcelain.

"We're proud not to be on the cutting edge," she told me. Fair enough. But the jelly with the foie gras was much too sweet for us, the salt-baked lamb was too salty, and the kitchen seemed to lack the consistency that characterizes some competitors, notably the big, buzzy restaurants at Three on the Bund, a converted bank building.

The dining room of one of them, Laris, is drenched in white - white marble, white tablecloths, white orchids. "The food and clients provide the color here," said the man at its helm, David Laris, formerly chef at Mezzo in London. As befits someone of Greek ancestry, he serves great fish, including raw oysters from three continents, scallops with basil and Kalamata olives, and a fabulously earthy cauliflower and caviar soup, not unlike the brew served by Jean Joho in Chicago.

For those who require turf with their surf, there's also a delicious cross-cultural pairing of five-spiced venison with Vietnamese banana leaf salad. And for the sweet of tooth, Mr. Laris makes a remarkable panna cotta flavored with

pandanus leaves, which lend a subtle, vanilla-like taste.

Jean-Georges gave us a nearly flawless meal. After a single Kumamoto oyster with a coronet of Champagne jelly and raw tuna with a dab of mayonnaise made with Thai chili paste, the chef de cuisine, Eric Johnson, sent out an exquisite dish of cubed raw kingfish with Taiwanese mangoes (imported under a new trade agreement) and a chili-lemon granita. Peppery, sweet and acidic, yellow, orange and red, in one bite.

Dish after dish of similar excellence followed, as lunch stretched toward the cocktail hour while boats of every kind chugged along the river outside the restaurant's windows - more foie gras, with star anise flowers; peaches and endive hearts with pistachios and goat cheese dressing; crab dumplings with black pepper oil and tiny local peas; sweet scallops from Dalian, a port in north China, seared and paired with clams in a tomato jus; stunningly fresh steamed snapper on a basil purée, topped with cucumber strips for crunch; and Jason Casey's irresistible desserts, which coaxed every nuance of flavor from lush tropical fruits.

The service in the elegant copper-and-blue dining room was silent and skillful, which is more than one can say about the Whampoa Club, in the same building, where the gifted 34-year-old Mr. Leung presides. His Normandie-like setting, with shantung silk, ostrich skin and hammered metal panels, is elegant enough. But the reception was disorganized, the waitresses' heels clattered intrusively on bare floors, and language skills were so rudimentary that we were utterly bewildered until a supervisor came to our assistance. This is perfectly acceptable at \$10 a head, but not at \$100.

Mr. Leung's modern take on Chinese regional food is delightful. His caramelized minisquid reminded me why I was once addicted to Cracker Jacks. His "lion's head" pork meatballs came in a sumptuous winter-melon broth, with enoki mushrooms impishly

used as "eyes." His king prawns dazzled in a mild wasabi sauce. His crisp, spicy eel strips and smoked fish showed the potential of river fish, treasured in Shanghai.

"We begin with traditional peasant-style recipes and try to update and refine them," he said. "Take the smoked fish. Usually, it's fried in the morning and left to cool all day. It often tastes stale, even rancid. We fry it to order and serve it warm, not at room temperature. But the prawns - those, I must confess, are pure Jereme."

Table Hopping

The telephone country code for China is 86, and the city code for Shanghai is 21. **Bao Lu**, 2721 Fumin Lu; telephone 6279-2827. As many as 300 people are sometimes jammed into this atmospheric spot early in the evening, but go later and the crush isn't as bad. Classic Shanghaiese food, less than \$15 a head with beer.

Chun, 124 Jinxian Lu; 6256-0301. Have your hotel concierge reserve well ahead for this tiny place, and take a Mandarin-speaking friend or guide if you want to understand what you're being offered. Cheap (under \$10) and authentic.

Xin Ji Shi, North Block Xintiandi, Building 9, Number 2, Lane 181; 6336-4746. The setting is sleek, the service is charming, and for the most part the food is very good. Try the noodles flavored with scallions. With wine, about \$25.

Nan Xiang, 85 Yuyuan Lu; 6355-4206. Soup-dumpling heaven in the oldest part of the city. All the xiao long bao you can eat for \$20.

Din Tai Fung, 12-20 Shuicheng Lu; 6208-4188. It's just a branch of a Taiwanese dumpling house, but who cares? The dumplings and other dishes are first-rate, and the open kitchen puts on quite a show. About \$15, \$25 with wine.

Crystal Jade, South Block Xintiandi, House 6-7, Lane 123; 6385-8752. Stylish digs and carefully prepared dim sum (including some Shanghai and Beijing items as well as Hong Kong classics) account for long lines. Typically about \$20.

Guyi Hunan, 89 Fumin Lu; 6249-5628.

There's a string of red peppers made of satin near the door - a warning that the food is spicy, but also a signal of the stylishness of this place. Good value: \$12.

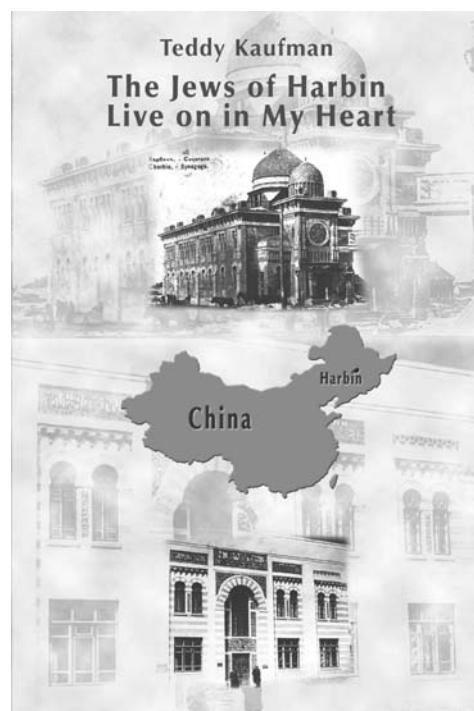
M on the Bund, 5 Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu; 6350-9988. Great views, excellent wines and competent (if inconsistent) Continental cooking that sometimes ranges into exotica like Persian salads. Eat on the terrace if it's warm. \$50.

Laris, 3 Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu; 6321-9922. One of Shanghai's few raw bars, with great oysters and clams to begin, and some of the city's most imaginative house-made chocolates to end. This stuff does not come cheap. About \$60.

Jean-Georges, 3 Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu, 6321-7733. China's best Western-style restaurant, and every bit as successful as the Vongerichten palaces back home in New York. Cheaper, too, at \$65. Polished service, gorgeous room.

Whampoa Club, 3 Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu; 6321-3737. Jereme Leung takes Chinese food out of tourist class and puts it in first, where it belongs. In season, he works magic with the famous Shanghai hairy crabs. \$60.

R. W. APPLE Jr. is associate editor of The New York Times.





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Senate

CONGRATULATING GILAD JANKLOWICZ

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish today to honor Gilad Janklowicz from the great State of Hawai'i in recognition of his induction into the National Fitness Hall of Fame in Chicago on Saturday, March 17, 2007.

Gilad, a longtime resident of our beautiful State, is a pioneer in the fitness industry and one of the world's most popular fitness personalities. For over 23 years, he has helped over 38 million viewers stay healthy through his award winning instructional home fitness videos and popular television programs, "Bodies in Motion," "Basic Training the Workout," and "Total Body Sculpt with Gilad." "Bodies in Motion," which is filmed on location in the Hawaiian islands, is the longest running fitness show in the United States and was chosen as the No. 1 TV fitness program in the world by Self magazine.

Since his years as a high school athlete where he excelled in track and field, Gilad has devoted his life to fitness and become a leading proponent of the fitness movement. His efforts to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining a regular fitness program along with a nutritional diet and proper medical care have helped millions around the world. Let me be the first to extend my warmest congratulations to Gilad Janklowicz for his well-deserved induction into the Fitness Hall of Fame. His life and work truly embody the aloha spirit of our State and serve as an example to us all. Mahalo.

Aloha punahana,
Daniel K. Akaka

Gilad Janklowicz is the son of our compatriot Yehiel Janklowicz from Shanghai (Hongkew)

A Lesson for Me

Hebrew Hearsay by Liat Collins

There used to be a slogan used by the Education Ministry to encourage more people to join the pedagogical profession by stressing the impact they could make. "Moreh ze lechol hachayim!" – A teacher is for life!

The phrase came back to me last month as I attended a reunion in honor of a beloved teacher at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dora Shickman was no ordinary teacher and this was no ordinary reunion. Giveret Shickman, as she was usually called in Hebrew, taught Chinese to scores of students crazy enough to want to learn the language at a time when relations with China were but a dream as distant as the Middle Kingdom from the Middle East.

Students decided to join the class for many reasons; they nearly all stayed on because of Giveret Shickman. Her force of personality – the mix between a Yiddishe Mame and a traditional Chinese educator – was such that for the reunion, some 40 former students got together despite the fact that the person who should have been the guest of honor – Dora Shickman – had died 20 years ago.

Permit me, then, to use a Hebrew-language column to pay tribute to a remarkable lady, a native of China, who escaped the Cultural Revolution with her Russian-Jewish husband and found herself somewhat an outsider in the rough Israeli reality.

In English, when something is incomprehensible, you can say: "It's all Greek to me"; the equivalent French expression decries that it is "Hebreu" (Hebrew), but in Hebrew the expression is: "Zeh Sinit" (It's Chinese).

Studying Chinese in Hebrew is not as complicated as it sounds. Chinese is not as difficult as it looks. But like most foreigners tackling Mandarin, one of my main problems was the difference

a tone could make. Poor Giveret Shickman spent weeks worrying about my brother. It was 1982. The Lebanese War was raging. Neither my brother nor I had access to a phone. Every time my teacher asked I would admit I was scared because he wasn't out of danger and wasn't home yet. After many lessons, she asked me what the doctor said. Doctor? What doctor? It turned out that I had been saying he was "sick" instead of saying he was a soldier (both bing in Chinese, but with different intonation). Had we spoken in Hebrew, we would not have confused the words "holeh" (sick) with "hayal" (soldier) so consistently.

For me, a major difficulty was trying to pick up another vastly different language when I had been in the country only three years (and losing 55 days to reserve duty). Strange to say, I used the Chinese lessons to learn Hebrew. To this day, certain words flow more easily in Chinese than the holy language. Recently I found myself in a shop looking for a kid's paintbrush. Unable to recall the Hebrew (mik'hol) I had to bite my tongue to stop the Chinese "maobi" from jumping off the tip of it and surprising the rather gruff vendor.

Dora Shickman was never gruff. But she could make a student curl up with shame for not preparing homework simply by looking upset. (Told you she was a Jewish mother). The reunion was attended by her daughter, Zvia Bowman (also a former HU teacher), son Simon and two of her grandchildren. They listened to our impressions of their mother and grandmother. We learned, at last, some of her personal history.

Unlikenormal reunions, former students didn't compare notes on financial well-being and achievements. If there was any element of competition, it expressed itself in subtle difference between

those who had turned Chinese into a career and either regularly visited or worked in a Chinese-speaking country, and those like me and my classmate Muli Vered ("a computer person by profession by Sinologist in my soul") for whom the language remained an unrequited love.

Classmate. Another word which more readily springs to my mind in Chinese (tongxue) than in Hebrew (haver lesafsal halimudim). How many times did we hear the question "Aval ma ta'asu im Sinit?" – But what will you do with Chinese? Well it turns out, 20 or more years down the line, that many students did use it – Israel even had a Chinese-speaking ambassador wandering the Far East.

Some, like my classmates Gadi and Yomi, are still teaching Chinese-related subjects. Some, like the reunion's chief organizer Sefi Sragusty, spent years in Taiwan (although now back in Israel and after a career change, he's probably the only local veterinarian who speaks fluent Mandarin).

It seems that through her students, and her students' students, Dora Shickman is basically the mother of all Chinese-language course in the country. And nowadays the classes are tremendously popular and large (You wouldn't need both hands to count my graduating class).

Looking around the room last month, I couldn't help but wonder whether Giveret Shickman would have been proud of us. I'm pretty sure the Jewish mother would have got some nachas, as they say in Yiddish (nachas in Hebrew). The refined Chinese lady would probably never have showed it. The main thing is, we are proud to be able to say we had Dora Shickman for a teacher. In any language.

(from *The Jerusalem Post*, December 22, 2006)

Letters

A letter from the Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Teddy,

Many thanks for the services in memory of my father Mordechai Olmert, held annually in Synagogue in memory of the Jewish communities in China.

The members of my family and I were deeply touched by your kind gesture.

Best greetings for the Pesach.

Ehud Olmert

Leona Shluger Forman

To T. Kaufman:

It has struck me that in the last two issues of the Bulletin, there has been no listing of the Igud chapter in São Paulo, Brazil. I know that the number of people in the Brazilian Russian-Jewish community from China has been dwindling, but wonder if Olga Birger is OK. I will appreciate any information on what caused the removal of that Igud address, so important to me personally for so many years.

I also take the opportunity to thank you for printing my previous query about the state of reconstruction of the Synagogue in Tientsin (Tianjin). I note that the Chinese authorities have suggested raising the building and then putting up a cultural center. In my memories that building lives as the sunniest, brightest synagogue I have been to in many travels around the world. I have never found one with so much light and happy spirit as the one in Tianjin. It would be wonderful if that blue-sky ceiling and architectural openness could be recaptured in any re-construction.

Third, Frances Greenberg just loaned me your book *The Jews of Harbin Live on in My Heart* and want to add my congratulations to all those you have so deservedly received on this very important contribution to knowledge about Jewish life in North China.

Dear Teddy, Thank you for your explanation about the São Paulo representation of IGUD. Next time I am there I will try to find out how she is and who is left in São Paulo. The small community in Rio has dwindled to none. I guess that is part of life.

I have another question and a request. The question is has there been any progress regarding the re-building of the Synagogue in Tienjin?

The request has to do with friends of mine, Jane and Peter Schneider from NY, who are going to China for the first time and Kaifeng is part of their itinerary. I have shared with them all information culled from the Bulletin and they would be most interested in meeting the young man Shu-Lei who came to study at Bar-Ilan University and then stayed on for some time at Yeshiva University. In the last issue, there is a reference to him being back in Kaifeng and actually working as a guide. They would love to meet him. Do you have his coordinates?

Tzachi Shickman

Thank you so much for the generous gift. I was inducted on March 26th, 2007 and will be released on March 25th, 2010/

The gift is of course greatly appreciated but even more is the link that the Igud Yoztei Sin provides me with my roots in China.

Son of Simon Shickman from Beijing

Grandson of Isaac Shickman from Harbin

Alissa Elegant

I was wondering if you could send me information on scholarships for the descendants of Chinese Jews. I am a student at UC Berkeley planning on studying abroad in China. My grandma was born in Harbin and also lived in Shanghai.

Email: aelagant@berkeley.edu

Tel : (510) 520-2011

Letters

Peter Nash

Sydney, Australia

To T. Kaufman:

I knew I would stir up a bit of discussion on the number of refugees that got to Shanghai. I agree with the estimate of 20,000 for the following reasons.

1. HIAS in Shanghai had applications in 1945 from the refugees for onward emigration from approx 8,528 family households which I estimate represents 17, 000 to 18,000 individuals. This I know from my inspection of the HIAS lists at the Central Archives in Jerusalem in 2001, the same time I also had a meeting with you. This also means that approx. 1,400 who passed away in the years 1940 to 1945 are not included. If you add the Sugihara Visa recipients who actually arrived in Shanghai (including those from the Mir Yeshiva), that is say, 1000, then you get to 20,000.

2. The Emigranten Adressbuch from Nov 1939 only has approx. 5,000 names, that is for heads of household, so at most they represent only about 10,000 refugees.

On another topic - when do you estimate the Harbin authorities will 'open up' the 'card index' of former Harbiners for the general public to study?

All the very best to you and Rasha.

Franklin Cole

My late Father, Heinz Cohn, was a refugee from Germany in Shanghai 1939-1947. He left me some photographs and other historical documents from when he was there. Would your association be interested in these items? I would like to present them to an organization that would make good use of these items for future generations. Please contact me if you are interested. By the way, I will be visting my cousins in Israel 25 September - 16 October so perhaps I can bring some of these items directly to you for your viewing. Your reply will be appreciated.

Email Address :fdc1225@earthlink.net

Phone Number : 1-325-947-1695

Dina Vincow (Lichomanova)

Dear Teddy,

Thank you very much for printing the article about my trip to Harbin.

The trip inspired me to think back about the transition from my life there and my new life in Israel. Perhaps it might be of interest to the readers of the Bulletin and so I am submitting it to you.

Thank you for keeping all the memories about our Harbin past alive through your work for Igud Yotzei Sin. Wishing you many years of good health to continue your great endeavors.

Nina Hellman

I am seeking information about my family who lived in Harbin.

My grandfather came to the US in 1939, but my grandmother died and was buried in Harbin sometime about 1936. I am wondering if you can help me find out about her grave, as I would like to visit it on a forthcoming trip to Harbin in 2 months. I would also like to visit the site of the family home, the address of which was 7 Litainaya St., but I assume that the street name has been changed. Here are my grandmother's name and the street address in Cyrillic, which may be of some help in this quest. Any assistance you can offer in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Grandmother's name: Eugenia Samuilovna Flix (name' patronimic' married name) Maiden Name: Beshkin

LATVIA- RIGA

Good day and best regards to all. My name is Juri Yakovlevich Alperovich and I am using genealogy to build the family tree and meanwhile continuing search of relatives.

I had recently received some document from the Kra- barovsn

Archive, stating that my relatives; Aleperovich Iliya Davidovich, born 1898 and WITH Alproovich (nee Gulbienovich) Liubov Michailovna arrived in 1930 from USSR to Manchuria and in 1931 settled in Harbin.

He was employed by the furs and skins trading company "A.S.Gold & Bros" IN New-York. Later they moved to Tsingdao and he had a job in the "OKURO& CO" Firm.

His trusted man in Manchuria, who could Guarantee for him was Mr. Kaufman (alas, no surname was given),so I used this fact as written in my uncle's Iliya Davidovich Question are this document was filled on 1.08.1939 in Manchuria.

It is known that your journal has direct connections to the history and life of the former Jewish community in China so you might as well have some interesting materials concerning the life of people mentioned – Iliya Davidovich and Liubov Michailovna Alperovich and Mr. Kaufman or their presumptive heirs who may know something concerning their relatives.

My other uncle businessman Alperovich Moysey Davidovich and his wife Rebecca Naumovna (house wife)lived in Tinentisn (as in may 1944)

About Haim A. Zimmerman (from your side)

If his second name is Abramovich-he is my cousin grandfather (brother of grandmother Rahil Obramovia Zimmerman)I would like to know about his date of birth and more information on his life.

Thanking you in advance for assistance in my search

Juti

E- mail: juraialp1@gmail.com

Malka and Rebecca Shneiderman

To Rasha and Teddy Kaufman: Wishing you a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year with peace in Israel and all over the world.

I was thinking about you all the other day and I found a surprise in our mail box – a Bulletin. And not just a Bulletin from Israel but one about Harbin – the town where I was born 76 years ago and where I lived for seven years with my parent and grandparents. Therefore accept my sincerest thanks for remembering us. Our daughter, Rebecca, lives with me and she too loves the Bulletin. All the best to you and your staff.

Prof. Izumi Sato

Tokyo, Japan

To Rasha and Teddy Kaufman: It was very nice meeting you and Igud Yotzei Sin members last August. It was really a wonderful reunion for me and I was also able to get acquainted with some new people such as Mr. Michael Fleischmann ...

On the other hand, I noticed that the attendance was small and I hope it was only because of the summer heat and the Hizbollah missile attacks. I hope and pray that IYS members all stay healthy and fine.

When I came back to Japan in late August I received a thank-you note from Mary and Julie Kotzujji. So I wrote to them and explained how difficult it was to receive the honor for their father, Prof. Rabbi Abraham Kotzujji and only with your endeavor it was possible. I am sure that they are very pleased to learn that their father's deed was never forgotten.

Somebody wants to know what happened to the daughter of Rabbi Ashkenazi who came to Japan. Do you know anything about her?

Once again, thank you very much for your kind assistance and warm hospitality.

Nona Mari (Van-Tschurin)

Canada

Please be kind enough to send me Rasha's (Segerman's) address. I am a very old and distant friend from Shanghai. We lived across each other in the same compound "King Albert apartments." Nadia and Frank Ognistoff gave me your EMail. I would love to hear from Rasha and Bella. My address is Nona Mari..727 Biddesden Pl.,, West Vancouver, B.C. Canada V7S 1 P 9.

EUROPEAN EMIGRANT HERITAGE

*Emigration Genealogy, 175 Emerson Street Denver, Colorado 80218 USA
Mobile Phone, China: 1340-2020-593, e-mail: hannum7@yahoo.com*

November 15, 2006

To: Teddy Kaufman

Ygud Yotzei Sin

Thank you for our conversation today. I am a genealogist from the United States. We are in Harbin researching:

David / Dan FROMAN / FREIMAN, his wife Olga MELAMIS, their daughter Sprincy, and her husband Peter ABALMASOFF

You mentioned an Australian FREIMAN family in our conversation. This is interesting because Sprincy's birth certificate says her mother was "Olga Froman (Freiman)." It would be very helpful if you could send me the contact information for this Australian family. Also, thank you if you can publish the below:

David & Olga FROMAN / FREIMAN

1. The Russian Jews David & Olga FROMAN (FREIMAN) immigrated to Harbin on unknown date.
2. 1914 They had a daughter Sprincy (Schprinze) born on 18 April 1914

in Tientsin.

3. Our David FROMAN died in Shanghai in approximately 1952; Olga died before him date and place unknown.

D. A. FROIMAN

4. In the Hong and HIAS Lists below we found only a D. A. FROIMAN. He may be our David:
 - a. 1926 Hong D. A. FROIMAN owed a "general commission store" at 280 Victoria Road, Tientsin. Victoria Rd was the main street of the British Concession. It is now called Jie Fang Bei Lu (Liberation Road).
 - b. 1930-40 Hong D. A. FROIMAN did business as "leather importer, fur & skin merchant" at 25, 27, and 145 Davenport Road, Tientsin.
 - c. 1941 Hong D. A. FROIMAN moved to Shanghai, 1173 Bubbling Well Road (now called Nanjing Xi Lu).
 - d. 1943 HIAS D. FROIMAN 175/6 Seymour Road (now called Shaanxi Bei Lu), Shanghai.

Seymour Rd was in the International Concession, ruled by Britain & U.S.

Sprincy & Peter ABALMASOFF

5. Sprincy FROMAN married a Peter (Piotr) ABALMASOFF, probably in July 1934 or 1935.
6. 1936-40 Hong Peter ABALMASOFF did business as "watchmaker, jeweler and dealer in precious stones" at 262 Victoria Rd, Tientsin. Tel 30896. Peter moved to Shanghai in 1940.

Thank you for any help, James Hannum

Attached: Photos of Shanghai former Jewish Ghetto at Hong Kew, 2006

Surname Variants:

FROMAN may be spelled FROIMAN, FREIMAN, FRYMAN, FREEMAN, etc. in the old records, and may end with a double "N."

MELAMIS may be spelled MELAMED, MALAMED, etc.

ABALMASOFF may be spelled ABALMASOV, etc.

**Charles Tucker
London Beth Din
Court of the Chief Rabbi**

I have been referred to you by Rena Krasno of the Sino-Judaic Institute, Menlo Park, California, who stated that you were the best person to contact regarding archival material relating to the former Jewish communities in Shanghai, and I should therefore be grateful if you could supply any information upon the following matters.

1. Are the records of the pre-1848 [sic] synagogues known to be in existence? We would be most particularly interested in births, marriages and deaths.
2. Was any record made, either in the form of transcripts of the inscriptions or photographs of the memorial inscriptions in the various cemeteries, either before or after their removal to a new site during the 1950's?
3. Can you supply any information about which jurisdiction would have dealt with testamentary (probate) records in Shanghai and whether its records are also known to be extant?

I have approached Dr. Maisie Meyer in connection with the above enquiries, but she was unable to supply any information, except in connection with the Sephardi community.

