



Bulletin

Igud Yotzei Sin

Association of Former Residents of China

July-August 2008 ♦ Vol LV ♦ Issue No. 