Address: Adler House, 735 High Road, North Finchley, London N12 OUS, England

Tel: (+44181) 0181-343 6270 Fax: (+44181) 0181-343 6257

At the Reception by the Chinese Ambassador in Honor of the Former Residents of China

The performance by the Embassy staff



A dance with fans



The Chinese choir sings Israeli songs



A fashion show



A tea ceremony



A dance with swords



"Prima donna", Mrs. Liu Shuxin, The Ambassador's wife

Tales of a Wandering Jew

By Paul Rockower

Spending Shabbat with the Jews of Beijing

I was lost outside the subway, searching for a bus to the Summer Palace, the emperor's old stomping grounds. I stopped the only Westerner I saw to ask for directions, but he was lost as well. As we talked, we established that we were both "MOT" (Members of the Tribe) and both from Washington, DC. As it was Friday, I told the fellow traveler about Shabbat services at Chabad in Beijing, and how the Web site offered printout directions in Chinese for a cab to the synagogue. We went on our respective ways.

Later that night I arrived at the rabbi's house-turned-synagogue, leaving the unfamiliar Chinese world behind, and entering far more familiar surroundings. My fellow traveler was there, as well as 40 or so members of the Beijing Jewish Community. Surrounded by Jews from Israel, Australia, Russia, Canada and America, together we celebrated Shabbat and shared a delicious kosher meal. Ironically, I even ran into cousins of mine at the synagogue, proving once again how small the Jewish world can be.

The Beijing Jewish community numbers roughly 1000 people, hailing from the world over. This number includes 30 Jewish families at the American Embassy and the families of the Israeli Embassy. The community is growing and thriving, and that is in no small part thanks to Chabad. I spoke with Rabbi Shimon Freundlich, the veritable Chief Rabbi of Beijing, and he gave me the story of the Beijing community. Before Chabad came five years ago, there was little to no Jewish infrastructure. Today there is a Jewish day school,

a community center, and a Chinese pagoda-style mikve.

Chabad of Beijing distributes kosher meat all over China, receiving it from either Israel or Australia. Meanwhile, once a year, a container of dry goods, kosher wine and long-lasting milk is brought from Israel. The rabbi said that at the Western supermarkets it is possible to get some kosher foods in the form of Western products that happen to be kosher. In addition, kosher foods and kosher products are brought to Chabad Beijing by the many business people who pass through Beijing. More than 2000 business people come through Beijing, many bringing kosher products for Chabad. Many of them stay at hotels close to the synagogue or Jewish Community Center, and these hotels often have a relationship with Chabad as well. Rabbi Freundlich noted that they have ties with hotels ranging from backpacker hostels to 4-star hotels. Those planning on visiting Beijing, who would like to bring food or stay close to the synagogue can find information on the Chabad Beijing Web site (www.chabadbeijing.com). The Web site, along with Chabad Thailand Web site, are the most visited Chabad sites in the world.

Judaism is not one of the five recognized religions in China, but Rabbi Freundlich said that the Jewish community has a good relationship with the Chinese government. The Jewish community is pushing for status as a non-recognized Western minority community, which will accord the Jewish community status as a community in China.

He said that the Chinese government understands that the Beijing Jewish community respects Chinese culture,

and the wishes of the government and the Chinese people. Chabad is not able to perform conversions of local Chinese people, and local Chinese are not allowed to participate in rituals unless they are married to a Jew.

Rabbi Freundlich mentioned that Chabad gets a call at least once a week from someone in a far-flung province who wants to convert to Judaism. They counsel them that if they are serious, they can do a conversion in Hong Kong or Australia, but not in Mainland China. The gregarious rabbi said that rebuilding the first Jewish community in Beijing since World War II has been tremendous. On the horizon is the construction of an actual synagogue building, and the establishment of a kosher restaurant. Meanwhile, they will continue building the community and imbuing the Beijing Jewish community with a sense of purpose. As the rabbi noted, the survival of the Jewish people comes from both the physical community and the spiritual learning. Chabad of Beijing helps create that for the community. The Beijing Jewish community is growing at a frenetic pace, and is as enigmatic as the land in which it is found.

Paul Rockower served as the Press Officer for the Consulate General of Israel to the Southwest in Houston from 2003 until 2006. He is currently on a six month trek around the world. You can read more of his adventures at his blog: <http://levantine18.blogspot.com> and see pictures at <http://picasaweb.google.com/levantine18>.

(from *The Jerusalem Post*, December 14, 2006)

Confucius and what he said

By Emmanuel Pratt

The name Confucius is the Western barbarism of K'ung Fu tsu, the name of the Chinese sage and teacher, whose philosophy and personal behavior carved the shape of thought and ethics throughout China's history.

According to tradition, he was born circa 551 BCA in a humble village of Tzou in the state of Lu (present-day Shandong Province) at the lower reaches of the holy mountain Tai Shan, to a poor family of the noble clan of K'ung.

His father, local district military commander, died when Confucius was three years old, leaving the family in poverty. As a child, Confucius held make-believe temple rituals, as a young adult, he quickly earned a reputation of love of learning, fairness and politeness. He was married at 19 and had two daughters and a son. In time, his family became numerous and influential, some of who exist to the present day.

At first Confucius the chief of the locally powerful Ki clan employed him as a superintendent of his parks (in his elder age, he is said to have remarked that "the trees have given me no few lessons of wisdom".) His mother died when he was 24, and immediately after the period of mourning was over, he began his career of teacher of a small body of disciples that had gathered around him in order to seek guidance in the principles of right conduct and good government. His book "The Analects" (Chinese "Lun Yui" = "Thoughts", "Ideas") is a compilation of the conversations of the Master and his pupils, as jotted down by his disciples. His fame as a man of learning and integrity soon spread throughout Lu.

Although his meeting with another key sage of the Chinese philosophy,

Lao tzu, the founder of Taoism, remains to be debated, it is said that Lao tzu was not at all influenced by Confucius, and that his teachings pushed him off, "for their formality and shallowness", as put down by the ancient historian Ssu Ma-ch'ien. "Confucius, on the other hand, was deeply impressed by Lao tzu, "writes the historian, and, "when asked by his disciples about the meeting, replied: 'I met a dragon!'"

During the Great Burning of the Books by the unscrupulous First Emperor of Ch'in (Qin), Ch'in Shih Huang-ti (Qin shi hunag di) in 213 BCA, practically all the writings on and by Confucius were destroyed, but later some (including the "Analects") were found or rewritten, so that none of the existing texts can be considered wholly true to the original.

Here are some of the better known sayings of the great Master:

To have a friend come from far away – isn't that a joy?

Better a diamond with a flaw, than a pebble without.

One who goes unrecognized, yet isn't annoyed – isn't he a noble person?

A man who has committed a mistake and doesn't correct it, commits another mistake.

There are three ways to learn wisdom: by reflection, which is the noblest; the second -- by imitation, which is the easiest; and the third – by experience, which is the bitterest.

The essence of knowledge is, having it – to apply it; lacking it – to confess your ignorance.

To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.

Confucius was mostly concerned with people and alien to animals. Once he returned home to find his stable burned to the ground. One of his pupils jotted down his remark:

"He asked: 'Were there any human casualties?' and about the horses he didn't ask."

He died at the age of 74.

Once again

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Israel's Messenger



Vol. IX No. 4

IYS Sephardi Division

Editor: Sasson Jacoby

The Sasson Jacoby scholarship was inaugurated in December 2006 thanks to a special donation from Mr. Matook Nissim, and the award will be given annually by Mrs. Hannah Jacoby at the traditional Hannuka gatherings held by Igud Yotzei Sin in Israel.

In this issue we continue with the series of articles on the history of the Jews of Hong Kong where many of the well known Baghdadian-Sephardi families had settled and maintained close ties with those in Shanghai. Following this series, we will also cover the communities in Singapore, Burma, Japan and other Far Eastern countries where such families had also lived. The Babylonian Center in Israel is planning to hold an exhibition on these communities within the next few years.

Another project being undertaken is a computerized version of the complete set of Israel's Messenger (1904-1938) transferred from the microfilms we acquired several years ago from the National Library at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where the original volumes are kept. This will facilitate research into the history of our community in Shanghai and the Far East. We will continue to publish a page from the Messenger in each issue of the Bulletin.

April 23, 2007

Mr. Matook Nissim

931 Snyder Lane Walnut Creek

Ca. 94598 U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Nissim,

I would like to express my gratitude for your very generous donation to the Sephardi Division of Igud Yotzei Sin in memory of my late husband, Sasson Jacoby. Your contribution has been used to set up a scholarship fund for an annual award to be given to an Israeli student who is a descendant of one of the families of the Sephardi-Baghdadian community that formerly lived in China.

Your contribution to this fund is important in maintaining the ties of the younger generation with their family history and traditions. The first recipient of this scholarship award was the grandson of Cissy Fleg (nee Abraham) who was born in Shanghai and was a member of the Sephardi community there.

I feel that through this annual scholarship award, the memory of my husband and his many years of work in editing of the New Israel's Messenger will be preserved.

Yours sincerely,
Hannah Jacoby

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JEWISH CALENDAR 5697	
5697	1937
*Rosh Hodesh Shebat	Sun., Jan. 13
New Year for Trees	Wed., Jan. 27
*Rosh Hodesh Adar	Fri., Feb. 12
Fast of Esther	Wed., Feb. 24
Purim	Thurs., Feb. 25
*Rosh Hodesh Nisan	Sat., Mar. 13
Passover first day	Sat., Mar. 27
Passover first day	March 28
Passover 7th day	April 2
*Also observed the day Previous as Rosh Hodesh	

מבשר ישראל

Israel's Messenger

The International Jewish Monthly

SHANGHAI'S ONLY JEWISH PAPER FOR THE JEWISH HOME
FOUNDED AND EDITED BY THE LATE MR. N. E. B. EZRA

PRESENT EDITOR REV. MENDEL BROWN, B.A.

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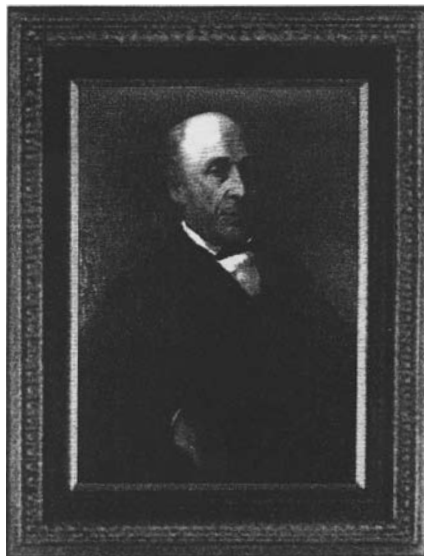
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Early Jewish Life

The first Jews arrived in Hong Kong in 1843 and 1844, the years immediately following the ceding of Hong Kong to the British under the Treaty of Nanking. The treaty had ended the First Opium War and brought unprecedented access to China for foreign merchants and the promise of peace and security of business.

One of the first known Jews to arrive in Hong Kong, English businessman Jacob Phillips, would have witnessed the early rise of the city of Victoria on the waterfront, where the well-known merchant houses of Canton and Macau bought land and established offices and godowns. Many of these companies continued to profit from the trade in opium in the early years of the colony – a trade that brought swift prosperity which in turn funded the rapid commercial development and diversification of business in Hong Kong.



Phillips, who born the son of a rabbi in Birmingham in 1803, established a trading agency in Hong Kong in partnership with Benjamin Phineas Moore. Phillips' nephew, Edward

Cohen, joined him in Hong Kong in 1846, continuing in the business after Phillips returned to England in 1851. Another Jew who came to Hong Kong at the colony's outset was adventurer Samuel H. Cohen, who arrived in 1844 on The Asiatic; he later spent four years in Shanghai, where he sought to establish ties with co-religionists there.

A Jewish Cemetery in Hong Kong was laid out as early as 1855, the same year as the arrival of Nissim Joseph Ezra, who came to Hong Kong from Canton. A Crown Lease for land was granted in 1857, the year of the first Jewish burial in Hong Kong. The cemetery was expanded in 1904 by a lease negotiated through the good offices of Sir Matthew Nathan who served as Hong Kong's only Jewish Governor from 1904 to 1907. The cemetery has survived and is today a tranquil retreat in the mass of buildings above Happy Valley.



A small community of Jewish merchants, many Sephardic Jews from India, contributed richly to the territory's commercial and political growth, from as early as the 1860s. Among the leading early Jewish merchants of Hong Kong were a succession of Sassoon family brothers, who worked as principals

for the firms of D. Sassoon, Sons & Co. and E.D. Sassoon & Co. In A Sense of History, Carl T. Smith links eight sons of twice-married David Sassoon, founder of Bombay-based D. Sassoon, Sons & Co. to Canton and Hong Kong in the mid to late 1800s: Elias David arrived in Canton in 1845 followed by Abdullah (later Sir Albert) in 1846; Reuben came to Hong Kong in 1850, Sassoon David in 1852, Abraham (Arthur) in 1861, Frederick in 1874 (who became a legislative councillor), and Aaron in 1884 (who was not active in the family business).



Alongside the Sassoons, the Jewish firm of E.R. Belilios became well-known in the mid to late 1800s, founded by Emmanuel Raphael Belilios who, like the Sassoons, was a Sephardic Jew. He came to Hong Kong in 1862 from his birthplace, Calcutta, and lived in the colony until the early 1900s. Belilios was a successful Hong Kong merchant; he became Hong Kong's first Jewish legislative councillor and served on the board of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. He is remembered as a larger-than-life character whose camel could be spotted carrying

supplies to his mansion, The Eyrie on the Peak, until the opening of the Peak Tramway provided a more convenient means of transport. He is also remembered for his philanthropy. He built a reformatory which later became the Belilios Public School for Girls, which remains open today. He also funded educational scholarships from which Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Republic of China, is believed to have benefitted.

Other Jewish firms which established offices in the territory in the 1850s and 1860s (listed in Traders of Hong Kong: Some Merchant Houses, 1841-1899) were Judah & Co (1855-1870), Moses & Co (1860-1870) and Joshua, Gubbay & Co (1862-1872). Later Gubbay & Co. set up offices in Hollywood Road (1872-1882), and N.N.J. Ezra operated from 33 Wellington Street (1884-1892). Hong Kong's business directories of the time also reveal a number of other Jewish businessmen and firms active from the 1860s through to the late 1880s. They included Aaron Gindell, a bookbinder; Landstein & Co.; C.C. Cohen & Co.; Reuben Solomon, a broker; A.S. Cohen, a broker; H. Cohen, a merchant; J.A. Solomon, merchants; Cohen (C.C.) and Eaton, share brokers; and Cohen (C.C.) and George, share brokers.

Eleazar Lawrence (later Sir Elly) Kadoorie, pioneer of the Kadoorie corporate empire, came to Hong Kong from Bombay in 1880 for E.D. Sassoon & Co. By the 1890s he had founded his own brokerage, from which Kadoorie business interests expanded spectacularly, eventually embracing banking, hotels, real estate and public utilities. While back in England in the late 1890s, Kadoorie met and married Laura Mocatta. Together they returned to Hong Kong in 1897, where the new Mrs. Kadoorie's reported difficulties in settling into the young colony were cushioned by her friendship with Mrs. Gubbay, the paternal grandmother of Lady Muriel Kadoorie.



By 1890, the number of Jews living in Hong Kong had moved well beyond the 1881 census of 71; they resided in a colony that featured "a glorious bay ... excellent roads, trolleys, a railway to the mountains, museums, botanical gardens ..." as described by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov, who visited Hong Kong in October 1890. The Jewish community by then had begun to change from being dominated by wealthy Sephardic merchants to including other Jewish heritages, particularly Ashkenazim, who came to Hong Kong, many as refugees from Eastern Europe, in the 1880s and 1890s.

By 1900, there were some 150 Sephardic Jews living in Hong Kong; there were also 'a number of European co-religionists, who have no congregation of their own.. When they cannot form a Minyan among themselves, they attend our synagogue ...' commented

Emmanuel Raphael Belilios in *The Jewish World* in 1900.



In 1904, Hong Kong's only Jewish Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, arrived. An engineer and bachelor, he was appointed at the age of just 32 and was to serve the colony until 1907. 'His competence and far-sightedness were unique,' writes Dr. Solomon Bard. 'He pushed ahead the Kowloon-Canton Railway ... and actively promoted education, particularly in technical fields. He is probably best remembered by his namesake road in Kowloon, which he planned and which became known as Nathan's Folly. Time showed the epithet unwarranted and proved the wisdom of his effort as it became a vital factor in Kowloon's development.' While Governor, Nathan was Honorary President of the Ohel Leah Synagogue



Twin cities. Victoria, with Kowloon across the strait

ANTI-SEMITISM IN FRANCE.

PARIS, November 1, 1907.—It has been assumed too readily that the light thrown on the Dreyfus affair had caused a moral blow to anti-Semitism, and that it would not raise its head again in France. It is quite true that for a long time the anti-Jewish movement has been considerably discredited in public opinion, and that Jews had regained the place which they had deserved in all their official positions. At the commencement of the Dreyfus affair, in consequence of the hostility displayed by a certain portion of the public against the Jews, the Ministers of departements feared for some time to give their Jewish subordinates the advancement which they deserved. This is, above all, true of the army. The Jewish officers remained without any advancement and the best of them were discouraged on encountering from companions in arms distinctly antipathetic receptions. Many of them renounced the military career, and from that time onward the number of young Jews who took up a military career has diminished. Nevertheless, for the last several years a favorable change has taken place even in the army; and, at any rate, the successive Ministers of War since Waldeck-Rousseau left out of consideration all thought of creed, and anti-Semitism had no part in the Government councils. The whole country was pacified even as far as Algeria, where anti-Semitic madness had raged to the highest degree.

A recent unfortunate event, however, has seemed to revive once more the Jewish question, which one thought to be forever solved. A naval officer, overcome by debt, and seeing no way out of his embarrassed situation, thought of diabolic means of procuring the money of which he had need. In a moment of aberration he took copies of documents of great national importance entrusted to his care, and actually proposed to the Minister of the Navy to sell them to him for a large sum. These guilty acts, which one must regard with disgust, were published, and, as fate would have it, this officer proves to be of Jewish origin. Immediately the anti-Semitic pen recommenced. It is true that another officer was discovered at the same time who though a Christian, was really guilty of true treason. Of the two, as far as is known at present, he was only guilty of having tried to gain the money in an unworthy manner, without dreaming of betraying his native country. But the anti-Semites recognized but one thing they had an excellent occasion to reopen their campaign of hate. According to their usual procedure, they included all the Jews of the country in the same accusation. The Jewish officer, named Ulmo, was not alone the occasion for personal attacks, but it was a new Dreyfus, an able Dreyfus—that is to say, a representative of Jews in religion, who, whatever country they

inhabited could not be otherwise than agents of destruction and perversion. According to the theories dear to the anti-Semites of all countries, they claim that the Jews have an hereditary tendency which render them unassimilable and undesirable. One can easily imagine what the anti-Semitic press will try to make out of this affair. It has raised anew the war cry, "Frenchmen!" and has attempted to arouse public opinion once more and to induce conflict between the Israelites of France and their fellow-citizens. It is, however, to be hoped that these attempts will have no success in this country, which understands that the anti-Semites not alone desire to drive the Jews from the country, or, at any rate, from the situations they occupy in public office, industry, art and science, but desire to discredit the form of government of the country. Anti-Semitism requires not alone the moral ruin of the Jews, but also that of the Republic. All clear-thinking minds, and fortunately they are in the great majority in this country, see through their machinations, and it is therefore to be hoped that the unfortunate event will have no serious consequence, for French Jews—*The American Hebrew*.

"NO MAN IS INDEPENDENT."

We may prate about our being independent, but no man is independent. We are all dependent upon each other. The only man who can be independent is the man who lives upon some desert island. Robinson Crusoe was independent. But men who desire to live in and with the world are dependent upon the society in which they live. One man is "no man," said the Latin poet, and he was right. The highest need the lowest and the lowest need the highest. The richest need the poorest and the poorest need the richest. The employer needs the employee. The best evidence of our mutual dependence is shown in the recent flurry in the money market. The large banks of the country are by one fell stroke crippled, when the poor laboring man begins to withdraw his penny savings from the bank. It has come to pass that no man, no matter what his wealth or what his station in life, can say the public be damned. He who gives expression to such a sentiment had better be careful lest he be not made to take the place of the public in this classic utterance of his. The whole world is bound together by an invisible chain. Every individual is dependent upon every other individual of human society. What disturbs the one disturbs the other. It is therefore to the advantage of the human family that each one acts with a knowledge of this fact before him so that he do nothing that will result in the hurt of his fellow brother, for in the ultimate analysis it is liable to result in a hurt to himself. *The American Israelite*.

SHANGHAI JEWISH SCHOOL.

[COMMUNICATED.]

Minutes of a meeting of the Committee of the Shanghai Jewish School held on Monday, December 16th at 4.15 p.m. at No. 46, Kiangse Road. There were present—Messrs D. E. J. ABRAHAM, President; SIMON A. LEVY, A. E. MOSES, E. NISSIM and EDWARD I EZRA, Hon. Secretary.

The financial condition of the School was discussed. For the year ending March 1908 there will be a deficit of about \$2,100, and therefore it was decided to make an urgent appeal for further subscriptions and donations.

There are 33 Sephardim and 18 Ashkenazim pupils attending the School; the fees from the former amounting to \$23, and from the latter \$13 per month.

It was proposed to send an appeal to the trustees of the late Mr. ARON SASSOON, of London, for a donation towards the School.

The Committee after consideration, decided to give notice to one of the German Hebrew teachers on account of the scarcity of funds and the poor attendance of the German children.

The age limit for boys seeking admittance was fixed at 15 years, and girls at 16 years.

Messrs E. NISSIM and EDWARD I. EZRA were appointed a Sub-committee to revise the school fees.

It was proposed to collect a special donation for a Purim treat to the children.

In conclusion, it was decided to make an urgent and special appeal to the Community for further funds, for if the School be not adequately supported the capital of Tls. 4,200 in hand, would soon be exhausted and the School closed in consequence. This would be a great pity as the School is undoubtedly doing good and useful work. The following gentlemen, Messrs S. A. HARDOON, D. E. J. ABRAHAM, and EDWARD I. EZRA were requested to collect donations and subscriptions.

With a vote of thanks to the Chairman the meeting terminated.

THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND.

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Judge (to burglar)—"What is your trade?"

Burglar—"I'm a locksmith."

Judge—"What were you doing when the police entered?"

Burglar—"Making a bolt for the door."



CHUSAN ROAD CHATTER

Issue 392

IYS Hongkew Division

Editor: Kurt Maimann

A City of Refuge: Shanghai and the Jews

By Paul Rockower

(Tales of a Wandering Jew)

Having lost my guidebook two weeks back, I was wondering how I find my story on Jewish Shanghai. Then, sitting on the train from Lhasa, Tibet to Shanghai, the story found me. As I sat sipping tea in the dining car, a security guard handed me a mini-guide to Shanghai complete with a section on Shanghai's Jewish past. Sometimes the story finds you, and God always grants you what you need.

The Shanghai Jewish community has a long and storied history, beginning with the immigration of Sephardi Jews from the Middle East in the mid-19th century. Iraqi Jewish families like the Sassoons and the Kadoories built business empires as Shanghai began its meteoric rise. Victor Sassoon made millions in the opium trade, and then even more in Shanghai real estate. At one point he owned more than 1,900 buildings in the city. His other love was horses. He once quipped, "There is only one race greater than the Jews, and that's the Derby".

At the turn of the century, Ashkenazi Jews began flooding into Shanghai from Russia. Three waves of immigration followed: in 1904, during the Russo-Japanese war; in 1906, with the outbreak of pogroms; and in 1917, as a result of the Russian Civil War. With the influx of Ashkenazim, the Hongkew neighborhood, nicknamed "Little Vienna" teemed with Jewish-owned shops and kosher delicatessens. Numerous schuls were built, including the Ohel Moishe synagogue, which functions today as a small museum on Shanghai's Jewish past.

In the lead-up to World War II, Shanghai became a refuge for those fleeing Europe. While doors the world over were closing on European Jews, Shanghai's status as a free port allowed it to welcome the refugees. Shanghai was one of the few places that did not require papers or a visa for entry. From 1939 to 1941, 20,000 to 30,000 Jews immigrated to Shanghai to escape Nazi persecution.

When the Japanese occupied Shanghai, they designated the new Jewish residents as "stateless refugees" and confined them to a somewhat benign ghetto in the Hongkew neighborhood. The ghetto was wall-less but guarded. The veteran Jewish community was able to move freely through the city to provide provisions for the refugees. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee aided the refugees as well.

With the end of the WWII and the rise of Communist China, almost all of the Shanghai Jews immigrated to America, Canada, Australia or Israel. Traces of the community can still be found in the Hongkew neighborhood with its European-style tenement houses. In the back alleys, there are still nail holes where mezuzot used to hang and door grill shaped like a Magen David. In Huoshan Park, in the heart of the neighborhood, there is a small memorial in Chinese, English and Hebrew to the stateless refugees who found haven in Shanghai.

Visiting the Ohel Moishe Synagogue, I was met by its caretaker, Mr. Wang. Now in his 80s, he grew up in the

neighborhood, side-by-side with the Jewish families. Wang shows visitors a video about the Jews of Shanghai, takes them on a brief tour of the schul and answers their questions. He recalled the Jewish community fondly and noted that both peoples had suffered persecution: the Jews under the Nazis and the Chinese under the Japanese.

Today the Shanghai Jewish community is the largest in China, numbering around 1,500, coming from all over the world. Shanghai's role as a center of international trade and investment brings numerous businesspeople to its shores. Chabad Shanghai runs a Jewish center, complete with kosher café, school and weekly Shabbat services. They also have a service that delivers kosher meals to hotels and offices.

There is even a Jewish Shanghai tour, offered by Dvir Bar-Gal (www.shanghai-jews.com). Bar-Gal is an Israeli living in Shanghai, and gives a very thorough tour. The story of today's Jewish community is being written as fast as the skyline grows.

Paul Rockower served as the Press Officer for the Consulate General of Israel to the Southwest in Houston from 2003 until 2006. He is currently on a six-month trek around the world. You can read more of his misadventures at his blog: <http://levantine18.blogspot.com> and see pictures at <http://picasaweb.google.com/levantine18>

(From *The Jerusalem Post*, December 24, 2006)

Jewish Life in Shanghai 60 Years Ago

TAGAR-
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Dinner Of National Unity

SHANGHAI Jewry's stand toward the Yishuv's struggle for Jewish freedom and statehood was unmistakably demonstrated on February 5 at the Shanghai Jewish Club at a dinner sponsored by the the United Zionist-Revisionists of China, when the participants denounced the British terror in Palestine.

A large turnout of Jewish youth and men of Shanghai enthusiastically applauded speakers of the Revisionists here, when it was resolved to dispatch radiograms of protest against the illegality of the death sentence imposed by the British on Dav Grunner, the young Jewish fighter for his nation's freedom.

As each speaker in turn took the floor to point out to the audience the wrongness, injustice and cold-blooded treatment of their brethren in Europe and in Palestine, loud applause clearly showed that Shanghai Jewry stood in no way behind other Jews all over the world in backing the Jewish struggle being waged now.

L. Tomchinsky, Chairman of the United Zionist Revisionists of China, spoke a few words prior to the commencement of the dinner, stressing the need for all Jews to become further united in their support to their oppressed brethren.

His words gave emphasis to a fact apparent even as the people had commenced coming in to dinner—that more than ever before was there an urgency for Jews of all nationalities and political beliefs to get together.

The next speaker, Jack Liberman, general secretary of the United Zionist-Revisionists of China, dealt at length with a report on the progress and results of the recently-concluded Zionist Congress at Basle.

The final speaker of the evening, a brilliant orator who held the audience's close attention, was A. Kalamanowicz, who spoke in Yiddish. He told, step by step, of Jewry's plight and yearnings for a homeland. He told, too, of British methods to keep this goal far away from Jews, of British machinations to pit Arab against Jew, and of the present Jewish fight to overcome all these obstacles.

When lists were passed around the tables for enlistment with the United Zionist-Revisionists of China, the results were gratifying, and unmistakably drew a clear picture of Shanghai Jewry's feelings regarding the situation in their homeland.

At the close of the dinner, Mr. Tomchinsky read a radiogram which was received that evening from New York from Miss Judith Hasser, one of the two Revisionists delegates of China to the Zionist Congress. Miss Hasser is at present in New York en route to Shanghai.

The two radiograms of protest sent the next day to Chief Rabbi Hertzog and to General Sir Alan Cunningham, read as follows:

RABBI HERTZOG KATACH TELAVIV
MEETING SHANGHAI JEWRY FEBRUARY
FIFTH PROTESTED ILLEGALITY DEATH SENTENCE GRUNER EXPRESSED INDIGNATION BRITISH TERROR STOP VOICED ADMIRATION OF FIGHTER FOR JEWISH FREEDOM STOP HIS STAND WONT BE FUTILE HIS FIGHT WILL BE CONTINUED.

GENERAL ALAN CUNNINGHAM JERUSALEM
MEETING SHANGHAI JEWRY PROTESTED DEATH SENTENCE GRUNER EXPRESSED INDIGNATION BRITISH ULTIMATUM DEMANDED JUSTICE TOWARDS JEWRY ESTABLISHMENT FREE JEWISHSTATE.

Simhath Torah Dance

The next two weeks will see winter activities inaugurated, beginning on Simhath Torah. That day, Monday, October 6, Betarim will attend the synagogue in the evening, after which they will proceed to the Betar club for dinner and dancing.

Children's Program

Simhath Torah will also be the occasion for a Children's Day to be held on Tuesday, October 7. The program will commence at 5 p.m. at the Betar clubhouse, with movies, games, refreshments for the Darga Alef children.

Opening Ceremony

Although activities in the new Betar clubhouse commenced some time ago, the premises have yet to be formally opened. This official opening ceremony will be held on Sunday, October 12.

In what is expected to be a particularly colorful ceremony, the club will be pronounced open at 4 p.m. An extensive program for the day has been arranged and is being worked out at present. Details of the program will be announced shortly.

(Contributed by Joe Levoff)

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A Reception at the Residence of the Chinese Ambassador in Israel



1. T. Kaufman thanks the host. Next to him is Ms. Wang Yu translating from Hebrew into Chinese
2. Left to right: Pnina Klein, Judith and Uri Bein, Aya Rozenblatt
3. Left to right: R. Kaufman, E. Vandel, L. Heiman, S. Umansky and Harry Bravinsky
4. Shosh and Benny Tzur

The Judaic Response to Modernity and Its Referential Value to the Cultural Reconstruction in China Today

By Youde Fu Professor of Judaism and Director of the Center for Judaic and Inter-religious Studies of Shandong University, E-mail:ydfu@sdu.edu.cn

The Enlightenment and modernization in the West have not only tremendously changed the destiny and way of life of the Europeans, but also, like a hurricane involving majority of the peoples all over the world, affected their cultural and spiritual traditions. Faced with the challenge of modernity, none of civilizations, whether it is old or new, can escape from a choice between tradition and modernization. Among all of the nations including Chinese, Arabic, Indian, Jewish, Mexican and others, it seems to me that the Jewish people is the most successful in response to the challenge of modernity. That is to say, the Jews have modernized themselves materially, living modern life on one hand, and they have maintained their cultural identity - Jewishness, on the other.

Since the Opium War, in Mainland China took place great events such as the Movement of Foreign Affairs, Reformation of Wu Xu, Nationalist Revolution of Xin Hai, May Fourth Movement and New Cultural Movement, communist revolution and the foundation of People's Republic of China, economic reform after the Cultural Revolution, etc., all of which are somehow related to the alternatives of modernity and tradition. After a century's efforts and zigzagged slow progress, the Chinese people have now begun stepping market economy, the right way to a prosperous economy and material modernization. However, unlike most of the Jews who are aware of their cultural identity, that is, the Jewishness, Chinese people are still perplexed in

their cultural identity. Most of them do not know what their cultural identity is and how to keep it. In short, they have lost their Chinese cultural identity and are soul-less at present. It is the right time now for the Chinese to find the lost soul of the people.

Concerning the issue of Chinese cultural and spiritual identity, variety of opinions and disputations happened in the past century or more. For instance, "Overall Westernization", "the Quintessence of Chinese Tradition", "Chinese Body and Western Function", "Western Body and Chinese Function", Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Taoism and others. I have no intention to continue the existing discussions in this paper. What I am trying to do is, by historical analysis and comparison of Judaism and Confucianism, to find out the referential value of Jewish Reform and the process of modernization to current cultural reconstruction in China. I shall briefly describe the movement of Jewish Reform, analyze the formation of modern Judaism and its significances to Chinese cultural construction and finally try to demonstrate why the Jewish success of religion and modernization can be applied to China today.

I. The Reform of Judaism and Its Outcome

In 1801, the reform movement of Judaism opened its curtain as Israel Jacobson (1768-1822), the father of Jewish Reform, established the first Temple in a small town of Harz in Germany. Soon after it, many Reform temples emerged one after another in Berlin, Hamburg, Blaslow,

Burn, Heidlburg, and Frankfurt. The Reformers overcame the interventions from the royal sovereignty and preventions from the traditionalists and singled out to be an independent denomination marked by the first Central Rabbinic Conference in 1846.

The German Jewish thinkers in the first half of 19th century were directly or indirectly affected by a group of precedent philosophers such as Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Fredrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Georg Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel (1770-1831). The intellectual climate at that time was considerably complicated in the Jewish world. However, there is no doubt that the theory of historical evolutionism was upheld by the major leaders of the reform movement like Abraham Geiger (1810-1874), Sammuell Holdheim (1806-1860) and later an American reformer Isaac Mayer Weis (1819-1900) and others. They thought that history is a process of evolution and expresses itself in different ways in variety of historical phases. The tradition as manifestations of the Absolute Spirit must adjust itself to the changed society. Judaism must adapt itself to the Changed time. As Abraham Geiger stated, Judaism was a living and changing system of faith. It shaped its forms in history and as a tradition involved its followers in a moving process. Judaism was divided into different forms with distinct characteristics in different historical stages. This theory was opposite to

the traditionalist Jews who regarded Torah, either Mosaic Law or Rabbinic tradition, beyond history and timeless, therefore eternal and unchangeable. For the traditionalists, however, it was the Torah that changes the time and society, not the reverse.

The reformers changed the rituals of synagogue worship and folk practices. They discarded Hebrew language in sermons, prayers and hymn chanting and started to speak vernacular language, that is, German. They introduced organ accompany and choir with both men and women from Christian churches and replaced the traditional chore without musical accompaniment. They let women sit with men in synagogue services in which there were no seats for women before. They accepted both Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah and abandoned the "barbarian" circumcision (quotation from Geiger) for the Jewish boys, which was traditionally taken as the sign of covenant with God. They also deserted the "strange and odd dietary law" (quotation from Geiger), regulations and other unnecessary and over elaborate formalities.

The most significant outcome of the Reform Movement is the split of traditional Judaism and formation of modern Judaism which includes the following three major denominations. (1) Reform Judaism, which broke through the fence of traditional Judaism, emerged as an independent denomination after the reformer's fierce struggle of nearly five decades. (2) Orthodox Judaism as the remains after Reformers moved out. It also includes Hasidim and Neo-Orthodox Judaism as a mixture of traditional Judaism and romanticism. (3) Conservative Judaism, which took the form of historical school in Germany in 19th century, formerly appeared in the United States of America later. It basically upheld the Reform Judaism in changing the old Jewish ideas and rituals with progressive outlook, but adopted conservative attitude and kept more tradition in worship services.

Both Reform and Conservative Judaism belong in the category of liberal or progressive Judaism whose followers cover 72% of the American Jewish population. Apart from the three main denominations, another small denomination, that is, Reconstructionism was founded by M. Kaplan in 1920s. It considers Judaism as a civilization with the concept of God, a force made for salvation. It is a newest movement of Judaism with radical theory and conservative practice and has impacted the Jewish world mainly by its philosophy.

Now what are the aims of Jewish reform movement and is it successful from historical perspective?

The reform movement in 19th century virtually adopted a twofold of tasks which were put forward by Mendelssohn when he defined the goals of *haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) in his *Jerusalem: The Jew* "sought to break down the ghetto barriers and transform the Jew into a European, who, at the same time, would retain his Jewishness. Accordingly, the Jew was to be integrated into Western culture and trained to live in two milieux, the worldly and the Jewish, thereby assuming dual cultural responsibility." In reality, after two centuries since the commence of Reform in 19th century, we can now assert that the objectives of the Jewish reform have been attained in the main, which can be justified by the following facts.

Above all, most of the European and American Jews have modernized themselves by integrating into the main steam of Western societies in many ways, especially in science and technology, politics and economics. According to a recent survey, 167 Jews and persons of half-Jewish ancestry have been awarded the Nobel Prize, accounting for 22% of all individual recipients worldwide between 1901 and 2004. In addition; the Jews have been an eminent political force in many countries apart from Israel. According to the Political Graveyard, a website about U.S. political history

and cemeteries, 138,150 Jewish politicians including both living and dead are listed. As we all know, some Jews have become prime ministers or cabinet ministers in Britain, France, Australia and other great countries. Again, the Jews have won and tightly held the first place in the monetary domain of many western countries and produced a good number of most wealthy enterprisers and numerous great thinkers. Furthermore, even the Jewish households and family life have been changed and modernized tremendously and the Jewish children have been best educated in modern world.

However, it is also an undisputable fact that Judaism still plays a very important role in Jewish life. Take American Jewry as an example. In light of the demographical survey of the United Jewish Community in 2002, the population of American Jews is 5.2 million and around 56% of them are registered in synagogues and participate in regular services and the other 44% are not in the lists of synagogues and do not take part in religious service regularly. The religious Jews spent Shabbat and other holidays and festivals in accordance with the Jewish religion; and even a good number of irreligious Jews, celebrated Jewish holidays too. It is unnecessary to enumerate examples to illustrate the Jewish people's spirituality and religiousness: for everyone knows that in the West, the Jews are a religious people and majority of them find their identity in Judaism as a way of life.

To sum up, since 19th century, the Western Jews have gradually modernized themselves and fulfilled integration into modern societies. And meanwhile they have also lived as Jews and maintained their Jewish identity by practicing Judaism to certain degrees in different denominations.

Now from the process of modernization and maintenance of cultural and spiritual identity of the Jews in Diaspora, we can reach the following conclusions.

First of all, tradition and modernity are not directly opposite to each other but to a great degree in harmony with each other. Modernity is the manifestation of human reason which created modern science, technology and industrialization necessary to human material life and promote human well-being. However, Human beings also live moral and spiritual life on which science and technology do not work. Therefore religions are needed. For a people like the Jews with long history and rich culture, tradition should not be discarded. What the people can do is to innovate and reform as took place in Judaism since 19th century. Majority of the modernized Jews, whatever denominations they are in, have maintained tradition to some extent and found their identity from Judaism and its practice.

Secondly, modernity can be grafted on the stem of tradition. A Jew can be a scientist and at the same time, a religious person who follows Mosaic Law, goes to synagogue on Shabbat day, celebrates Jewish festivals and lives religious life. Though not all of the successful Jews are religious, a good number of religious Jews have shown that traditional values and modern life can be co-existent without conflicts. As a matter of fact, they are complimentary and beneficial to each other.

Thirdly, tradition should be reformed. Tradition is not to be reserved without condition. The purpose to keep tradition is to adapt itself to the changed situation in order to serve the people properly. Tradition without change cannot be the way of life of the people in changeable society. If a tradition does not fit the changed society well, it should and could be changed. If Judaism did not reform itself, it could not have been the guide for nearly 80% of the Jews (Reform and Conservative denominations) in variety of countries. It seems to me that liberal Judaism can nowadays play an important role in Jewish spiritual and moral life mainly because of the

reform movement initiated in 19th century and developed afterwards. Even the Orthodox Jews and neo-orthodox Jews, changed their way of life to some degree in the direction to modernity.

Fourthly, to reform is not to abandon tradition. The Jewish reform was in the frame of Judaism rather than beyond it. In other words, to reform is to critically inherit not to give up tradition. As declared the statement of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1999, "Throughout our history, we Jews have remained firmly rooted in Jewish tradition, even as we have learned much from our encounters with other cultures. The great contribution of Reform Judaism is that it has enabled the Jewish people to introduce innovation while preserving tradition, to embrace diversity while asserting commonality.....This Statement of Principles affirms the central tenets of Judaism - God, Torah and Israel - even as it acknowledges the diversity of Reform Jewish beliefs and practices." Whereas the attitude to Zionism, dietary law and other precepts were revised and changed, the basic beliefs and principles of Judaism were not changed.

Finally, religion is irreplaceable to maintain a nation's spirit or identity. Faced with the powerful Christian culture with the strongest missionary tendency, any non-western people, if they intend to resist western impact and free from the fate of assimilation, have to strengthen and develop their religion in order to attract mass and make it the soul or spirit of the people. Jewish people would have lost their soul and identity without Judaism. Ancient Judaism shaped ancient Israel and modern Judaism with variety of denominations has formed the Jewish spiritual and cultural identity of the modern Jews.

I will contend that the Jewish way to cope with the relation between modernity and tradition points to a way for other peoples with the similar social and cultural background.

II. The Referential Values of Jewish Reform to the Construction of Chinese Culture

One Chinese proverb says, "A stone from another mount may also be made into a good jade." That is especially true when it comes to the referential values of modern Judaism to the reconstruction of Chinese culture. The contemporary Chinese people can benefit a lot from the experiences of Jewish reform.

Since the Jewish experiences have demonstrated that tradition and modernity are reconcilable, the appropriate attitude for Chinese people in facing the choice of them should be "both...and", instead of "either...or". That is to say, on one hand, it is improper to westernize by embracing foreign cultures without reserving the tradition, on the other hand, the attitude of nationalism which is characterized by sticking to the tradition stubbornly and excluding foreign cultures blindly is not appropriate either. The wise choice should be accepting modernity while giving considerations to traditional values.

Since Jewish people have succeeded in transplanting modern science, technology and industry on the basis of Judaism, it is advisable that Chinese people make an attempt to make use of western science and technology on the basis of Chinese traditional values. Science is universally useful and has no borders or boundaries. Although having originated and developed in Europe and North America, modern science does not exclusively belong to the West. It is one part of the civilization of the whole humanity in the whole world. History has shown that Chinese traditional culture failed to come up with a systematical science, not to say modern technology, though it included some scientific elements and factors. So I cannot see any possibility or necessity in "developing" or tracing the origin of modern technology in Chinese tradition as some scholars

had attempted to do. One possibility might be learning from the Jewish attitude, that is, to take the existing modern sciences and technology from the West, and employ it in the modernization in China. In this case, philosophers should dispense with their intellectual efforts and let the scientists introduce and innovate bravely. As to the scholars of humanities, they have their own vocation, that is, to reform and reconstruct the tradition creatively, set up cultural and spiritual values and develop them into the spirit of Chinese people.

Since the successful maintenance of Jewish identity to some extent lies in reform of their tradition, we Chinese people should follow the Jews and reform our traditional culture. In dealing with values and cultural spirits, we should not take the attitude of “bring everything here”, instead, we should emphasize reform and reconstruction. Reform of the tradition is an approach of both reserving and discarding in treating our traditions. Similar to the reform of Judaism, our reform and reconstruction are carried out on the basis of Chinese traditions, and it is not like “setting up a brand new oven after damaging everything”. We should differentiate and conserve the essence of our traditions that is in accordance with spirit of the times and humanity, while discarding the dross that is outdated in contemporary times. Simultaneously, we should open our minds, absorb and assimilate the universally excellent achievements in both the eastern and western civilizations. On that basis, we can set up new cultures and new religions that function as the Chinese spirit of the new era.

Although the Judaic reform led to divisions of Judaism, none of the denominations has gone out of Judaism. Similarly, in the times around May Fourth Movement, the Chinese academia split into several sects in response to the Western modernity, such as the school of “Overall Westernization” represented

by Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, the school of “Chinese Body and Western Function” with Zhang Zhidong as its representative, the School of “quintessence of Chinese Tradition” represented by Zhang Taiyan, Liu Shipei, Ma Xulun and others, and the school of “Western Body and Chinese Function” advocated by and Li Zehou. With the experiences of Jewish reform in mind, we can say that theories of “Overall Westernization” and “Western Body and Chinese Function” are expendable since their principal orientation is negation of the tradition and neglect of the succession of national spirit. The school of quintessence of Chinese Tradition refuses to follow the mainstream of modernization by sticking stubbornly to traditions without differentiation; hence their approach is also expendable. The contrast between the School of Westernization and the School of quintessence of Chinese Tradition” is comparable to Jews converted to Christianity and the Orthodox Jews in the Jewish reform movement. The former are rebels of their tradition while the latter are its defendants. One of the fruits of Judaic reform is the successful restraint of Jewish conversion to Christianity. Although still as an independent group of religion, the Orthodox Jew is a minority (21% of the religious Jews in the U.S.). Thus among the above options, we can see the thought of the School of Chinese Body and Western Function” is more practicable in the reconstruction of Chinese culture today. It is comparable to liberal Judaism which includes the majority of Jews who respectively belong to the Reform and Conservative movements.

However, the thought of “Chinese Body and Western Function” I proposed here, is quite different from that of the school with same name in late Qing dynasty represented by Zhang Zhidong. Their practice was to accept the traditional Chinese system of values unchangingly while

introducing Western technology. By Body (Ti) they meant the Confucianism of the Song and Ming Dynasties and Function (Yong) was referred to making use of Western science and technology. In their thought, Body contained the meaning of “fundamental” and “principal” while Function is instrumental, secondary and complementary. In terms of their purpose, they did not transcend what Wei Yuan proposed “mastering the western technology in order to resist the Western barbarians”. They did not realize the changes of the times and hence failed to realize that Body should also be adaptable to the changes of the times. Body is closely related to Chinese tradition, especially the Confucian tradition, but it should be the tradition reformed according to spirit of the times and reconstructed on the basis of absorption of the cultural essences of both the East and the West, not the unchangeable old convention. I think the Body in this sense can jointly function with modern science and technology and is capable of meeting the needs of Chinese people and hence can become the spiritual backbone, their cultural identity, and function in the spiritual settlement of Chinese people

As to the differences between Chinese people and Jews, I propose two points: first, Judaism is a successive tradition without ruptures while the Chinese tradition was not. Second, Jewish tradition is a typical religion while the Chinese tradition is not. The two differences mean that the construction of Chinese culture today should not be completely the same as that of the Jewish reform in 19th century.

The reform of a continuous tradition—Judaism, means the innovation and reconstitution of it with a theory of historical evolution as its standard. The Jewish reformers differentiated and discarded the some doctrines, rituals and customs, while choosing and reserving the factors that were adaptable to requirements of the times. In fact, the Jewish reformers

and Conservatives both adopted this approach. But that is not practical for the construction of Chinese culture, for our tradition on the elite level, at least in mainland China, was broken in the times around May Fourth Movement in early 20th century. Nowadays, the majority of Chinese, the young generation in particular, know little about the traditional values except some professional philosophers and scholars. The traditional values were deprived of its carrier — intellectuals. Hence, the priority of the contemporary Chinese cultural construction should not be innovation as it was in Jewish Reform Movement. The first mission should be the link or connection with the tradition, that is, we should go way back to where the tradition was broken, and bridge the gap between tradition and the present culture. Only after that can we take the task of innovation and reconstruction.

However, the linear quality of time means that history will never be replayed and we will never travel back to the past in terms of time. So the sequence of connection to and innovation of the tradition is not in the sense of time but of logic. It is not possible and practical to spend ten or more years on recovering the tradition without reforming the tradition and reconstructing a new culture.

In time, connection and innovation happen simultaneously. That is, understanding and connection of the tradition coincide with its reform and reconstitution. The combination of connection and innovation is a two-fold of mission which is much more complicated and difficult than the innovation of Judaism. That should not be neglected in the process of building the contemporary Chinese culture.

The second difference between Chinese and Jewish cultures is of great importance. The Jewish tradition is a religious one. It consists of not only beliefs, rituals and customs, but also organizations and believers. That is to say, Judaism is an institutional

religion. An ideology as a belief without organization or believers can in the main be a philosophical system, which is only a rational pursuit of a few people and hence very limited in its influence. With believers and organizations such as churches, the belief of a religion is deeply set in every believer's mind and is performed in daily life and specific actions. So, religion is much more acceptable for the mass than philosophy. At present, some 80% of the world population is believers of certain religions and they regard their own religious beliefs as their cultural identity and spirituality. That is what Judaism is to the Jews. Undoubtedly, the Chinese tradition also included some religions, such as Buddhism and Taoism. But the disciples of Buddhism and Taoism are only a minority of the population in mainland China. Moreover, the two religions seem too passive and elusive (escaping from the physical world) to become popular among most people. The factual main stream of Chinese tradition was Confucianism. But Confucianism is not deemed as a religion in the minds of many Chinese people. Ideologically, the pre-Qin Confucianism is much more religious for its thought concerning Heaven. But the Confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties paid less attention to Heaven, instead, human became the center and its main pursuit is the instruction of Rite and self-cultivation. That undermined the religious characteristic of Confucianism. Functionally, however, Confucianism was a religion, an institutional religion consisting of beliefs (concepts of Heaven and man, nature and providence, for example), customs and organizations. Ever since the "Ba Chu Bai Jia, Du Zun Ru Shu" (exclusive acceptance of Confucianism and discarding a hundred thought schools) during the reign of Emperor Wu of Western Han dynasty, Confucianism was combined with the monarchical system and became the state religion. Since Sui dynasty, with the promotion

of the official examination system, Confucianism became the state religion that attracted followers from extensive fields and was integrated with its contemporary bureaucratic systems as one. That condition continued until late Qing dynasty. Undoubtedly, Confucianism functioned as the Chinese identity and national soul in Chinese history, and as the destination of cultural pursuit and guidelines of daily life for Chinese people. Considering the Jewish reformation and modern Judaism, Chinese people should re-establish Confucianism and make it their cultural identity. That has become the most important task in the contemporary cultural construction in China. To be exact, we should go back to the period of May Fourth Movement and connect contemporary to the tradition, Confucian tradition in particular. Though the critical inheritance and creative transformation, we should try to make Confucianism a religion or religious ethics with doctrines, rituals, organizations and followers.

The American Jewish scholar Joseph R Levenson thought that Confucianism had been laid in the museum of history with the end of monarchy in China, and it would never recover and become a living religion. He surely noticed the characteristic of link of traditional Confucianism and monarchy system. But he forgot that Confucianism was not always the official religion, for example, during the period of time between Confucius and Dong Zhongshu in the Han Dynasty. So it will not necessarily be the official religion in the future. He did not understand that ideology is somehow independent and it can detach from its former subject and adjust to new carriers. My point is that after the collapse of the monarchy bureaucracies, the carrier of Confucianism should shift from government officials and scholars to the common people. China has a population of 1.3 billion persons who, just as the people of most other

countries and religions on the earth, are thirsty for spiritual guide which are required by human nature. That is the hotbed for Confucianism to take root, sprout and grow up. Hence in the process of constructing the contemporary Chinese culture, the mission of scholars should be not only to connect the tradition, set up new tenets, extend the "intellectual course" of Confucian thoughts, but also to disseminate Confucian religion, transmit Confucian doctrines to the mass, develop Confucian disciples of them, hence make Confucian beliefs and values practical guidelines of life for the populace. Only then can we proudly say that the Chinese people can not only realize the material modernization but also develop their unique identity and national soul, and hence become a real and dignified member of the peoples of the world.

After the failure of Wu Xu Reform, Kang Youwei vigorously promoted Confucian religion in order to make it the national soul of Chinese people. In his book *Levenson* summarized Kang's viewpoints that, without Confucianism, China is like a ship without a steering wheel that is going to sink at any time; Confucianism is the special national identity of China; deprived of it, the country will perish, and the people cannot exist on... the Jews, having reserved their religion, still exist though their state has perished.... A century has passed, Kang Youwei's opinion on Confucian religion and national soul is still worthy of our reconsideration and recognition.

III. Why Jewish Experiences Are Referential

Some one may well question, why are the Jewish experiences of their religious reform and modernization valuable for Chinese people today? In response to that question, we need to retrospect the background of the Reform of Judaism and the over hundred year course of Chinese history.

After the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, Jewish people were entitled to political rights for the first time in a western country and they enjoyed the same rights with French people. Then, with the continuous military victories of the Napoleon Empire, Jews in some other countries were given the same political rights. Before the revolution, Jewish people lived in ghetto secluded from the outside world physically and culturally, with nothing like power or privilege but discrimination and persecution. For the Jewish people living under other's roof, the attainment of civil rights was regarded as freedom and emancipation granted by God, just as the Exodus of the ancient Israelites suddenly exposed to modern society, the emancipated Jews had never been so close to the western world that unavoidably they had to face the impact and challenge of modernity in politics, economy and ideology.

Politically, Jews began to recognize nationalism in the sense of geographical group, and admitted that Jews were no longer one nation but a religious group. Compared with the religious group, the nation in the sense of geographical group is more important. The emancipated Jews felt that they should not stick to the old ethnic identity, but merged into the nation they resided in and became citizens loyal to the modern nations. That nationalism not only disintegrated the original Jewish identity, but also broke down the relatively independent Jewish communities and their legislative organizations and systems.

The challenges from modern economy to Judaism were as sharp, if not sharper, as those from modern politics. "as soon as he (the Jew) emerged from the ghetto, he was forced to live on the plane of development established by the modern economic system." The Jews turned from craftsmen, peddlers to company owners, businessmen,

white-collar workers almost overnight. At that time, Jews had to adjust themselves so as to survive and develop in the complicated competitions in industry and commerce. They had to collaborate with non-Jewish people, accept the non-Jewish working customs and life styles, adjust to Christian rituals and holidays, such as religious service on Sunday, Christmas, Easter, etc. as a result, it was becoming more and more difficult to observe the Jewish Sabbath and other religious festivals. Furthermore, economic benefits got to outweigh spiritual interest; profits almost became the only pursuit of the people; the pressure of life drove most Jews to work hard for survival with no time to think about the Judaic affairs. Accordingly, the traditional opinion of future salvation was giving way to the benefit and happiness of the present life. People began to adopt an indifferent even hostile attitude toward religion. Furthermore, at the beginning of modern times, the concept of Class replaced Nation, and Jewish workers also emphasized a sense of Class instead of Nation, and lost interest in Jewish identity and Judaism. Thus only the middle-class Jews still stuck importance to Judaism. In a word, modern economy made the life styles set up by traditional Judaism outdated.

Besides the political and economic impacts, modern ideology proposed enormous challenges toward Judaism. In his book *Judaism as a Civilization*, Kaplan summarizes three trends of modernist ideology: the trend to judge the truth of everything related to human with scientific approaches, the trend to judge good with the socialized standards, and the trend to regard aesthetic experience and creation as the basic human need. According to the scientific approach, biblical God, miracles and revelation were all challenged by history, anthropology, psychology and comparative religious study.

The traditional Judaism was a God-centered religion. The key of the goodness of human deeds rested on whether they were in accordance with the divine law. The meaning of human existence was to glorify the Lord. The perfection of human lay in his capability to communicating with God. With the God-centered tradition broken by the human-centered modernity, happiness and pleasure became the standard of goodness. The traditional laws concerning food and clothes and taboos in dressing were all against the standard of pursuit of human happiness, hence there were no reasons to retain them. Furthermore, since aesthetic pursuit can be the goal of human spiritual life, aesthetic education can take the place of religion and the ideas of supernatural God and salvation in the world to come become of no use any more. In short, similar to the Copernican revolution in the field of science, the human-centered ideology to a great degree deconstructed Jewish traditions in 17-18th century.

In a word, modern politics, economy and ideology became the first challenge to traditional Judaism after the middle Ages. The ideas of God, future salvation, chosen people, miracles and revelation in Bible and Talmud faced unprecedented doubt, and the customs and rituals lost their original values on the scale of enlightened rationality and modernity. The life styles of Jews were changed and their sense of Jewish identity was greatly weakened. In all, precious to the Jewish reform, Judaism was confronted with modernity and slipped into unprecedented crisis and the related Jewish sense of the people was seriously endangered.

Facing the challenges of modernity and crisis of Judaism, many Jews began to think that Judaism was out of fashion, hence the personality of the Jews cultivated in such a religion was inferior and their life styles were outdated. On the other hand, for many

Jews, Christianity was superior, the life styles of modern Europeans were more civilized and the personality of Christians was worthy to be learned and followed. In such situations, some Jews developed a sense of self-hatred and began to think of converting to Christianity. German poet Heine once said that Judaism was a misfortune rather than a religion. Factually, after the enlightenment, groups of Jews were baptized and converted to Christianity, including Heine, the family of Marx, children of Mendelssohn, etc. Before the reform in 19th century, Judaism had become a burden for many Jews, and it was popular to participate in European mainstream society by converting to Christianity. Under such circumstances, some Jews apprehensive of their fate and prospect could not help asking: was there any reason for Judaism to exist with the challenges from the Enlightenment and modernity? Should, or, can Jews continue to be as a people with spiritual identity? If the answer is positive, then what will Judaism be in the future? The reform movement in 19th century was the response to the challenge of modernity under such circumstances.

Though the reform and reconstruction of Chinese culture is different from the Judaic reform which began in 19th century, the two movements have much similarity in background.

The War of Opium in 1840 was a turning point of history in China. Since then, the arrogant empire that had long been secluded from the outside world began to open her door. It was followed by a succession of unfair treaties with foreign countries such as *Nanjing Treaty* and *Maguan Treaty*, territory and indemnification ceded and commercial ports opened. China was endangered and exploited in sovereignty, economy and culture. Who could imagine the proud and arrogant Central Empire slipping into the state of colony and semi-colony of the western powers? Facing the

impact and challenges from the West, Chinese people realized unanimously that lagging behind other countries means asking for humiliation from them and that the responsibility of building a strong and prosperous country was on the shoulder of every Chinese person. The national psychology of humiliation and indignation turned into actions to help the survival of the nation. First the Movement of Foreign Affairs arose with its aim to build a wealthy country and strengthen the army. Then was the Reformation of Wuxu that was aimed at constitutional government. In 1911, the Xinhai Revolution broke out and then Republic of China was set up, and then led to the Movement of Restoration of Monarchy by Yuan Shikai, which was followed by the Period of Warlords. The successive events provided Chinese people with no hope of national prosperity. Besides the Movement of Foreign Affairs and political reforms, some Chinese people pursued cultural approaches to rescuing the people and the nation. They compared western cultures with Chinese tradition and realized the negative aspects of Chinese traditions in realizing modernization in China. Thus the Neo-cultural Movement around the period of May Fourth Movement followed. In the movements, some insightful Chinese intellectuals promoted use of modern Chinese (Bai Hua Wen) in writing, expressing new thoughts and advocating new moralities while stopping practice of classical Chinese, old thoughts and old ethics. They raised the slogan of "Down with the Confucian mansion and welcoming Mr. Democracy and Mr. Science". Various thoughts coexisted at that time, such as "Overall Westernization", "the Quintessence of Chinese Tradition", "Chinese Body and Western Function", Cultural Nationalism, so on and so forth. How to save the nation, the people and the culture become the heated topic in various social classes. Heated

were the disputations between Science and Xuan (metaphysics), the historically unprecedented introduction of Marxism and foundation of Communist Party of China, etc. In a word, from 1840 to the period of May Fourth Movement, confronted with sharp challenges from western modernization, some Chinese people adopted a series of responsive strategies and actions with the purpose of saving the nation from perishing and revitalize China. But the fact was that China was still in the miserable conditions of undeveloped economy and political chaos. Even worse, the 2000 years Chinese cultural tradition was broken, hence Chinese people slipped into an unprecedented cultural crisis, which reminds us of the religious crisis of Judaism before its reform.

The Japanese invasion in 1930s turned the Chinese attention to national war crisis, which somehow concealed the cultural crisis. As the popular saying of the academia in that time said, the war against invasion preceded the enlightenment in importance. Undoubtedly, the foundation of People's Republic of China was a great event which caused enormous changes of the country. The independent new China paved the way for Chinese people to stand up among other nations of the world. However, from 1949 to the Cultural Revolution (ended in 1976), again China stuck to the policy of "closing the door and secluding from the outside". A series of movement after the establishment of new China, among which are Socialist Reform Movement, People's Commune Movement, and the Movement of Reform and Opening to the Outside World following the Cultural Revolution, were after all attempts in the field of economy, science and technology. The Cultural Revolution with the slogan of "breaking the old world and setting up a new one" was disastrous for traditional Chinese culture. In the cultural sense, the

Movement of Reform and Opening to the Outside World threw China into the situation similar to that during the May Fourth Movement, facing challenges from western cultures and the once concealed cultural crisis, falling into the state of lacking the cultural identity which was owing to the broken cultural tradition. Thus began a new series of cultural reform and reconstruction movements. Opening to the Outside—Cultural Crisis—Cultural Reform, the formula is not only the description of the history from 1840 to May Fourth Movement, but also a portrait of the cultural journey of the two decades after the Cultural Revolution.

It's true that even in the condition of semi-colony, Chinese people had their own country, which was different from the Jews in Diaspora in foreign lands. But the difference is not a decisive factor. What is decisive is the similar "cultural march" that both Jews and Chinese people had to take, symbolized as Opening to the Outside—Religious/cultural Crisis—Religious/ cultural Reform.

Besides the similar backgrounds, Chinese cultural reform also shared the same goal and mission as the Jewish Reform. The goal of the Jewish Reform was to retain Jewish cultural identity by reserving Judaism while accepting modernity and merging into western society. After a century of misery and efforts, more and more Chinese people have realized that what is facing them is, on one hand, to realize modernization in economy, to catch up with western countries in living standards, and to establish a sound legal system, on the other hand, to inherit their own culture, and make the Chinese people exist as a people not only because of their "yellow face", but also because they share a common spiritual identity. The greatness of Jewish people lies in their success in fulfilling the seemingly paradox dual task after years of efforts. But the Chinese people are still in the

process of experiment and trial. For historical reasons, the journey for Chinese to fulfill the dual task is full of more hardships and difficulties. But once set, the goal should not be given up, for it, as the goal of Judaic reform, was originated from the age-old and profound tradition, from the spiritual need of the people, from the inner efforts to be a well-deserved member of the world. It was also a reasonable choice between tradition and modernity after more than 100 years of journey of blood and fire.

Similarity in their goals is owing to the age-old history and cultural tradition of the two peoples, and because of their similar experiences of insult and humiliation from other nations. With tradition, they have to face the problem of cultural inheritance; with the pressure of modernity, they resort to reform and change. Inheritance and reform, tradition and modernity, are what Chinese people have to balance in their road toward the realization of the dual goal, as what the Jews did in 19th and first half of 20th centuries.

Jewish approach to modernity is different from that of the European countries. In the European pattern, science and democracy originated spontaneously from their own rationalist philosophy, Protestantism developed from within Christianity. That is the natural outgrowth of the tree of western culture. The Jewish journey of reform and modernization was to transplant some elements of the foreign culture (science, universal humanist values, for example) to their own tradition on the basis of inheriting and reforming their tradition. In this case, China is more similar to Jews than to Europe. Thus, if we are justified in asserting that the European pattern of enlightenment and modernization is not suitable for China, we can safely say that the Jewish pattern is more referential to the reconstruction of Chinese culture today.

Shanghai's Tombstone Raider Uncovers Forgotten Jewish History

By Barbara Koh

March 28 (Bloomberg) -- As Shanghai busily flattens its distinctive, 80-year-old neighborhoods in pursuit of a high-rise future, Dvir Bar-Gal is scouring swamps, construction sites and cabbage fields for an all-but-forgotten past. In sidewalks, ditches and piles of rubble, Bar-Gal, a 41-year-old Israeli photojournalist, searches for slabs with a sign -- a Hebrew character, a Torah shape, a Star of David -- that identifies the long-lost headstones of Shanghai's once-thriving Jewish community.

His efforts have unearthed 85 gravestones from the 1870s to the 1950s. There's Solomon Kapel's marble slab, dredged from a stream, bearing the Hebrew epitaph a "great student of the Bible," who died in 1946 at 28 "of tragic events." In a pavement, a book-shaped stone betrayed the Yiddish-etched grave marker of a Polish refugee author. The broken, 1958 white marble stone of Leeds-born optometrist Charles Percival Rakusen, a ladies' man and member of the family that started British matzo-bakers Rakusen Ltd., covered a sewage drain.

In the late 1940s, Shanghai had a Jewish population of about 25,000 and four Jewish cemeteries with 3,700 graves. Sephardim from Baghdad and Bombay had arrived in the 1840s, building business dynasties on opium, tea and property, including landmarks such as the Peace Hotel. The city later became a sanctuary for Russian Jews fleeing revolution and pogroms, followed by 20,000 European Jews escaping Nazi persecution, among them Werner Michael Blumenthal,

who became Treasury Secretary under Jimmy Carter.

Smashed Gravestones

After the Communist Party seized power in 1949, China became isolated from much of the world. In 1958, foreign graves in Shanghai were transplanted to a newly designated international cemetery on the city's western edge. Then came the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). The new cemetery was vandalized and gravestones smashed, hauled off or flung in nearby creeks.

In 2001, Bar-Gal learned of two Hebrew-inscribed slabs for sale at a Shanghai antique shop. He investigated, cracking the mystery of the missing tombstones, and began a recovery mission. Thus far, the baritone-voiced headstone hunter has made most of his finds in the countryside west of the Shanghai Racquet Club. Many villagers simply gave Bar-Gal what they had used as washboards, sewer covers, tabletops and steps. One wealthy farmer hid a doorstep-tombstone in a sheep pen. Bar-Gal said he plied the farmer, Shen Ji Long, with chatter and beer for a year before he agreed to sell the stone for 100 yuan (\$12). The dirt-encrusted, Torah-shaped slab, inscribed in Russian and Hebrew, was for "the virgin" Lea Dukowazkaya.

Bridge Building

Shen, 63, said he'd uprooted a few tombstones in his day.

"Mao Zedong said 'Take them,' so we took them," he said. Shen directed Bar-Gal to an algae-covered pond where a bulldozer subsequently

excavated a couple more stones, including Bible student Kapel's. The marker for Esther Robins was on the underside of a bridge, which had to be dismantled and reconstructed, wood replacing the gravestone. Bar-Gal also has found headstones of gentiles, foreigners and Chinese, and said he has "no good answer" for leaving them. "They're heavy and big. Who'll take any interest in them?"

Even Bar-Gal's efforts to garner interest from the descendants of the Shanghai Jews has had limited results. Just a few of the 20 families Bar-Gal located have replied, he said, including two that came to Shanghai to see the gravestones. "It's an enigma," he said. "Maybe because it was closed so many years, maybe because the experience of the refugees was so miserable here, they have no real desire to come back."

Harder to Find

After five years of searching, Bar-Gal said finding headstones has become increasingly difficult. "I'm very pessimistic" about uncovering many more, he said. "Every time Hebrew or Jewish marks appear from the mud, it gives me a lot of energy to keep looking."

The thousands of dollars in costs Bar-Gal has spent recovering the gravestones has been partly covered by donations from Stanford University's Sino-Judaic Institute, the Israel Consulate, some Israel-based companies and visitors who take his guided tours of the former Jewish neighborhood in northeastern Shanghai's Hongkou district, he said.

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An Israeli businessman has been storing the tombstones in his Shanghai factory for free. Bar-Gal is applying for grants to finish a documentary and lobbying for a commemorative site in the old Jewish quarter to display the gravestones.

It is like David versus Goliath. China doesn't officially recognize Judaism as a religion. Historical preservation is a low priority as Shanghai considers itself China's showcase of modernity. Local authorities have spent years deliberating over the restoration of Hongkou and negotiating with potential developers, including overseas Jews, with little progress.

Bar-Gal said the commemorative site would remember all of the Jewish community that once lived in the city. "I'm hoping that building the site itself will be a memorial to the rest I didn't find," he said. It would also be a marker of his own -- one that would show his descendants: "This is something I did in this world."

(Barbara Koh writes on culture for Bloomberg news. The opinions expressed are her own.)

To contact the writer on this story: Barbara Koh in Shanghai at barbkoh@gmail.com.

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IN MEMORIAM

Izya Nadel

Our close friend from Harbin, Itzhak Oren (Izya Nadel) passed away in Jerusalem on February 11, 2007. He was 89.

On February 12, Isia was laid to rest at the cemetery in Maale Hahamisha near Jerusalem. He was a distinguished Israeli writer, the author of many novels, essays, magazine articles and poems. He wrote under the nom de plume – Itzhak Oren.

He was also the Editor-in-Chief of the Jewish Encyclopedia translated into the Russian, and one of the founders of the Russian language broadcasts.

All his life he was an ardent participant in Igud Yotzei Sin. Izya is survived by his wife Isabella and daughter Timna and family. May his memory be blessed.

An evening in memory of Itzhak Oren z"l

A memorial meeting for Itzhak Oren (Izya Nadel) took place on April 11 at Beit Avihai, Jerusalem's Research Center of the Jewish Communities in the Diaspora.

More than 200 people, amongst them academicians, intellectuals, and Israeli veterans, were present.

He was eulogized by academicians from the Hebrew University, the Bar Ilan University, "Kol Israel" officials, Russian language translators of the Jewish Encyclopedia, and Teddy Kaufman.

Jim Winson z"l

Igud Yotzei Sin is deeply saddened by the passing away of Jim Winson (Weinstein) of Melbourne, Australia.

May his memory be blessed.

Special Olympics Meeting

Shanghai hosting Special Olympics

The 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games will be held in Shanghai, from 2-11 October 2007.

What are the Special Olympics?

The Special Olympics is an international non-profit organization dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports training and competition.

The Jewish angle

There will be a big delegation coming from Israel to participate in the games, and Jewish people from all over the world are joining as well. They need our support: spiritually, emotionally, physically and financially.

Meeting this Thursday, May 17, 2007

An initial meeting will be held this coming Thursday, May 17, 2007 8:00PM @ the Shanghai Jewish Center. This meeting will aim to set up a committee

which will lead our community's efforts to serve the needs of the Special Olympics participants and their families when they are in Shanghai.

If you are planning to be in Shanghai during this time (October 2007) please join us this Sunday.

Please confirm by reply email that you are coming to the meeting

Thank you,

Consulate General of Israel in Shanghai

Shanghai Jewish Center

Chabad Jewish Center of Pudong

Evaluation of the Research of

Harbin Judaic History and Culture

By five famous people

With the approval of leaders of the Heilongjiang Provincial Party Committee and Provincial Government, the eight-person delegation composed of Judaic research center members in Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and Chenghe film and TV Company in Peking headed by President of Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences went abroad to the US, Israel and Austria to shoot an oral account of historical materials and film and TV documentaries focusing on "Jews in Harbin" during the time spanning from late October to early November, 2005.

The support and help from China's Consulate General in New York, Israeli-Chinese Friendship Association and Austrian-Chinese Friendship Association have contributed a great deal to our successful visits and interviews with such high-level political elites of Judaic origin as Henry Kissinger, Ex-Secretary of State of USA, Samuel Berger, Ex-Assistant for National Security of USA, Charlene Barshefsky, former US trade representative general in USA; Ehud Olmert Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Haselbach, acting vice president of the Austrian Federal Congress. All of who were unanimous in their opinion that the Chinese population of Harbin thought of the Jewish people with unique kindness and generosity. The vigorous efforts made by Harbin to protect Judaic relics and remains and the loads of work done by researchers of Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences for the protection of the Jewish history and culture.

Ehud Olmert, the Prime Minister of Israel

Above all I have to say that Harbin served as the core and turning point in the development of my family. My parents were born in the Ukraine and brought up in Harbin. They had no opportunity to visit the city anymore since leaving Harbin, yet the comfortable life they led there was embedded in their minds and they were longing for the people they left behind. Although I was born in Israel I knew Harbin city since my childhood for my parents used to reminisce on their wonderful life there. During the period of the anti-Semitic waves rising repeatedly in the world, Harbin had once been the only paradise of good life for the Jewish people living there. They have never been expelled by the native people of Harbin. The Chinese people were very friendly to them; they lived a life of freedom in their own communities.

In June 2004, in the capacity of vice premier of Israel and the descendent of Jews of Harbin, I paid a visit to Harbin where my grandparents had lived, I was full of excitement to feast my eyes on this vigorous city with intense unique charms, I felt as if I had touched the thriving atmosphere in the former Jewish Communities in which the local government was making active efforts to restore. Jewish relics and remains such as the new synagogue strongly attested to the truth that only China embraced and treated Jews kindly when the Jews were denied admission to many other countries.

My parents left Harbin in the 1930s

for Israel. China and Harbin stuck in their minds the rest of their lives. My father spoke Chinese until his death. It was his greatest pity not to be able to see Harbin once more. I recalled that my father could speak Chinese at the age of 85, which goes to show that my family was rooted in China, in Harbin.

In June of 2004, I paid a visit to Harbin to pay my respects to my dead grandparents at their tomb. When standing in the Harbin Jewish cemetery, I felt profoundly moved from the bottom of my heart at the sight of my family name on the well preserved gravestone of my grand parents, where I, together with my elder brother and my wife, held a memorial ceremony to my grandparents in our unique Jewish tradition.

We discussed between us whether we should remove the remains of our grandparents to Israel, in the end, we reached an unanimous consensus that we should respect their choice in staying in Harbin, cherish their unchanged affection for China and Harbin and their inalienable links with Harbin. In a sense, they belonged not only to the Jewish people, but to China and Harbin as well. In all, we should hold their choice in esteem.

Henry Kissinger

'I am really appreciative and excited to hear the comments of Mr. Quwei on the history of the Harbin people's kindness to the Jews and the picture album of "Jews in Harbin" presented by you. I like to hear such information for I am a Jew and I have been paying more attention

to the fate of the Jewish people. My parents have immigrated to the US from Germany. I have learned that the Chinese people have been kind to Jews, as early as a 1000 years ago, some Jews began to settle and live in Kaifeng and spent hundreds of years there harmoniously with the local people. One of my students majored in Sino-American relations is studying the history of contacts between Chinese and Jews. I know it clear from the bottom of my heart that Chinese people have been kind to Jews, so I'd like to extend my congratulations to you for your achievement in promoting friendship and cooperation between China and the US, between the Chinese people and the Jewish people by studying and publicizing Chinese peoples kindness to Jews.

I am really grateful that you invited me to attend 'The International Forum on the History and Culture of Jews in Harbin' and the International Trade Fair scheduled in June, 2006. I am due to be in China in April, 2006 for an international conference, I will give it great considerations to my next years schedule to go to Harbin.

Charlene Barshefsky:

It was during the Ice and Snow Festival in 2005 that I first paid a visit to Harbin, which left an indelible impression on me. Those architectures with the European style witnessed the integration of the Chinese culture with the Western one, I felt greatly moved visually by the snow and ice sculptures with delicate artistic ingenuity. My mother used to relate to the Jewish relics and remains in Harbin such as the main synagogue, the new synagogue, the Jewish middle school etc. now I was assailed by a wave of Jewish architectures alive in my eyes. That great financial funds, were allocated by Heilongjiang provincial government and the Harbin municipal government to protect and preserve Jewish relics and remains is a symbol of respect for the Jewish

people and their History and culture, and as a Jew, I would like rendering my deepest gratitude to them.

Harbin is a special city with the integration of Chinese and Western cultures and is one of the most essential cities in the Far East. In my opinion, with a view to opening its doors wider to the outside world, the essential step is to formulate more favorable policies and exert more effective efforts to improve an investment environment for more investments and establish more transitional enterprises including attracting more Jews to Harbin using the true history of the Harbin's peoples kindness to them.

It has been repeatedly mentioned by my mother that Harbin enjoyed a more free humanistic environment during the first half of the last century as well as a favorable economic environment for free development and colorful entertainment like Western high-profile concerts. All people whether adult or children, Chinese or Jews, are all living in harmony like members in a large friendly family.

I am willing to visit Harbin once more to attend activities on economy and trade and on Jewish culture to be hosted by you, I assure you that I will try to pencil it into my agenda.

As a Jew, I extend my deepest gratitude to the Harbin people for their great efforts to preserve Jewish relics and remains. But a blemish in an otherwise perfect record is that I hope Jewish customs are to be more respected in the process of preserving their relics and remains to embody the true aspect of the Jewish history.

The history of Jews being treated kindly in Harbin is known by only a few, now it is time to let people learn it in America and the world at large. In this sense, I am in favor to hold and exhibition on 'Jewish history and culture in Harbin' and produce a film on this subject, which, will be played as a TV documentary.

Mr. Samuel Berger, Ex-Assistant for U.S. National Security

For a long period of time, Jews have been discriminated and persecuted worldwide. For instance, numerous Jews were expelled from Russia, especially during World II, approximately 6 million Jews were massacred. Accordingly, Jews are alienated, and Jewish people were subjected to untold misery, but this people survived stoutly. It made a lively and unique contrast that Jews in Harbin were treated well generally. In my point of view, there were thousands of Jews in China, in Harbin where they lived harmoniously with the locals. I deem it extraordinary world wide, which manifested great respect of Chinese people for the Jewish people. I really appreciate the invitation from the Heilongjiang provincial government and am glad to have a chance to pay a visit to Harbin to see the exhibition on Jewish history and culture in the new synagogue and Jewish relics and remains. I assure you I will do my utmost to put on my agenda to go to Harbin in the middle of June next year

As an old friend of the Chinese people, I am very glad to see China's fast development in the past years. A powerful China is conducive to world peace and stability and is in the interest of the U.S.A. I will dedicate myself to Sino-US bilateral development and bilateral relation improvement. I'd like to extend my good wishes to all people who have done a lot to improve Sino-US relations and all in Harbin who have treated Jews well.

Haselbach, acting vice president of the Austrian Federal Congress

I know China is one of the few countries that treated Jews kindly in the dark times when Jews were discriminated and persecuted in Europe and the world at large. Today I learn that Harbin is a city, which

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accepted Jews earlier than any other city and treated them kindly longer than any other city in China. An Austrian Jacob Rosenfeld had spent more than three years of the happiest period of his life in Harbin. We won't forget him, as an exemplary model respected abroad, for his great contribution to enhancing the understanding between people although the record of his glorious short life wasn't written into any history books.

I came by your favor to Harbin to film his history, his former residence and his deeds. I would like to extend my thanks to the Heilongjiang provincial government and the Harbin Municipal Government for their efforts to preserve and restore Jewish relics and remains, and congratulations go to the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences for the unique Jewish research centered on Jews in Harbin. I really appreciate your efforts to have edited the picture album on "Jews in Harbin" and to have held the International Conference on Jewish history and culture in Harbin, and also to have brought this period of indelible history to light and to film the historical documentary by oral accounts of Jews in Harbin, it is of great significance to disseminate the glorious event of the Chinese peoples kindness in the past to the world.

I appreciate your efforts to hold the international forum on Jewish history and culture in Harbin and the exhibition next year where you will place Dr. Jacob Rosenfeld in the limelight; I deem it as important in enhancing Austrian-Chinese friendship. I am happy to be present at the opening ceremony of your conference and exhibition, but I regret to say that perhaps I will not be able to fulfill this wish, as the next year will see the election to the Austrian congress take place. I therefore wish beforehand your international forum a great success, and your exhibition to be wonderful and touching.

Jews of America: Now or Never

By Ya'acov Liberman

Specially written for the Bulletin of Igud Yotzei Sin

Jews of American have at no time constituted a serious factor in national elections, be they for President, House or Senate. At the reason was neither in numbers nor in political clout. It was mainly due to divisiveness and insecurity. Let us begin with divisiveness. There are three better known categories of American Jews: The Orthodox Jew, with its origin in the first wave of immigrants escaping pogroms in imperial Russia; the German origin pre-Hitler immigrants, who pioneered the Jewish Reform Movement here; and the eagerly assimilated, anxious to hide their Jewish roots by becoming Jew-haters who found refuge in conversion or secularism. This latter category quite naturally advocated anti-Israelism from the day the Jewish State was born. The three categories worked at cross-purposes and have seldom blended into anything resembling a consolidated vote.

The next element is that of insecurity. Although this trend has diminished significantly and has been neutralized in proportion with the decline of anti-Semitism, it is still a factor in some communities, especially among university students and their professors. Although they often mask themselves as "universalists" or "internationalists", they are implanted in basic insecurity and bereaved of idealism. These are self-hating Jews who often find common cause with the self-hating Americans.

As we recall, there was no powerful leadership of American Jewry throughout its history. Even such well-known names as Rabbi Weiss and Rabbi Silver failed to unite and solidify American Jews. Perhaps their gravest failure was illustrated by lack of leadership during the darkest days of the Holocaust. Not only did they fail to unite

American Jewry in demanding that the Administration open the borders of North America to Jews fleeing from gas chambers, but also by identifying

themselves with the Administration's lame goal of saving Jews only through a final victory of the Allies. As a result, the final victory was achieved, but European Jewry ... perished.

History is about to repeat itself. Will American Jews learn from the past? Led by Iran and Syria, global Islamic Nazism is out to destroy Jews, Israel and America. This is no idle threat!

There are only months left before Iran acquires the capacity to produce an atomic weapon. Eventually, this will lead to a confrontation between the world of Islamic fundamentalism and Judeo-Christian values. It will be a long and a costly war. Hopefully, humanitarianism will prevail. But in the meantime, Israel will be annihilated together with its five million Jewish inhabitants.

Again, we are standing at the brink of a Holocaust. Again we are leaderless. We are now being pushed to rely on the "moral resolve" of the United Nations and the "heroic might" of Italian and French gladiators. This will lead us to an abyss. Our only salvation is with resolute leadership in both Israel and America. Both are about to undergo change: in America, by regular elections, and in Israel, through an inevitable vote of non-confidence. In both cases these elections will not be a regular exercise of democratic procedures. These elections will determine the course of humanity and the future of Israel. To assure the continuity of both, Israel must be led by the likes of Ben Gurion or Begin; and America, by a Reagan or a W. Bush. Regrettably, these powerful leaders will no longer be available. Let us hope that those coming in their stead will be worthy of their eminent predecessors.

It is therefore in the hands of the American and Israeli electorate to determine tomorrow's leadership and to assure the future existence of Israel, America and the entire civilized Universe.

Japanese teacher and director of the Holocaust Museum in Tokyo, Fumiko Ishioka, greets a survivor who holds the book 'Hana's Suitcase,' at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Nov, 6.

Japanese educator recounts quest to unpack story of 'Hana's suitcase'

By Dina Kraft

Fumiko Ishioka carefully opened a large, cardboard box mailed to her in Tokyo from the Auschwitz museum in Poland. Among the contents were a child's shoe, a can that once contained Zyklon B poison gas and a worn, brown suitcase with white letters painted on its side that read: "Hanna Brady, born May 16, 1931." Who was this young girl, wondered Ishioka, who at the time had been setting up an exhibit on children and the Holocaust at a small museum called the Tokyo Holocaust Center. That question grew louder in her mind as the Japanese schoolchildren that came to see the exhibit peppered her with questions: What happened to the suitcase's owner? What did she look like? Did she live or die?

"I wanted to know about how happy she was before the war so that our kids could understand what was really lost. If they could really appreciate that one little life was lost, I hoped they might understand that there were 1.5 million other children just like Hana," who were also killed by the Nazis. "So I needed to put a human face on this ordinary suitcase."

Her quest for information on Hana (whose name had been spelled incorrectly on the suitcase) led her to Terezin where Hana was interned for two years before being deported to Auschwitz at the age of 13. There she was sent to the gas chambers.

Ishioka later traveled to Toronto after tracking down Hana's brother George, the only member of the immediate Brady family to survive the war.

Ishioka's journey to learn more about Hana and the story of Hana's life became the subjects of a children's book entitled "Hana's Suitcase" by Karen Levine.

On Monday, Ishioka and George Brady were in Jerusalem to attend a Yad Vashem ceremony in which the book won a prize for Children's Holocaust Literature. The prize was one of several given by Yad Vashem on Monday in the field of Holocaust education.

The book, published in 33 languages, has chapters recounting Hana's childhood in the Czechoslovakian town of Nove Mesto in Moravia, where she was an avid cross-country skier and skater. It follows Hana through her eventual deportation along with her older brother, George. Further chapters describe Ishioka's quest to uncover Hana's identity.

Ishioka, who says that Holocaust education in Japan is a new concept — decided to travel to Auschwitz soon after beginning work for the Holocaust museum in Tokyo.

It was during that visit in 1999 that she requested artifacts related to children from the Auschwitz museum for the exhibit she was putting together. The suitcase and other items arrived about a year later.

When Ishioka, now 36, found out that Hana had been to Terezin, she traveled there and found her first trace of Hana at a museum in Prague: several drawing she had done in art classes there. She then poured over stacks of typed deportation lists until she found Hana's name and deportation date of Oct. 23, 1944.

She also noticed another Brady on the list. A box was drawn by the name to signify that George Brady had survived.

She eventually tracked Brady down in Toronto, where he'd moved soon after the war. There he had become a successful businessman, parlaying the trade of plumbing he learned in Terezin into a large mechanical

contracting business in Canada.

"I had to continue the search, I really wanted to see her face," Ishioka said.

For Brady, 78, the contact with Ishioka was a life-altering encounter. Both of his parents were killed by the Nazis and he had always felt haunted by guilt for not having been able to save his younger sister.

"I felt responsible for her. I wanted to bring her home and I could not do anything," he said. The connection with Ishioka and the subsequent book has led to a strong bond between the two as well as speaking tours for both of them in North America, Japan and Europe. Most recently, they worked together on a documentary for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Speaking of his sister, whom he remembers as vivacious and athletic, he said, "She wanted to be a teacher in a small town and she ended up being a teacher to the world. We get letters and e-mails from all over the world."

Ishioka now visits about 200 schools a year in Japan and tells the story of Hana's suitcase. To date, she has reached about 60,000 school children.

"The kids got so excited that this is Hana. We could finally put a face to a name written in white paint on a suitcase," she said.

Ishioka said the example of a tower of photographs at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, depicting the lives of Jews before the death camps, had resonated with her when she was designing the exhibit in Japan.

"I thought this type of exhibit was more powerful than pictures of dead bodies. I wanted to make this suitcase a symbol of life, not just an unknown child," she said.

My First Two Years in Israel

By Dina Vincow

When my parents decided to leave China and go to Israel, along with the wave of immigration of many other Harbin Jewish families in 1950, I was a student in the ninth grade of the "Pink school", "The High School of the Society of the Soviet Citizens". At that time there was a general understanding that it would be wise and necessary to take the opportunity to leave China as soon as possible. For me it meant that I was not able to stay until the end of the school year and finish the ninth grade. We left early in the spring, stayed one month in Tianjin, and arrived in Israel on June 6, 1950. This story is about my very first steps starting life in Israel and what it was like to find my way in the very young State of Israel at the time of the big Aliya of 1950.

The Moshav (Fall 1950)

My family settled in a village called Moshav Tsahal (now Kfar Liman) located seven kilometres north of Nahariya. A few "Chinese" families joined a group of younger men, some with families. These men had recently completed their service in the Israeli army and came to build a moshav together; hence the original name Moshav Tsahal. One large group of these "moshavniks" were young families from Hungary. Another group was young couples from France. In addition to that there were many others: a group of Dutch families, a few people from Poland, an Egyptian couple, a guy from Iraq etc. All these people continued to speak their languages and interacted socially mostly among themselves. Their knowledge of Hebrew was marginal. Sadly, many of them were Holocaust survivors who were displaced and orphaned during the war and did not have an opportunity to get much schooling.

Among these settlers there was a sizeable group of "bachelors" (about sixteen of them) for whom life and work on the moshav was very difficult without a wife. They were looking forward to getting married and starting a family. At the age of 16, I suddenly realised that I was being considered as a prospective bride by some of them. I made a big discovery: I am no longer a little girl, I am an adult. This realisation was both exciting and frightening. I was very conflicted and worried about my future. I did not feel at all mature and ready for the life of hard work on the Moshav and was not reconciled with the fact that I did not finish school, and did not have much hope of ever going to school again.

There were two main reasons why I could not simply go and continue study in High School: 1) My knowledge of Hebrew. I was not ready to enter the only existing regular High School in Nahariya (which at that time was not geared for the new immigrants), and 2) We could not afford the tuition.

I heard about some opportunities that did exist for girls like me. There were three possible directions available: to become a nurse, a social worker or a teacher. There were courses of study offered to new immigrants that did not require a High School diploma. I considered these choices. From the start I knew that nursing was not for me. So I followed a friend to an interview in connection with a course of study for social workers. My friend and I both expressed our interest to enrol in the course. She was a couple of years older than me and was accepted into the course, but they told me that at 16 I was too young to become a social worker. My friend went to study in Tel Aviv and became a successful social worker, and I stayed in the moshav.

Ulpan in Nahariya. (Winter 1951)

But soon an opportunity to study presented itself to me in a form of afternoon Hebrew Ulpan classes for adults in the town of Nahariya. These classes attracted new olim (new immigrants) as well as some of the "vatikim" of Nahariya (the German old timers, who came to Israel before World War Two, but still did not speak much Hebrew). There were some technical difficulties for me to attend these classes. The class ended at 5:30 PM and there was no bus going back to the Moshav after 5:00. Lucky for me, two women from the moshav decided to attend the class. We relied on the fact that some of the time we could go home with the moshav truck, which often returned home around that time. On other occasions we had to hitchhike or even walk part of the way. There was strength in numbers, and somehow we managed to get home every time.

The afternoon class at the Nahariya Ulpan was for students of the advanced level. I qualified, and for that I have to thank my Harbin Talmud Torah learning experience. It was so easy for me to absorb new Hebrew vocabulary and grammar because of my early exposure to the Hebrew language. It was all coming back and I felt very fortunate. Our teacher was a thirty-one year old woman whose name was Geula Shoham. She was a member of Kibbutz Geshet Haziv, a sabra, who had some experience in teaching but had no formal training as a teacher. Most of the students in that class were middle-aged men and women, but with some exceptions. There was another young girl my age in this class named Miriam. We became friends and it was friendship for life.

I was absent from class one afternoon.

On that day a visitor came to our class. His name was Gideon Freudenberg. He was the head of Bet Midrash Le'Morei Am, a special "seminar" in Jerusalem. One year of study in this seminar prepared students to become Ulpan teachers. One of the ideas of this program was that the very same people who themselves went through the process of acquiring the language would be good in teaching others. When I returned to class the next day my new friend Miriam told me about the visit of Gideon Freudenberg and excitedly suggested that we should follow up and go to Jerusalem for an interview. Nothing was easy in those days. From the moshav it was impossible to make the trip to Jerusalem and return on the same day. (We had to return. After all, who had the money to stay at a hotel in Jerusalem in those days). Our plan therefore was that I would come and sleep over at Miriam's in Nahariya and that we would take the first bus to Jerusalem. Miriam and her parents lived in the Maabara of Nahariya in a small aluminium "Tzrif". I got to sleep there on a mattress that was placed on top of a wooden box. Originally, their belongings were transported in this box from Transylvania on their way to Israel. The box was a little bit short for me, and my feet hung over at the edge while I tried to sleep. These details help me to recall what life was like in Israel in the early fifties, and I feel quite nostalgic about those times.

My interview at the Bet Midrash Le' Morei Am in Jerusalem (Spring 1951)

Miriam and I found the building on Jabotinsky street that housed Bet Midrash Le'Morei Am, a course of study that was then in its second year of existence. I remember answering questions and telling my story to three people who sat behind a long desk facing me. They were Gideon Freudenberg himself, his wife Hadassah, a very tall woman who was a whole head taller than her

husband, and one very short bald man with a beard. At that time I had no idea who he was. I learned later that I was interviewed by Martin Buber himself. He was the honorary head of the seminar. Both Miriam and I were accepted for the course of study and were offered financial assistance in a form of a loan of 200 Lira, to be paid back later when we were working. Since my parents were not financially qualified, this loan was graciously co-signed by their well known friend Boris Kotz.

In the summer of 1951, before going to Jerusalem, I worked in the Maabara of Nahariya with three and four year olds, as a helper in the day care center and earned a little bit of money. My decision to go to study in Jerusalem was my first grown up decision. My parents were supportive but I could see that they were not able to take charge and direct me in the world of Israel, which was very new to them and in which they were limited by not speaking Hebrew. They were also completely tied down to their work on the moshav. It was my first time away from home. My parents could not travel to Jerusalem with me to see where I would be living. In fact, they were not able to visit me while I studied there.

Bet Midrash Le'Morei Am, Hebrew University Extension Courses (Fall 1951)

I remember how I moved to Jerusalem. Again, Miriam and I had to start early in the morning with the first bus out of Nahariya. I had all my belongings in one big suitcase. The bus to Haifa was full of people and we had to stand. The last stop for what was then called the Shahar bus line from Nahariya was at the Haifa train station. Our bus to Jerusalem departed from the Egged station located several blocks away. I remember the effort it took to drag my heavy suitcase all the way there. The bus ride from Haifa to Jerusalem in those days took a very long time. The old small brown bus climbed slowly along the road passing the

"meshuryonim", - the reminders of the Liberation War time. Meanwhile, inside the crowded bus there was a little commotion in connection with some chickens that were being transported in baskets on the luggage shelf as they became restless in their confined situation. It felt like it took forever. Finally we were there.

Since Miriam and I were among the youngest students, (I was just seventeen years old) we were given the chance to live in the same building where the seminar was located and where classes were held. (Others were housed in the Notre Dame monastery.) It was a two-storey building. The downstairs entry hall of our building was wide enough to be used as a breakfast and supper eating area. We ate our main meals at noon in the cafeteria of Bet Halutzot in Rehavia. These were tough economic times and our typical breakfasts and suppers were the same: half a boiled egg, some lettuce, cucumbers, a little bit of white cheese, bread and tea. At noon we ate mostly vegetarian food. Once a week we were offered a piece of cod filet, a very tough textured, hard to chew, bland tasting fish that came to Israel in a frozen state. The highlight and a treat for us, was a "fruit" soup made of zucchini in a sweet lemon-flavored liquid. Our modest meals were also a matter of the limited amount of money that was available to our house mother Hadassah to provide us with food. The 200 Lira that we borrowed had to cover all the expenses: food, room and board, tuition and some school supplies.

On the second floor of our building there was a fairly large and wide central hall surrounded by a few rooms in which students lived. This hall was our classroom and the door of our room opened directly into the classroom. A very convenient situation most of the time, but not good if you overslept the beginning of classes. There were five beds in our room. My friend Miriam and I had three more roommates. One of them turned out to be Geula, our teacher from the

Ulpan in Nahariya, who decided to get formal training and was sent by her kibbutz to study in Jerusalem. It was a little scary, but exciting to be her equal now.

The classroom had several rows of long desks and housed about fifty very diverse students. The ages of the students ranged from people of my age to one or two women in their fifties or maybe even older. There were a number of sabras and some young people who already had a university experience before coming to Israel. It was a very intimidating group for novices like me and my friend. On a few occasions we saw a very quiet woman sitting in on some classes. Her hairdo was a little unusual and old fashioned. She parted her hair right in the middle, gathering it in the back of her head and covering her ears. She looked like Golda Meir and, as we later found out, was actually Golda Meir's daughter.

I entered into a new and amazing world. I was given an opportunity to be on the periphery of the intellectual life of the Hebrew University, and to sample some of it. The formal title Bet Midrash Le'Morei Am Al Yad HaUniversita Ha'Ivrit, meant that we were connected to the Hebrew University. Many of the professors who lectured to us were also professors at the Hebrew University. The organisers of our seminar took a somewhat unconventional approach for the contents of our course of study. I would like to describe here the unique curriculum that was offered to us and what an amazing experience it was to be a part of it. The goal of the seminar was to prepare Ulpan teachers of Hebrew for the new immigrants, but in the hands of Gideon Freudenberg -a German Jew, Zionist intellectual, and a close friend of Martin Buber- the way to achieve this goal was to expose students to as much knowledge and culture as possible in one school year. Therefore he invited as many lecturers as he could find to give a series of lectures about as many diverse topics as possible. Our typical day started

with the first lecture at eight o'clock in the morning and a couple of days a week the last one ended at ten at night.

Here are the names of many of the great people that I had the privilege to hear during that unforgettable year: Professor Nehama Leibovitz, who held two doctoral degrees, one in biblical studies and another in literature, lectured about the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. Her brother, Professor Yeshayahu Leibovitz gave a number of lectures on genetics. Professor Elitzur spoke about the archaeological findings of the biblical period. Professor Ben Sasson, a historian, taught the Second Temple period. Professor Katz explained the Mishna treatment of the biblical laws. We were offered an opportunity to go to Terra Sancta to hear a few lectures by Professor Hugo Bergman. The topic was: The Philosophy of Descartes. Martin Buber himself gave lectures at the seminar, but in the year that I was there, he was out of the country and came only once to speak to us. I must confess that at age of seventeen I was far from ready to appreciate his talk. I remember only that he discussed the quote from Isaiah: "Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh" (Holy, holy, holy). I wish I could have heard that lecture at a more mature stage of my life.

Among the experiences that I remember clearly until today was listening to the lectures of Professor Gershom Scholem about Shabtai Tsevi and Kabbalah. He told us about the sad end of Shabti Tzvi and the mysterious concept of breaking of the heavenly vessels. He also talked about the need to first descend into impurity in order to achieve holiness. Only much later in life I realised that I had the privilege to learn about these matters from the world's greatest authority.

The most important subject, the one that had obvious practical applications for me in the future, was the subject of Hebrew grammar. It was taught by Yitzhak Livni. I remember a short grey haired man who looked a little

bit like Ben Gurion, minus the large amount of hair. Though he was born somewhere in Eastern Europe (possibly Russia), he spoke Hebrew like it was spoken in ancient times, differentiating the sounds of the letters Alef and Ayin, Khet and Khaf, Vet and Vav. He taught us Torat Hanikud, the Hebrew vowel system. Somehow, he made the elements of Hebrew grammar very clear and logical for me. He provided me with tools that have been of great help to me all my professional life. I have thought of him frequently over the years and I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to have been his student.

After the completing the studies in Jerusalem and an internship teaching classes of willing new immigrants in the Shikunim of Beer Sheva, we were granted a teaching certificate signed by the main professors. Among them is the signature of Martin Buber himself. As a parting gift, we all received the Hebrew dictionary by Gur and I went back home to the moshav and began looking for a job. I had to begin to repay the money that I owed to the bank.

As I look back at that year in Jerusalem, I know that it was a life changing experience for me. I think that I might be one of only a few people among all those who studied there during the four cycles it existed who actually continued to follow the Hebrew teaching path that originated there.

The experience of studying in Jerusalem was an academic starting point from which I could go on and eventually earn BA and MA degrees in Russian literature at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington. The story of my teaching experiences is a long one. At this point I would like to say only that I have been teaching Hebrew in the United States at Syracuse University for over thirty years, thus doing exactly what I was trained for then during that unforgettable year in Jerusalem. I enjoy the opportunity to keep young Jewish people connected with Israel and the language that I love.

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The establishment in Jerusalem of the School for Adult Educators in 1949 was undoubtedly Buber's most important venture in the field of adult education in Israel. This school trained adult educators who would cope with the cultural integration of the masses of immigrants flowing into the country after the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. With the establishment of this school, Israel became one of the first countries to offer specialized training for adult educators. The school was influenced by the ideology of the folk high school founded by the great Danish educator N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872). Buber was impressed by Grundtvig's concept of 'the living word', which corresponded to his own principle of dialogue in education. He also adopted the Danish pattern of the boarding school—a living, and learning union—consistent with the Buberian concept of a 'spiritual community'. Many of the school's students were themselves new immigrants—mainly from Islamic countries. The academic staff was composed of outstanding humanists: Gideon Freudenberg (who served as Director), Ernst Simon, Gershom Scholem, Hugo Bergman, Avraham Halevy Fraenkel and Martin Buber himself. The teachers were most responsive to the pluralistic makeup of the student body - relating not only to Western values, but also to the traditional culture of the Middle East. The teaching was founded on genuine multi-cultural dialogue - along with academic courses on Judaism and humanities, and the imparting of professional skills. The study of the Hebrew language - not only as a means of communication but as a vehicle for Israeli culture—played a major role in the curriculum. Buber's instruction on 'The Hebrew Bible in the Shadow of the Holocaust' was a great source of inspiration to the students.

China & the Jews

A talk by PETER BERTON, with OTTO SCHNEPP as discussant

Thursday, February 22, 2007

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

10383 Bunche Hall

UCLA

The Jewish presence in China dates back over a thousand years, and one can identify four distinct waves of Jewish migration to China. How did the PRC's relations with Israel and with former Jewish residents in China develop? Beijing's relations with Jerusalem predate China's formal recognition of Israel and the establishment of full diplomatic relations in 1992. The Sino-Soviet conflict left China without access to spare parts for its Soviet-made military and civilian equipment. Israel was only too happy to sell Soviet-made weapons that it had captured from the defeated Arab armies. These mutually beneficial sales were done in strict secrecy. With official recognition, relations between China and Israel rapidly expanded to include trade and joint ventures in a number of fields, but most notably in agriculture, weaponry, and high technology. The Chinese government also became interested in taking advantage of the heritage of former Jewish residents to promote tourism, trade, and foreign investment in the pursuit of economic development. For their part, the latter took the initiative to organize the Israel-China Friendship Association. Recently, there seems to be also an emerging keen interest in China in popularizing Jewish values and urging Chinese youngsters to emulate Jews as a key to success in life.

Peter Berton is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations at USC and Emeritus, New Center for Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles. He was a

resident of Harbin from 1928 to 1941. Otto Schnepf is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at USC. He was Counselor for Science and Technology, U.S. Embassy in Beijing, 1980-1982, and a former director of the USC East Asian Studies Center, 1994-2000. Professor Schnepf was a resident of Shanghai from 1939 to 1948.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

SUGGESTED READING:

Jonathan Goldstein (ed.), *The Jews of China*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, 2000), 2 Vols.

Jonathan Goldstein (ed.), *China and Israel, 1948-1998* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999).

Yitzhak Shichor, "Reconciliation: Israel's Prime Minister in Beijing," *The Jamestown Foundation China Brief*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (January 24, 2007)

Pan Guang (comp. & ed.), *The Jews in China* (Shanghai: China Intercontinental Press, 2001).

Pictorial album depicting the four waves of Jewish migration to China; "The Historical Pages of Traditional Friendship between the Chinese and Jewish People.;" and "Jews in China: A Hot Topic of Academic Research and Public Interest."

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Flight and Rescue 2001*

See chapter 7, "Exile: Final Refuge in Shanghai," pp 145-179.

Parking for Bunche Hall is located on the north end of campus. The closest parking structures are parking structures 3 and 5. The parking fee is \$8.00.

For more information please contact Richard Gunde

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A Name That Saved Two Lives

By Masha Leon

Currently Masha Leon writes a weekly social-commentary column in the English version of *The Forward* and contributes to the *Yiddish Forward*. She and her husband, Joseph, have three daughters and five grandchildren. Her father's archives as well as his extraordinary Holocaust library are housed at Yeshiva University. Some of his archival material is at the YIVO and Hebrew University. He found the YIVO's archives in post-war Germany that the Nazis had stolen from its Vilna home and planned to display it in a museum of the "dead" Jews. His Lukishki prison experience is detailed in Begin's book *White Nights*.

I'm often asked, "How did you survive?" A series of "miracles." How else could my mother and I have lived through the bombing of Warsaw; the German occupation' betrayal by a Polish peasant; near execution by a Nazi firing squad; being shot by a Soviet soldier? Among these miracles: a chance encounter at the "no-man's land" border that divided German-occupied Poland from Russian-occupied Poland; and ultimately - a righteous Japanese diplomat.

By cart and on foot, mostly at night, trudging through fields, forests and swamps, in the winter of 1939-1940, my mother and I fled Warsaw, heading for her birthplace, Byten (now in Belarus) in Soviet-occupied Poland. We hoped to join my father who, along with his colleagues from the newspaper *Folkszeitung*, had left Warsaw the first week of September. When we left Warsaw, my mother cautioned me not to speak Yiddish or to call her "Mamma, because then the Germans will know you're Jewish." She was now my Italian niania, taking me to my Polish family

in the provinces. But she stressed, "Should the Russians stop us, I want you to cry, because Russians have good hearts."

Along the way, my mother traded matches, salt, needles and thread, and offered to milk cows and dig potatoes in exchange for food and shelter. Because of her dark eyes and wavy black hair, the peasants would relegate my mother to the barn, while I - blonde and blue-eyed - "passed," and was allowed to mingle with the peasant children and sleep inside the huts.

Joining a stream of refugees heading for Stalin's "paradise" (where, we were told, we'd be welcomed with open arms), we arrived at a barren, frozen swath of land separating the Russian occupied and German-occupied sectors. The Germans waved us across as music blared from a loudspeaker. The Russians, with bandoleers across their chests, galloped out of the forest, bellowing: "Go back or we shoot!" In a panic, everyone dashed back. The Germans would not let us return but laughed: "Go to your Bolshevik friends!" Another dash to the Russians. Again, guns pointed at us, the Russians ordered "Go back or we shoot!"

After several days, trapped on this no-man's land, in freezing sleet without shelter or food, people began to die. "Let's go!" my mother yanked me by the hand. Despite the cold, I felt warm. I had the mumps, a high fever and wore a coat my mother had made from a coat she had found after our possessions had been lost in the bombing. We began walking along the "Russian" forest line when my mother spotted a Polish woman leading a horse-drawn cart full of hay. Her fields were on the Russian side, her home on the German side. She hid us for three days. Who knows what

would have happened to her - or us - had the Germans (or her neighbors) discovered she was hiding Jews?

My mother offered her payment: "Take whatever you want." She refused. "No, no it is my Christian duty," she replied. Later, her son led us past German patrols, leaving us - once more - at the Russian tree-line. No sooner did we enter the forest a young Russian soldier, a teenager, with bayonet at the ready, ordered us "Go back or I shoot!" In flawless Russian, my mother explained that she'd been born under Russian rule, and that the czar had imprisoned her brother. She then handed him her Russian-lettered birth certificate. He threw it on the ground. "Go back or I shoot!"

Defiantly my mother put down the suitcase she was carrying, ordered me to take off my rucksack, and snapped back, "I'd rather have a Russian shoot me than a German." At that moment I remembered her injunction about the Russians being kind and began to cry. "Nie plakaj, Mashinka," she said to me as though there was no point to this ploy now.

Unexpectedly, the soldier lowered his gun. "Since when do the Poles give their children Russian names?" he asked. How could my mother explain that I had been named after my grandfather Moshe! So she spun a tale of having named me after the character "Masha" in Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, after Masha in *Brothers Karamazov*. She invoked Masha from a Tolstoy novel. The soldier picked up my mother's birth certificate, turned it upside down, looked at it and handed it back to her. She whispered to me in Yiddish, "Er iz a poyer, he's a peasant, he can't read!" He'd never heard of Chekhov or Tolstoy! We were going to die!

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Unexpectedly, the soldier smiled. "I have a sister Masha," he said. "Same age, same braids. If I shoot you, it's like shooting my sister." He then led us through the forest to the kommandatur - headquarters - where at the mention of "Masha" (Russian for Mary) out came the samovar, bread, butter and sausage. At dawn we were driven to the train station in a Soviet military truck. We went by train to Byten where we were reunited with my father. Later we headed to Vilna and the next stage of our survival.

In August 1940, the NKVD arrested my father. He shared a Lukishki prison cell with Menachem Begin and spent the war years in Siberia and Uzbekistan. In February 1941, thanks to visa number 1,882 out of 2,139 issued - against his government's orders - by Chiune Sugihara, Japanese Consul in Kovno, my mother and I were able to escape to Japan, eventually going to Canada and later the U.S.

My mother, father and I were the only survivors of an extended family of nearly 200. Thanks to my father, a journalist, historian and archivist (he would later edit dozens of memorial books), I know how, when and where the members of my family - including 45 first cousins - were executed or died.

Sugihara's 2,139 visas saved 6,000 Jews who might otherwise have perished in the Vilna Ghetto, the execution pits of the Ponary Forest or some death camp. There are now more than 40,000 descendants of these 6,000 Sugihara survivors.

Books

The Jews of Harbin Live on in My Heart

By Teddy Kaufman

Book Review

Teddy is in love with Harbin. He is the authentic and authoritative historian to bring back memories of the past. It is a most readable and highly interesting history of people and events of Harbin in particular, and of Chinalanders in general. For Harbiners this is a unique opportunity to remember and recollect memories of the city, and, for the descendants and friends of the families who lived in Harbin, to read about and learn of the life and conditions in Harbin.

The book includes the chronicle of events that occurred with chapters such as:

The First Jews in China

The Harbin Jewish Community

Under the Japanese Occupation

The Soviet Army in Harbin

More interesting reading material on Harbin such as synagogues, institutions, organizations, youth movements, social and cultural activities, are also included in the book.

A chapter regarding the courageous Dr. A. Kaufman, the leader of the Harbin Jewish Community, who at the end of World War II was illegally

seized by the Soviet regime and sent to Siberia for sixteen years. Only after Stalin's death was he released and travelled to Israel to meet with his son Teddy and the rest of the family and many friends.

With the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel in 1992, friendship with China became an integral part of the policy of Igud Yotzei Sin (Association of Former Residents of China). Exchange of officials, delegations, students are taking place between the two countries, and between the Harbin Municipality, and Igud Forums and Seminars are being held in Harbin as well as in Israel. Delegates from Israel and elsewhere are honored guests in Harbin. A permanent photo-exhibition – The History of the Jewish in Harbin – is within the premises of the New Synagogue in Harbin.

As Teddy is the President of the Igud, the relationship with China, especially the Harbin Municipality, and the publishing of the book will further strengthen the ties between the two organizations – Harbin and the Igud.

Reading the book is like walking along the 'memory lane' of Harbin, and Teddy has put his heart into the book.

S.P.



**IN MEMORY OF MY BELOVED
LILIAN
ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER PASSING.
"DEATH CANNOT TAKE FROM US THE LOVE WE KNEW,
IT IS WOVEN INTO THE TAPESTRY OF OUR LIVES**

US\$ 5,000

**Donation to the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund
AARON BELOKAMEN**

Chinese Orphan's Journey to Jewish Rite of Passage

by Andy Newman

Of the 613 laws in the Torah, the one that appears most often is the directive to welcome strangers. The girl once known as Fu Qian has been thinking about that a lot lately. Three weeks ago, she stood at the altar of her synagogue on the Upper West Side and gave a speech about it.

Fu Qian, renamed Cecelia Nealon-Shapiro at three months, was one of the first Chinese children - most of them girls - taken in by American families after China opened its doors to international adoption in the early 1990s. Now, at 13, she is one of the first to complete the rite of passage into Jewish womanhood known as bat mitzvah. She will not be the last. Across the country, many Jewish girls like her will be studying their Torah portions, struggling to master the plaintive singsong of Hebrew liturgy and trying to decide whether to wear Ann Taylor or a traditional Chinese outfit to the after-party.

There are plenty of American Jews, of course, who do not "look Jewish." And grappling with identity is something all adopted children do, not just Chinese Jews. But seldom is the juxtaposition of homeland and new home, of faith and background, so stark. And nothing brings out the contrasts like a bat mitzvah, as formal a declaration of identity as any 13-year-old can be called upon to make. The contradictions show up in ways both playful - yin-and-yang yarmulkes, kiddush cups disguised as papier-mâché dragons, kosher lo mein and veal ribs at the buffet - and profound. Yet for Cece, as everyone calls Cecelia, and for many of the girls like her, the odd thing about the whole experience is that it's not much odder than it is for any 13-year-old.

"I knew that when I came to this age I was going to have to do it, so it was sort of natural," she said a few days before the ceremony at Congregation Rodeph Sholom, a Reform synagogue on West 83rd Street where she has been a familiar face since her days in the Little Twos program. Besides, she said with a shrug, "Most of my Chinese friends are Jewish."

As Zoe Kress, an adoptee in Mt. Laurel, N.J., said about her approaching bat mitzvah: "Being Chinese and Jewish is normal for me. Thinking about being Chinese and Jewish is a little strange." Olivia Rauss, a girl in Massachusetts who celebrated her bat mitzvah last fall on a day when the Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot coincided with the Chinese autumn moon festival, said she saw no tension between the two facets of her identity either.

"Judaism is a religion, Chinese is my heritage and somewhat my culture, and I'm looking at them in a different way," she said. "I don't feel like they conflict with each other at all."

While no statistics are kept on the number of Chinese children adopted by Jewish families, over all, there were about 1,300 Chinese children adopted into American families from 1991 to 1994, another 17,000 in the second half of the '90s, and 44,000 since then, according to the State Department.

Cece was born on Jan. 29, 1994, in Jiangxi Province in southeastern China. She was abandoned to an orphanage because of China's one-child rule, and adopted by a lesbian couple, Mary Nealon and Vivian Shapiro. (The couple later adopted another Chinese girl, Gabie, now 5.) Cece has been drawing double-takes for a while, like when she used to ride on Ms. Shapiro's lap on a packed crosstown bus and

would burst into the Passover standard "Dayenu."

Ms. Shapiro, an advertising buyer, was brought up by atheistic Jews; Ms. Nealon, a school nurse, was raised a Roman Catholic. But after they met, they were drawn to Judaism and decided to give Cece a relatively traditional upbringing.

"That was my hope when I started her in day school," Ms. Nealon said, "that when she got up on the bimah" - the lectern where the bat mitzvah girl reads from the Torah - "she would feel like she had the right to be there."

The countdown to the big day was the typical blur of lessons and studying, sit-downs with cantors and tutors, caterers and party planners. There was a thick dossier of Jewish history to master - history that Cece confessed did not feel like hers. "I just really try to learn it," she said. "I don't try to think of whose history it is."

And, of course, there was shopping to be done.

"In my fantasy," Ms. Nealon said, "we'd take her to Chinatown and have this incredibly beautiful Westernized Chinese dress made."

But Ms. Shapiro said: "She wanted no part of it. For her, this has nothing to do with being Chinese."

Cece set her cantor's reading of her Torah portion to "repeat" on her iPod. She met with the head rabbi at Rodeph Sholom, Robert N. Levine, an affable, animated man with an office full of books and baseball memorabilia.

"So, Cece," Rabbi Levine said, "what do you connect to most about your Judaism?"

Cece had transformed into the archetypal opaque teenager.

"I think I like the holidays, and, um, yeah," she said, looking down.

(Continued on page 71)

Letters

Irene Clurman

Dear Mr. Kaufman,

I have heard about you for a long time and am finally writing to you at the urging of Mr. Yaacov Liberman. My husband and I this year were invited to create a Harbin link on the Jewish Genealogy website, which features historical "shtetls" from around the world. We completed our Harbin site in February but it's still in its fledgling state. We of course have a link to the Igud Yotzei Sin site, which is the definite site on Jews in China, and Mr. Liberman and his publisher were kind enough to give us permission to reprint some of his excellent book, "My China." We also have a link to the Sino-Israel Study and Research Center in Harbin. But most of the materials are from my family, because that is what I had. I am currently seeking out materials from other people and have heard from many around the US, including some who found us through the website and whom I didn't know. I would be delighted to have your personal participation in any way you see fit, as I know you are the official Harbin historian. Any personal memories and photos would be appreciated. Also, if you know anyone, especially in Israel, who would like to contribute personal memories and/or photos, I would be very grateful. As you know, we are losing many of the oldtimers so this project is very urgent. I don't know if you're still publishing the IYS bulletin, which I enjoyed when my late grandmother used to get it. If you are, please let me know how to subscribe. I still have a copies of some of the articles, such as the obituary of my aunt Tziva Clurman Epstein and the article on Al Maisin's donation to IYS. I also invite you to check out our site at <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/harbin/index.htm>

Wishing you all the best on your important work.

Email Address :isee@indra.com

Phone Number : 303-674-3789

Chinese Orphan's Journey to Jewish Rite of Passage (Continued from page 70)

The rabbi asked her to recite for him. She did.

"I love it," Rabbi Levine said. "You have a beautiful voice. Your Hebrew is perfect. The only thing I need you to do, Cece, is project. Just give me a 'Baruch' like you're singing in the shower."

"Baruch," Cece said, a bit louder.

On Feb. 17, nearly 200 of Cece's friends and relatives filed into the vast Romanesque sanctuary of Rodeph Sholom. A box of commemorative yarmulkes with the yin-and-yang pattern sat by the door. Six alumnae of Cece's orphanage - they call themselves the Fu sisters - had flown in from all over the country.

To the side of the altar, on a red throne, sat Cece, resplendent in a long black patterned dress with a scoop neck. Ms. Shapiro laid a prayer shawl over Cece's shoulders, a symbolic transfer of power. Cece and the other bat mitzvah girl that day, Sadie Friedman, lifted their voices and let loose a Hebrew welcome song that Cece had sung with the synagogue choir from

the time she was seven.

Rabbi Levine preached from the day's reading: " 'Let the stranger in your midst be to you as the native, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.' " Cece and Sadie approached the ark, the enclosure, flanked with marble columns and topped by carved lions, where the Torah scrolls are kept. The cantor, Rebecca Garfein, handed them the oversize scrolls, dressed in maroon and gold fabric. The girls held them like bagpipes. Cece laid her scroll on the bimah and read in Hebrew, in a loud, clear voice, from Chapter 21 of Exodus, a compendium of commandments on the treatment of servants and slaves. Then she moved to her English speech.

"This long journey to becoming a bat mitzvah today has provided me with so many ways of learning," she said. "The part that will always stay closest to me is the importance of caring for strangers. Just like Jews were once strangers in the land of Egypt, we have all been, or will be strangers at some point in our lives." Cece finished,

touched the fringe of her shawl to the Torah and kissed it. She returned to her throne and sat down, cheeks red, looking exhausted and relieved.

That night - the eve of the Chinese year of the pig, as fate would have it - Cece and her guests reconvened at the Faculty House at Columbia University. The outer room was set up like a casino, with Cece-backed playing cards and Cece-faced play money. Inside, the music throbbed, the D.J. yelled, the fog machine billowed. Cece and her friends traded their shoes for white socks and pogoed across the floor.

After dinner - kosher Chinese for the kids, steak for the adults - the D.J. cranked up "Hava Nagila." Cece, in a chair in the middle of the dance floor, was lifted up, up, up until she bumped her head on the Chinese umbrellas hanging off the chandelier. Then she was back on the floor, dancing with her mothers and little sister and singing along with the recording: "Hava neranena, venis'mecha," or: Let us sing and be glad.

Not Just Another Country

By Jonathan Goldstein

The Olmert Family Sojourn Through China as a Case Study

of the Role of Travel in Jewish Identity Formation

"China is the country which hosted our parents. They studied in China. They spoke Chinese, and the Chinese culture is part of my heritage and memory as a young kid in the State of Israel. So China is not just another country for me." Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Beijing, speaking to the Chinese news agency Xinhua, quoted in JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY DAILY BRIEFING, 8 January 2007, p.1.

Between 8 and 10 January 2007, the University of Cape Town's Kaplan Center for Jewish Studies and Research convened an international conference to examine the role of "travel" and "journeys" in the formation of Jewish identity. This article adds an East Asian dimension to that discussion. In particular, it examines the sojourn through China of the family of Israel's best-known contemporary personality, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. How did the Olmert family's political identity coalesce in an Asian political context? This article utilizes the four-part analytical framework suggested by conference organizers Tony Kushner, Sarah Pearce, and Milton Shain for examining Jewish journeys in many parts of the world. It focuses first on "leavings," or what motivated Jews to abandon their ancestral homelands; second, "passages," or how the vicissitudes of travel to new and relatively unknown destinations shaped Jewish consciousness, thought and behaviour; third, "identity," the new cultural and intellectual characteristics which Jews adopted at their new destinations; and fourth, the "return," or how Jews, in their new homelands, remembered and utilized their ties to their ancestral homelands.

"Leavings"

In 1917, Ehud Olmert's grandfather Iosif Iosifovitch was a middle class merchant in the city of Samara, or Kuybyshev, a major trading port on Russia's Volga River. In that year, as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution, Iosif made the momentous decision to move himself, his wife, young son and daughter away from the chaos gripping their ancestral homeland. For many Jews 1917 was a time of political uncertainty, social upheaval, famine, and virulent anti-Semitic pogroms which were byproducts of civil war between Red and White Russian factions. With little chance of escaping to the West and with strong devotion toward things Russian, Iosif turned eastward, traveling across the Trans Siberian Railroad to the city of Harbin, a Russian railway hub located several hundred miles within China's northeasterly province of Manchuria. Why would a Jew like Iosif Olmert flee from one part of Russia to another to escape such problems as anti-Semitism? The answer lies in the peculiar nature of Harbin. It both was and was not part of Russia. It was constructed in 1898 by Czarist Russia on land leased from China. Here Jewish and non-Jewish Russians enjoyed an array of economic, political and cultural freedoms unavailable in Russia proper. Despite wars, revolutions and upheavals, many of these fundamental rights remained after the railroad zone was sold to Japan in 1936. In these fortuitous circumstances the community grew from zero Jews in 1898 to the Jewish first settler in 1899 to a high point of about 13,000 residents in 1931. By 1982, in the wake of the Chinese

communist revolution of 1949, the community had declined to one elderly resident.

"Passages"

It was both the "push" of Samara and the "pull" of Harbin that brought the Olmerts to the Far East. The vicissitudes of travel from one place to another in the turbulent Russia of the late nineteen teens effected both the ideas and personality of Iosif's son Mordechai, also known as Motti or Motka, who had been born in Samara in January or May 1911. Motti was nine years old when his father made the momentous decision to relocate the family. By 1919 Iosif had reached Harbin but left his wife Michal and their two children in Irkutsk, north of the Chinese border. In that year Iosif wrote his wife, urging her to take the children and head south. In his autobiography Motti explains how this trip contributed to the formation of his Jewish identity. He records that "my mother immediately began preparations [for the trip] because many dangers were involved. Between Irkutsk and the Chinese border the Ataman Semenov took over and they hated the Jews. My mother warned us and stressed that we hide our national identity. In those days, because of my mother's warning, I was beginning to question what it meant to be Jewish. The question of identity is associated with other issues I found out about in Irkutsk from the Jews who were there. They were talking about a Jewish country of our own - Eretz Israel - where they were about to go. Those things were absorbed in my mind although I did not understand them and they were kept deep in my memory."

Finding “Identity” Within a New Geographical Context

Twenty hours after leaving Irkutsk Michal Olmert and her children reached Harbin and met Iosif. Both parents become shopkeepers and retained their traditional occupations, life styles and attitudes. This was definitely not the case for the younger generation, and particularly for Motti Olmert. Motti’s transformation can only be understood in historical context.

In addition to being a boom town from an economic point of view, the Harbin in which the Olmerts settled was a crucible for Jewish intellectual development. It was not just another place. A contemporary of Motti recalled that “Harbin was a place where the interests of Russia, China, and Japan all converged. This gave the town a cosmopolitan character. Harbin was the only place in the world outside the Soviet Union where Russian was the language spoken by the Jewish population...a small island of Russian Jewry beyond its borders.” The city had a Hebrew, Yiddish and Russian publishing company. It brought out the Hebrew and Russian-language tracts of the city’s long-serving Rabbi Aharon Moshe Kisilev [1866-1949], who had embraced the pre-Herzlian religious Zionism of Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever while a student at the Volozhin Yeshiva. Twelve Russian-language Jewish periodicals were published in Harbin, including *Evreiskaia Zhizn’* [Jewish life]. The very freedoms that allowed those publications to flourish also enabled the left-leaning Yiddish-language newspaper *Der Vayter Mizrekh* [The Far East], edited by Meir Mendelevich Birman, to appear. The city hosted a variety of political movements ranging from the anti-Zionist Jewish Workers’ Bund of Lazar Epstein to the general Herzlian Zionism of Jewish hospital director Avraham Kaufmann to the ultra-religiosity of the non-Zionist Agudat Israel. There was also a largely clandestine Communist Party in which

a few Jews were active, notably Lazar Epstein’s son Israel Epstein, who later becomes a member of the People’s Republic of China’s National People’s Consultative Congress.

Perhaps the fullest description of Harbin’s intellectual vitality at the moment of the Olmerts’ arrival appears in an account published by General Zionist fundraiser Israel Cohen, who had also visited the Jewish communities of Singapore and Manila. Cohen contrasted Harbin’s vitality with the relatively blasé Jewish intellectual life of Singapore and Manila. He wrote that Harbin’s “vigorous Jewish consciousness” manifested itself in a struggle of parties, in which the Right, Centre, Left, and Extreme Left were always engaged. There were ceaseless public discussions, especially on Saturday night, between the rival adherents of Zionism pure and simple, Zionism without Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy without Zionism, Zionism with Socialism, Socialism without Zionism, Hebraism in Manchuria, and Yiddishism in Palestine...I soon realized that there were...hundreds of Jews in Harbin who were eager to go to Palestine...There was therefore no need for me to gain converts: my task was confined to spreading information and obtaining donations from a relatively small group.

It was in this context that Motti took on a new Jewish identity. In Harbin Jewish identity had already been defined as a mixture of culture, language, politics, and religion. Prior to the Olmerts’ arrival, and under the influence of Rabbi Kisilev, the older generation within the Harbin Jewish community overwhelmingly committed to General Zionism. The younger generation, under the influence of the Bolshevik Revolution, sympathized with Leftist causes.

By 1928, both Motti Olmert and his future wife Bella Wugman leaned toward the Leftist Zionist youth movement Hashomer Hazair. They had been influenced by the Russian refugees David Laskov and his wife

Zippora, who had already had a taste of Siberia. They had been exiled by order of the Soviet government, and, at great peril, crossed the Soviet-Chinese border. The Laskovs suggested to the older Jewish youth in Harbin that they join Hashomer Hazair. A letter was sent westward to Hashomer headquarters. Even before a response was received back, the Harbin Jewish youth movement began functioning under the title and banner of Hashomer Hazair.

At that crucial moment, a second Zionist emissary, Alexander Gurvich, arrived from Eretz Yisroel as the shaliach of the Zionist Revisionist movement. Gurvich championed the right wing ideology of Vladimir Zev Jabotinsky’s Betar movement, the ideological precursor of many Israeli parties from Herut to Kadima. Gurvich had been born in Minsk in 1899 to a middle-class family which was very much part of the Russian Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment. He attended high school in St. Petersburg and, like other maskilim such as Chaim Weizmann, Selig Brodetsky, and Harbin Jewish hospital director Avram Kaufmann, went further West for his higher education. In 1925 Gurvich matriculated in politics and economics at the University of Hamburg. There he became an active Revisionist. He immigrated to Palestine upon his graduation from Hamburg. In 1928 Gurvich was dispatched to China as shaliach of the Revisionist Movement. According to Motti Olmert, “Gurvich was our teacher. He came to us at a time of crisis in Zionist ideals, when many left Eretz Yisroel and returned to Europe. In those dark and overcast days, he acquainted us with Jabotinsky’s theories [which] meant the obligation first of all of moving to Eretz Yisroel. Gurvich had not only made aliyah but was a chalutz, a pioneer, in the full sense of the word. He established factories, made employment for others, and went about developing trade and industry as well as the agricultural sector.”

Gurvich met regularly with the young Zionists in Harbin where, according to Olmert, "he tried to prove to the youth that joining Hashomer Hazair had been a mistake...for based on their beliefs, they were closer to Betar than to Hashomer Hazair. Within a short time, the older youth came to the conclusion that they belonged to the National Camp of Jabotinsky. They sent a letter to Betar headquarters in Riga which approved their joining." A minority of the Harbin Hashomer Hazair refused to go along with the switch to Betar and instead joined the Komsomol. This tiny faction ultimately migrated to Birobijan in the Soviet Union and was never heard from again.

Gurvich remained in Harbin until 1939. Under his influence, in 1934, Motti Olmert left China for agricultural training in Holland preparatory to his immigration to Palestine. His wife-to-be Bella Wugman left Harbin directly for Palestine on a phony marriage certificate to fellow Betarnik Eliahu Lankin, who was already an official Palestinian resident. When Motti ultimately reached Palestine in 1935, the phony marriage to Lankin was dissolved, Motti married Bella, they settled near Binyamina, threw themselves into Herut politics, and had four sons in rapid succession: Amram [Ami], in 1936; Yirmiyahu [Irmi], in 1943; Ehud [Udi], in 1945; and Yosef [Yossi] in 1950. Yossi was named for his grandfather Iosif who was buried in Harbin in 1941.

Return to and Memorialization of the Chinese Homeland

In China Motti and Bella assumed a Zionist Revisionist political identity and a commitment to leave China for Palestine. A second ideational impact of their China sojourn was a determination to maintain their China ties while living in Eretz Yisroel. Amram recalls chinoiserie in the Olmert house in Nahalat Jabotinsky, near Binyamina. Ehud maintains that "China is the country which hosted

our parents. They studied in China. They spoke Chinese, and the Chinese culture is part of my heritage and memory as a young kid in the State of Israel. So China is not just another country for me." The fullest expression of that commitment has been the repeated return visits to China of members of the Olmert family beginning in the 1940s and their ongoing memorialization of the family's China experience.

The first member of the Olmert family to revisit was Motti, in 1947. He had twin motivations. First, he wished to visit his mother Michal, who was still in China, and ease her exodus to Eretz Israel. His second motive was subversive. He was traveling on behalf of the Irgun, the Jabotinsky-oriented underground movement in Palestine. Motti was assigned by his old Betar guru Alexander Gurvich to raise funds for the arms ship "Atalena," which was bringing weapons to force the British out of Palestine. In Shanghai and Tianjin Motti collected about \$100,000, a considerable amount of money in 1947. This sum was about 40% of the total cost to purchase and supply the "Atlalena," which was ultimately sunk off the Tel Aviv beachfront in a pitched battle between Zionist Revisionists and mainstream Zionists.

The second family member to reestablish Chinese ties was Yossi. By 1989, the heirs of Jabotinsky had come to power in Israel via a succession of political parties which stretched from Herut to Gahal and ultimately to Likud and Kadima. In that year Yossi, as representative of Yitzhak Shamir's Likud government, met in Israel with Chinese pilots, including the chief test pilot of Chinese air force, at a time when Israel was establishing its first military and diplomatic contacts with China. In 1991, again at the directive of the Prime Minister's office, Yossi helped China set up a Tel Aviv office for its official press agency Xinhua. This office, and a branch of China's official state travel service Luxingshe, served

as intermediaries between China and Israel until the establishment of full diplomatic relations and embassies one year later. In June 1992, after Likud lost national elections to Yitzhak Rabin's labor party, Yossi went to China on a private visit. There, he became the first family member to actually revisit Harbin.

The third family member to reestablish Chinese ties was Amram. He was a professional agronomist who had maintained the family farm near Binyamina even as a teenager, when his father returned to China to raise funds for the "Altalena." In 1989 Amram visited China at the invitation of the Chinese Government, in his capacity as Chief Executive Officer of Agridev-Agricultural Development Company. While in China he learned that the grave of his grandfather Iosif was in dilapidated condition in Harbin's Huangshan Jewish cemetery, which, with over 700 graves, is the largest in the Far East. Amram returned to Israel and planted the idea in the minds of his brothers to help restore that tombstone, the graves of some of other relatives and also the graves of the grandmother and grandfather of [Ret.] Israeli General and parliamentarian Efi Eitam (Faine).

In 1992 Amram secured an appointment as Agricultural Attaché in Israel's new Beijing Embassy. In that capacity he also laid the groundwork for future appointments as Professor of Agronomy at Beijing's China Agricultural University and Qingdao's Laiyang Agricultural University. As Agricultural Attaché, Amram also helped establish Israel's first Dry Lands Research Station in China, a project sponsored by the Foreign Assistance Program of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MASHAV].

When Ariel Sharon's Likud party returned to power in the national election of 2001, Ehud became the fourth member of the family to renew his China ties. By 2004 he had already served eleven years as the Likud Mayor of Jerusalem and

(continued on page 75)

The Year of the Pig

Emmanuel Pratt

Unlike in the Western countries, if a man calls another man a pig in China, he does not necessarily intend to insult him. Perhaps just the contrary. Because according to the Chinese Zodiac, people born in the Year of the Pig are supposed to be simply too good to be true: charming, witty, gallant, wise, chivalrous and obliging. You may safely put your trust in them. "Pig-people" are the people everyone admires most. Make a list of the "Pigs" in your life. Aren't they the nicest, most loving and scrupulously honest and straightforward people around? Frankly speaking, most people take advantage of these traits of the "Pig nature". No matter how old they get, 'Pig-people' remain childishly naïve

and continue to believe, despite all disappointments, that all men and women are good and kind.

"Pigpeople" are splendid companions. But if you have a Pig friend, don't think that your worries are over: they are loyal, faithful and giving – only as long as you don't force your opinions on them. A Pig rarely asks for help and cannot graciously accept it. Like "Monkeys", they are intellectuals with a great thirst for knowledge.

"Pigs" are romantic and certainly are the marriage-type. No wonder that in Chinese, the word "family" consists of the character "pig," written under the character "roof". The Chinese are known to be family people, and revere "Pigs, living under one roof".

But on the other hand, "Pigs" are also jealous and possessive.

People born in the Year of the Pig have a taste for la dolce vita and merry making. They possess a strong sense of luxury and can be extravagant, taking great pleasure in pampering themselves and their loved ones. They are cheerful and like to be found with friends around a table, crammed with plates and bottles, and their appetite can verge on gluttony.

One question remains to be answered: "If they are so virtuous and worthy, why is it that the Pig is last in the cycle of the Chinese zodiac?" "Because they are lazy," say the Chinese.

In 2007, the Year of the Pig falls on February 17.

Not Just Another Country (continued from page 74)

was a Vice Prime Minister in Sharon's national government. In that capacity Ehud visited China. Under Ehud and Amram's supervision the family purchased two monuments for the Harbin cemetery and effectively inaugurated the process for the cemetery's total rehabilitation. One monument is their grandfather's re-engraved tombstone. The second is a triumphal obelisk at the entryway to the cemetery. It bears a heartfelt inscription, in excellent Chinese and cumbersome English, reading: "Thank you for the protection given to our community. From the standpoint of a past member of this Jewish community, we appreciate this protection. Thank you for the dignity that was provided. All of this will be remembered by most of the Jewish people who lived in this city—Harbin. Ehud Olmert, Vice Prime Minister of the State of Israel, June 25, 2004."

Yet another way in which the Olmerts have preserved and utilized the memory of their Chinese experience is in a series of historical seminars about the Jews of Harbin. Two of these conferences have been jointly organized by the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, the Chinese Communist Party of Harbin's Daoli [formerly Pristan] district, Israel's Embassy in Beijing, and the Tel Aviv-based Israel China Friendship Society and Igud Yotsei Sin [Association of Former Jewish Residents of China], headed by Teddy Kaufman. The first seminar, in which this author participated, was held in August-September, 2004.

The second, in which Amram Olmert and his wife Regina participated, was held in June 2006. By that time Ehud Olmert had become Prime Minister of the State of Israel. In that capacity he gave videotaped greetings in English

to the historical seminar. Amram Olmert and Teddy Kaufman recited the Jewish prayer for the dead at the grave of Iosif Olmert, in a ceremony covered by television, radio and print media crews from Harbin, Beijing, and Shanghai.

On January 8, 2007, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert visited China once again. His task this time was not to memorialize Harbin but to discuss the existential threat which Iran poses to the entire Zionist enterprise.[20] In a broader sense Prime Minister Olmert was rekindling his family ties to China that were first made during his father's perilous train journey from Irkutsk to Harbin eighty-eight years previously. That train trip into China initiated the rich, fluid, and complex process of ideological formation of the Olmert family.

Chinese Jewish Internet Web

My honorable Jewish friends, I am the founder of Chinese Jewish Internet web, www.jewcn.com. My purpose is to give a fair and depersonalized introduction about Israel and Jews to 1.3 billion Chinese, to defend the image of Israel and Jews, to change Chinese prejudice against Israel and Jews, to enhance the friendship between the Chinese people and Jewish people as well as to make www.jewcn.com a top-ranking professional Chinese website.

This Jewish web is rich in content and there are many good articles that anyone who read it would have a good impression and nice feelings for Israel. One of the net friends criticized the distorting report of Chinese government after reading "Tell You the Truth about the Separating Wall" and another reader demanded Israel government to take military action against Arabic terrorists after reading "The Baby Suicide-Bomber". All these things indicate the Jewish web can change Chinese prejudice against Israel and Jews and can help Chinese see through the terrorists. And there are more articles written by net friends to express their admiration for Israel and Jews.

www.jewcn.com contains almost all the information about Israel and Jews in 15 million Chinese characters, 800 pictures and 200 thesis.

In my opinion, in order to change Chinese prejudice against Israel, we should first change Chinese government's constant policy to support Arabian world. As we know, Chinese political regime is much different from those of US, Australia or Israel. In China, no religious communities or folk organizations or labors' units can exist independently; grass roots are afraid to tell the truth and speak different from the government, even scholars and professors.

There is an obvious feature in Chinese Jewish research: there are few specialized scholars and students and short of profound research. Under the present Chinese machinery, Chinese scholars' research fruits on Arabian-Israel conflicts and Israel cannot become political policy in reality. For a long time our government has been adopting a mid-east policy that stands by Arabians, controlled by which, the news report has been holding the same opinion. So under the misleading of media press, most average Chinese tend to support Arabians. For example, Chinese government denounced Israel in Israel's military action of capturing Arabian terrorists. Professor Solomon Wardour, an expert of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, holds the same opinion. He wrote a strategic report after he had done lots of research in Chinese provinces of Henan, Shandong, Yunnan, Beijing, Shanghai. I appreciated his viewpoints very much.

Only when Chinese policy to support Arabian world changes, does China stop supporting Arab terrorists.

Without Chinese support, the Arabian terrorists will be in trouble and Israel will be safer.

It will be most effective to advertise on Reference News and Global Times that have largest circulation in China and respectively has greatest influence on Chinese officials and Chinese youth. In this way, the propaganda can influence the officials of various stratus and immense young people, thus influence 1.3 billion Chinese with these millions of officials. In China, policy is not decided by the will of the mass but the politicians. Chinese government is not elected by the people and how could the people have any civil rights? They have to follow the government. Now, everyday only hundreds of people visit Jewish website. If it could be

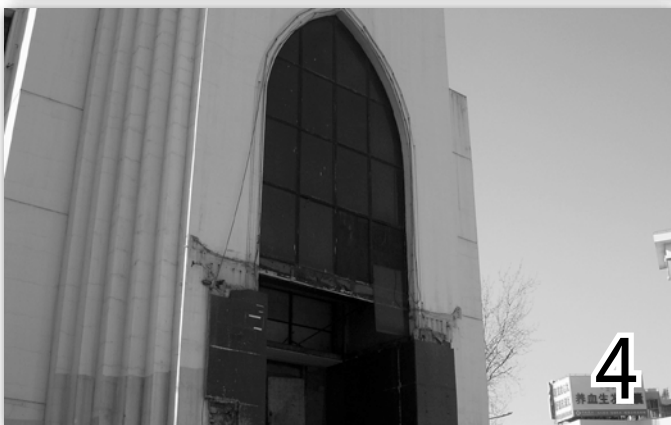
advertised on these two newspapers, the number would increase to thousands even millions. The Jewish website plays an important and convenient role than publishing books and holding Jewish learning lectures which can only influence hundreds of people or thousands of people but have little effect on 1.3 billion Chinese people. Moreover, this Jewish website influences not only the average people but also the officials in political and military department.

I've been working on introducing and defending the image of Israel and the Jews at my own expense. If www.jewcn.com became an effective website, it could change the stand and policy of Chinese government. Then our TV news, newspapers, broadcast will not distort the truth and all stand on the side of the Arabic terrorists any more but report on a relatively just standpoint. Now, even some Chinese scholars, professors and students in the field of Jewish study also stand on the side of the Arabian world on Arabian-Israel issues because many of them take Jewish study as their career only for a good job or social status. They do not sincerely support Israel and the Jews

Now the Jewish web is at the early stage of development, short of employees and fund. I'm faced with many difficulties, for instance, 20,000RMB for a server, 48,000RMB for advertisement on Reference News (34 sub-press and 4 million circulation in the nation), 28,000RMB for advertisement on Global Times (34 sub-press and 2 million circulation in the nation), and the cost for renting an office and employing workers. These difficulties are oppressing me like a mountain. Now I have used up all my savings for this Jewish web. It is not effective for a website full of political atmosphere like the Jewish web to be

(continued on page 77)

THE TIANJIN SYNAGOGUE TODAY (February 2007) - in restoration



1. The facade of the Synagogue
2. Side view
3. Our compatriot Sam (Shmuel) Müller who was born in Tianjin
4. The entrance to the Synagogue

Chinese Jewish Internet Web (continued from page 76)

advertised on other medium because only advertising on relative medium does achieve the ideal effect.

My Jewish web has to hire others' space on internet now and it's seriously restricted. If we had a server of ourselves, we can improve the net speed and provide movies and newsreel about Israel and Zionistic subjects. In this way, it can vividly introduce Jewish history, Zionism, Middle-East conflicts, truthfully present Israeli heroic image against invaders and their indomitable, fortitudinous, creative and hardworking spirit reflected in their survival in terrible natural environment without natural resources except desert and the battles that is vital to the national survival.

I wish I could get the help and support from all my Jewish friends to accomplish the great yet difficult task:

to change Chinese government's policy of supporting the Arabian world and make it give up the stand of supporting Arabian terrorists.

I have a grand plan to make the Jewish website a peculiar influential professional website in China, and one of the listed websites so that Jewish web could earn profits and use them to do other activities beneficial to Israel and the Jews in China, for example to build Jewish libraries, Jewish Memorials (like the Jewish massacre memorials in Washington, Boston in America and Jerusalem in Israel), national Jewish schools and research centers, Jewish publishing centers as well as publishing Jewish books and establishing journals on Israel and the Jews for Chinese masses. I will use all means to make propaganda for Israel and the Jews in China which will hopefully become as

active as in U.S.

In China, I'm the only person who has such a grand plan. To establish the Jewish Web is just the beginning of my plan. The Jewish Web will in time act as forceful as a giant atomic bomb to influence Chinese politics and the 1.3 billion Chinese people. At that time, 1.3 billion Chinese people will stand firmly on the side of Israel and the Jews.

Best wishes for you and Israel!

The firmest supporter of Israel and Jewish people,

Hu Liangming

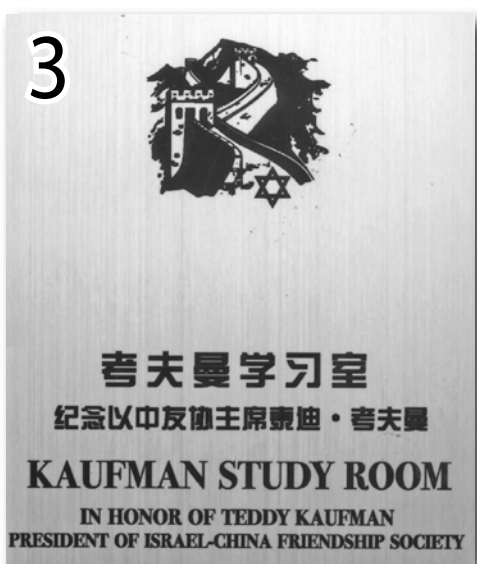
Address: "Jewish Net", 7th Floor, 84 Jiefang Road, Chenzhou, Hunan Province, China.

Zip code: 423000

E-mail: jewcn@126.com

Website: www.jewcn.com

The dedication ceremony for the Glazer Institute of Jewish Studies of Nanjing University



A generous donation from Varda and Shalom Yoran for a study room named Teddy Kaufman

1,2,3. Signs near the Kaufman study room

4. The study room

DONATIONS

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The Central Committee of IGUD YOTZEI SIN and Stella and David UDOVITCH, who conducted the 2007 I.Y.S. ANNUAL APPEAL in Australia, wish to express their sincere thanks to all contributors.

Total A\$ 20,295.-

We list below the names of the contributors in order of generosity (in alphabetical order).

From	Mr & Mrs Harry TRIGUBOFF A.M.	A\$	3500	From	Mr & Mrs Rene TSUKASOFF	A\$	150
"	Mr & Mrs David LEVITAN	"	3000	"	Mr & Mrs John BORDER	"	100
"	Mr & Mrs Michael TRIGUBOFF	"	2000	"	Mrs Helga GIVORSHNER	"	100
"	Mrs Rachel RIVKIN	"	1200	"	Mrs Nora FENBOW	"	100
"	Mrs Leana LEIBOVITCH	"	1000	"	Dr & Mrs Andrew HOLLO	"	100
"	Mrs Bella SHANNON (Melb.)	"	1000	"	Mrs Janna RADOM	"	100
"	Estate of the late George TSIPRIS	"	1000	"	Mr & Mrs Alex SAMSON	"	100
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"	Dr Sam SAKKER M.B.E.	"	600	"	Mrs Jenny ROSEN	"	70
"	Mr & Mrs Paul CONWAY O.A.M.	"	500	"	Mrs Leah ONIKUL	"	60
"	Mr & Mrs Bob SHTEINMAN A.M.	"	500	"	Mr Moris BRAUN (Melb.)	"	50
"	ANONYMOUS	"	500	"	Mr & Mrs Morris ESKIN	"	50
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"	Mr & Mrs Efim KROUK	"	300	"	Mrs Sopha SAKKER	"	50
"	Mr Michael GELBERT	"	200	"	Mrs Hanna STERN	"	50
"	Mr & Mrs J.TRACTON	"	200	"	Mr & Mrs Ilia VILENSKY	"	50
"	Mr & Mrs George VORON	"	200	"	Mrs Fira ZATZ	"	40
"	Mr Alfred KANT	"	175	"	Mrs Asya RAHMAN	"	30
"	<u>Mrs Rosa HEETMAN dec.</u>	"	150	"	ANONYMOUS	"	25
"	Mr Michael REDHILL	"	150	"	Mrs Zina KOMONSKY	"	25
"	Mr & Mrs Emil SCHWARTZ	"	150	"	Mrs Bluma KOTZ	"	20

From	Mr. and Mrs. Harry TRIGUBOFF in memory of his mother Frida TRIGUBOV on her Yahrzeit	A\$	750
"	Harry TRIGUBOFF in memory of his late FATHER on his Yahrzeit	"	300
"	Mr. & Mrs. B.SHTEINMAN in memory of Zina and Leiser SHTEINMAN on their Yahrzeits	"	100
"	Riva FRENKEL in memory of her husband Grisha FRENKEL on his Yahrzeit	"	50
"	Sopha SAKKER for Teddy Kaufman's book "The Jews of Harbin live in my heart"	"	64
"	Leana LEIBOVITCH for Teddy Kaufman's book "The Jews of Harbin live in my heart"	"	35
"	Mrs. F.SMOLIANSKY in memory of her husband NORBERT	"	200
"	Estelle TRACTON in memory of her husband ROBERT	"	300
"	Mr and Mrs Emil SCHWARTS	"	25

USA

LOS ANGELES

From The AMERICAN FAR EASTERN SOCIETY of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA towards the Social Aid Fund for the PASSOVER Holiday

US\$ 975

SAN FRANCISCO

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

From Mr. and Mrs. David FAMILIANT for the Social Aid Fund of IYS

US\$ 5000

From Mr. Harold LERNER for the Sephardic Section of Igud Yotzei Sin US\$ 2000

USA

From Leo (Lyonia) WINSTON in memory of his grandmother Rebecca TUNKEL US\$ 100
 " Susan SHENNON in memory of her husband Gregory SHENNON on his Yahrzeit " 25
 " Nina SAPOSHNICK in memory of her sisters Esther and Dora KOLIADITSKY " 100
 " Ruth and Zalman AGRAN for the PASSOVER Holiday " 100
 " Benjamin HENKIN in memory of his beloved father Zeev Wulf HENKIN on his Yahrzeit " 100
 " Yaacov LIBERMAN in memory of his mother Gisia LIBERMAN on her Yahrzeit " 50
 " Gregory HODSON in memory of his wife Rose HODSON " 25

In lieu of flowers for Passover

From Aya PIVO (Machlin) US\$ 500
 " Anne HUDSON " 70

CANADA

From Regina CANNING in memory of her mother Lubov GOLUBITSKY US\$ 20

SWITZERLAND

Mr. Vova DICHNE towards the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund S\$ 1000

ISRAEL

From Marianna BARLY towards the IYS Social Aid Fund in memory of her parents Dr. Ernst and Gertrude MICHAELIS NIS 5000
 " Alina KRINKEVITCH in memory of her dear RELATIVES " 200
 " Leonfried HEYMAN in memory of his dear wife HENRIETTA " 180
 " Asnat RAYES in memory of her mother Henrietta HEYMAN " 100
 " Leah BECKER in memory of her mother Anna Borisovna ALTCLASS and family friend Shimon FUCHS " 150
 " Neri NEDER in memory of his wife Shulamit NEDER " 500
 " Orly SHLIFER-SARUSY and Galia PARDO in memory of their father Reuven SHLIFER " 200
 " Sophie FUCHS and Musia HENIGSBERG in memory of their dear PERSOFF parents, brothers and sister-in-law " 500
 " Fira KANER in memory of dear husband, father and grandfather Sioma KANER " 200
 " Tzipora SHNEIDERMANN with the best wishes to Abrasha Ozrelvitch and Kira and the Fratelis family for the Passover " 200
 " Michael FLEISCHMANN in memory of his father M.B.FLEISCHMANN on his Yahrzeit " 500
 " Tema BLUM in memory of her parents Golda and Moshe ZANTLAUFER, husband Emil BLUM and brother Alex PELEG " 180
 " Mark and Olga SHIFRIN in memory of their dear parents Sophia Abramovna and Naum Markovich SHIFRIN " 180
 " Vera BEGUN in memory of her parents Mordechay and Sonia BEGUN " 100
 " Golda TOLEDO in memory of her father Grisha (Gershon) PESELNICK on his Yahrzeit " 100
 " Vera YOSELEVICH in memory of Rina BABUSHKIN (Zubitsky) and Sarah EFRON-DASHINSKY " 100
 " Genia OLSHEVSKY in memory of her brother Arye OLSHEVSKY " 100
 " Raya BOYANOVER in memory of her father Eliahu (Ilyusha) SEMBERG and mother Sonia SEMBERG (Rapoport) " 100

In lieu of flowers

From Mr. & Mrs. T. PIASTUNOVICH	US\$ 300	From Zelda and David FRIEDMAN	NIS 200
" Mr. & Mrs. A.ABRAHAM	NIS 100	" Etti and Meir GINANSKY	" 100
" Leah ALPER	" 180	" Ariela GALANTI	" 250
" Raya BERGMAN	" 300	" Inna GLOBIN	" 250
" Garry BROVINSKY	" 500	" Elia and Dan GODER	" 200
" Luba BRUNER	" 200	" Riva HOFFMANN	" 200
" Mr. & Mrs. H.DVIR	" 100	" Emmanuel INGERMAN	" 200
" Shulamith Yohana EVEN	" 360	" Eli KAMA	" 200

From	Genia KAUFMAN	NIS	100	From	Hanna PORAT	NIS	250
"	Ilana and David KIMELMAN	"	200	"	Tania PRISH	"	200
"	Ruth KIMELMAN	"	100	"	Sima RAYCHER	"	150
"	Shmuel KISLEV	"	200	"	Serafima RIBINICK	"	200
"	Pnina and Yossi KLEIN	"	500	"	Carmela ROSEN	"	150
"	Rivka and Yehuda KOTIK	"	500	"	Shmuel ROSENBLUM	"	50
"	Joe LEVOFF	"	200	"	Yakov ROSENBLUM	"	100
"	Katy LEVY	"	200	"	Judith and Israel SANDEL	"	200
"	Moshe LICHOMANOV	"	150	"	Renata SHANY	"	200
"	Benjamin LITVIN	"	1000	"	Tania SHLIFER	"	100
"	Gabriela NACHTOMI	"	150	"	Moshe SHMERLING	"	200
"	Isabel NADEL	"	150	"	Rivka SHMERLING	"	500
"	Celia NIRIM	"	1000	"	Ilana SILBERSTEIN	"	360
"	Sarah and Shlomo NITSAN	"	200	"	Carmela SOKOLOVER	"	100
"	Mr. & Mrs. Kurt NUSSBAUM	"	500	"	Yosef YAKOBSON	"	100
"	Genia OLSHEVSKY	"	100	"	Esfir YARCHO	"	150
"	Abraham OZRELOVITCH	"	400	"	Mifa and Boris ZILBERG	"	350
"	Mira and Israel PISETSKY	"	200				

SYNAGOGUE FUND

USA

From	Freda TERFANSKY in loving memory of her sister Rachel PERSOFF	US\$	100
"	the KOMBERG family -- Edit & Ed and Jacob, Callie and Ellie Mara in memory of their grandfather and great grandfather Mara MORGULEV	"	100

SWITZERLAND

From	Mr. Vova DICHNE towards the Synagogue Fund	S\$	1000
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ISRAEL

From	Luba TSINMAN in memory of her dear parents Rabbi Yehuda Zelig and Dina SLUTSKER	NIS	300
"	Etti and Meir GINANSKY towards the Synagogue Fund	"	50
"	daughter-in-law Sara ROSS and grandson Danny ROSS in memory of dear Yevgenia Levovna ROSENBERG	"	200
"	Hezkeyahu DVIR in memory of his parents Henrich and Ida DAVIDOVITCH	"	200
"	Riva HOFFMANN in memory of her husband Freddy HOFFMANN	"	100
"	Isa and Esther YARCHO in memory of their dear husband and father Aaron YARCHO	"	200
"	Yocheved OLSHEVSKY in memory of her father Moshe OLSHEVSKY and uncle Abraham OLSHEVSKY	"	100
"	Genia KAUFMAN in memory of her brother Abraham SAMSONOVICH	"	100
"	Riva HOFFMANN in memory of her sister Luba FISHBAIN	"	100
"	Bernard DAREL in memory of his brother Isia DAGILAYSKY	"	50
"	Vera YOSELEVICH in memory of Rina BABUSHKIN (Zubitsky) and Sarah EFRON-DASHINSKY	"	100
"	Shulamith Yochana EVEN and family in loving memory of our beloved father Mara MORGULEV on his 10th Yahrzeit	"	360

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

AUSTRALIA

From	Lyka KAGANER and family in ever lasting memory of our dear husband, memory of Yasha Kaganer	A\$	100
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ISRAEL

From	Fania and David MINDLIN towards The Scholarship Fund in memory of David KATZ	NIS	100
"	Shulamith Yohana EVEN in honour of Rasha KAUFMAN's Birthday towards The Scholarship Fund in memory of Tania and Shmuel Aba SEGERMAN	"	180

D e a t h

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of

Jim VINSON

after a long illness, on February 12, 2007

Loved son of Lev Victorovich and Anna Yakovlevna VEINSTEIN (both dec)

Dearly beloved husband of NORA

Loving and devoted father of JENNI, DAVID and MONICA

Respected and admired father-in-law of

Jack KRAFCHER, Sandi VINSON-BROMBERGER and Geoffrey KEMPLER

Adored grandpa Jim of MELISSA, LEIGH, KATIE and NEIL

Much loved brother of ISABEL and

much loved uncle of VICKY, VITTORIO and KAREN

We express our deep condolences to Nora VINSON on the death of

J I M

and convey our sympathy to the bereaved family

Celia NIRIM and family

We mourn the passing of our dear cousin

Jim VINSON

and express our heartfelt condolences to his wife NORA,
to their children JENNIFER, DAVID, MONICA and their families,
to his sister ISABEL and family

He will be missed and remembered by all of us

Hannah STERN, LUCY and WOLF and family,
GARRY, JOSEPH, LIKY, LARRY and family
and IRENE

Death

It is with great sorrow we announce the passing of

George (Grisha) TSIPRIS

on April 9, 2007, aged 89 years

Beloved husband of MUSIA (deceased)

Much loved father of MARK and TOM

Loving brother of AMALIA and ALEC (deceased)

Loving uncle of VERA

Much loved father-in-law of ROBYN and BRONWYN

Cherished grandfather of

SYMON and ADAM and their wives JESSICA and EMMA

Loving great-grandfather of TALIA

He will always be loved and missed

We are saddened by the passing of our dear friend

George (Grisha) TSIPRIS

and express our heartfelt condolences to AMALIA, MARK, ROBYN and family, to TOM and BRONWYN, to VERA and family, grandchildren, great granddaughter and the friend OLGA

Debbie and Mike ABARON and family
Nehama ALTCLASS
Ira BOYARSKY
Zina and Paul CONWAY O A M
Mary and Joe GIBIAN
Anya GOODRICH O A M
Natasha and Yana GOOSEV
Lyka KAGANER
Vera KARLIKOFF and family
Leana LEIBOVITCH
Lialia and Vova LEITIS

Pam MOSHKOVITCH
Ira and Boris OLEINIKOFF
Tonia and Michael PERUCHINSKY
Debbie, Sandra RADVIN
Asya RAHMAN
Sopha SAKKER
Olga and Emil SCHWARTZ
Anta SHERELL
Marlena and Elijah UDOVITCH
Stella and David UDOVITCH
Mary and George VORON

We are very saddened by the death of our dear friend

George TSIPRIS

and express our deep sympathy to his sons MARK and TOM
with all their families, and to OLGA

Paul and Esther AGRAN

It is with great sorrow that we join MARK and TOMMY with their families
on the loss of their father and our dearest, oldest friend

Grisha TSIPRIS

Sophie VEINERMAN
Roberta and Richard GURALNIK

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
is deeply saddened by the passing of our dear member and good friend

Itzchak OREN (Izia NADEL)

and extend heartfelt sympathy to ISABEL and TIMNA and family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
is saddened by the passing of our dear member and good friend

Bobby MILLER

and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family

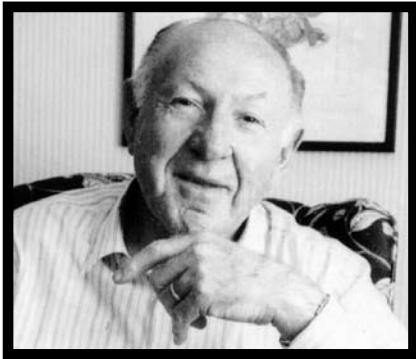
The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
is saddened by the passing of our dear member and good friend

Arye (Leva) BURSUK

and extend heartfelt sympathy to his family

IN MEMORIAM

George (Grisha) Tsipris



George was born in Vladivostok Russia in 1918.

At the tender age of 13 when most boys are still involved in the pursuit of boyish games, George's family felt it necessary to leave Vladivostok due to the growing hardship associated with Communist regime. Their only option was to escape across the border to China, a distance of 600 kilometers.

One February night in 1931 with his only possession a pillow case filled with a few meager belongings. George left his parents behind and, accompanied by his uncle, his cousin a Chinese guide and four others headed off for the Russian, Chinese border.

The cruel Siberian wind hissed about their ears, stirring up a mist of powdered snow that concealed them mercifully from roving border guards. George adjusted his face scarf, pinned the flaps of his fur hat tighter beneath his chin, and plodded patiently forward in minus 20 degrees.

George's uncle and cousin became very tired and elected to rest. The Chinese guard refused to wait and George clinging to the guide's arm decided to struggle on. The four others were caught by the border

guards and were never heard from again.

George finally reached China alone, frostbitten, exhausted, hungry and miserable.

Fortunately his uncle and cousin joined George in Harbin China a few days later.

George stayed with relatives in Harbin and then proceeded to Shanghai where he was eventually re-united with his family.

In Shanghai, George was enrolled in a public school, but due to financial difficulties he had to leave to help support his family. His love for his parents especially his mother whom he adored was well documented and when asked later in life to describe her, the word «Angel» was frequently used.

George's entrepreneurial skills began to surface at an early age with the purchase of a blind horse, and together with his Brother Alec, they delivered firewood. The meager earning from this venture paid for food for the family.

He followed this with a job in a French laundry where he learnt to speak French, Chinese and Japanese which he needed for his next venture selling woollen suiting fabrics.

During the middle of 1941, through the efforts of a friend, George was introduced to a woman by the name of Musia.

After a short friendship Musia had to leave for Japan but the couple maintained a warm correspondence. It is joked, that as George calculated that two could live cheaper than one and as Musia was a wonderful cook he popped the question.

The two were married in Shanghai on the 22nd March 1942 during the Japanese occupation.

The wedding reception was held in their one room flat; the furniture was taken out, tables set and the food prepared by Musia. The couple traveled home from the Synagogue by rickshaw.

With the Communist takeover in China after WW2, George organized his own and his extended family of eight to migrate to Australia, once again, being forced to leave everything behind.

In Sydney, George finally got established in the army surplus business and with the help of his wife Musia, eventually built a prosperous business in retail and property providing a wonderful home and platform for his family. He never forgot his past and was always there for his family and friends.

George and Musia were blessed with a wonderful marriage of 51 years, her devotion to him and family was legendary. One token of her love for him was expressed when George was diagnosed with bowel cancer. Musia begged the doctor not to reveal to George the seriousness and nature of his illness. She made a vow to God at the time that if his life was spared her sacrifice would be to fast every Friday for the rest of her life. She did this unconditionally until the day of her death some 30 years later. Life at 200 Military Road, Dover Heights where the family finally settled was always joyful and bustling; George was always renown for being a wonderful host, generous and kind, his greatest joy was winning at cards

with his group or friends.

As a father, George was a wonderful role model.

Even though he displayed a tough and intimidating exterior, he was kind, generous, wise and fair; he even managed to have a good sense of humor.

His two sons Mark and Tom owe a lot to him. He was also a wonderful father-in-law to Robyn and Bronwyn. He was a doting brother to his sister Amalia whom he loved very much as well as his late brother Alec.

When it came to his grandchildren Symon and Adam nothing was more pleasurable for him than to spend time with them taking them on numerous trips to Disneyland and Hong Kong.

George had a special place in his heart for his niece Vera whom he treated as a daughter and who spent most of her childhood living with the Tsipris family at Dover Heights.

To sum up George's long and fruitful life of 89 years in a few words would be impossible and I am sure that most of you here today will have your own wonderful memories of him.

George will be remembered by the following family as well as his friends:

His sons, Mark and Tom his sister Amalia.

His daughters-in-laws Robyn and Bronwyn.

His grandchildren Symon and Adam, their wives Jessica and Emma and especially the last ray of sunshine in his life his great granddaughter Talia, Musia.

His niece Vera and her husband Hilton and children Lara and Anthony and their families.

His cousin Alice and her family who had traveled from Melbourne to be with George over this past week.

His dear and close friend Olga who lovingly cared for him the last few years of his life.

George Tsipris was a wonderful man, a true Mench. He will always be remembered in our hearts.

A Word about Gregory Singer

The author: the composer Gregory Fried from Russia

that wrote the opera "The Diary of Anne Frank"

Gregory Singer was born in Harbin (the capital of Heilongjiang province in NE China) in a family of the boot-maker Solomon Singer in 1913. The boy began to study music at the age of 10 – rather late for a professional musician. However, the young musician perfected his technique extremely quickly. This was due on one hand to his brilliant talent for music, and on the other hand because of the outstanding gifts of his teacher B. Lasarev. Mr. Lasarev was a student of A. Zilotti. By the age of 15, Gregory Singer gave his first solo concert.

Shortly after that the Singers moved to Shanghai. There Gregory found wider scope for his education. He began to concretize. His concerts of that time were made into records in a Shanghai recording studio. He also worked as a pianist and a conductor in the Patti Orchestra. At that time he began to compose music. One of his pieces of that period was "Shopeniana" which expressed his musical predilections.

In 1948, under the influence of Soviet propaganda for the return of Russian emigrants from China to the USSR, Gregory Singer moved to Moscow. He was accepted to the Union of Soviet Composers, but shortly after his coming, he was banished to the city of Ivanovo – one of the five cities where he was permitted to live by the KGB.

Only in 1952, after his return to Moscow, he began working for the Ensemble of the Soviet Opera for the United Theater's Association (UTA). He participated in staging some operas such as Sergey Prokofiev's "War and Peace" and "Semen Kotko" among others.

Gregory Singer was a splendid Ensemble member and a concertmaster pedagogue. During the fifties and sixties he was active in playing on tour around the USSR with the well-known Russian singers, Victoria Ivanov, Michael Ryba and Galena Pisarenko. As a pianist in

the Ensemble, he performed with such violinists as Galena Barinov, Samuel Fuhrer and Mark Lubotsky, and with the cellist Natalie Gutman. In 1969, he gave performances on a tour of America with great success. Since 1965, Singer has been accompanying the illustrious songstress Valentina Levko (a mezzosoprano). He accompanied her on concert tours around the USA, England, Japan, the Philippines, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

Many records made by Singer with instrumentalists and songsters have been kept at the "Melody" studio and on Russian radio. Today, they belong by right to the "golden fund" of Russian music.

Gregory Singer was a very modest man. Therefore his compositions were much less known than his concert activities. But he was always composing. Here are some of his musical compositions: Vocal Cycles on verses of Prever and Maykovsky; the cycle "At the Bright Brook" on themes from French folk songs; compositions for piano, amongst them the concert, the toccata, the pieces; instrumental music, three string quartets, two sonatas for cello, compositions for violin, flute, contrabass, etc.

Singer wrote many adaptations and arrangements of musical compositions and original compositions for children. He arranged music of Prokofiev to "Eugene Onegin", he created a musical setting to his "Egyptian nights" and "Antonio and Cleopatra".

Psychological depth, thoroughly styled finishing, adherence to the manner of the composer's style are typical of Singer's music.

Singer lived in a tragic age. He himself was a man of tragic destiny. In my opinion, the oppressive political conditions of Singer's life were a severe impediment to his assuming his rightful place as a world-class musician and composer in the musical heritage of Russia.

From The Album of The Past



*The Jewish Company Of The Shanghai Volunteer Corps at The Rifle Range, Shanghai.
Prior To The Shooting Competition' 1940/1941.*

IGUD YOTZEI SIN BULLETIN – English Supplement – ISSN 0793-8365

THE IYS BULLETIN (Russian, English, Hebrew), (approximately 250 pages per issue), all aspects of Jewish communities of China, historical, memories, book reviews, archival information, current lives of individual Jews (China expatriates) worldwide. Continuous Publication since 1954

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"The aim of the Association is to organize the former residents from the Far East for the purpose of mutual assistance and cooperation."
(from the by-laws of the Association)

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1. To promote a sense of community among the former Jewish residents in China.
2. To maintain a channel of communication for the members of the above community
3. To assist in collecting, preserving and publishing historical materials dealing with the life of the above community.
4. To assist IYS in meeting its goals, particularly those dealing with social assistance and educational stipends to members of the above community living in Israel.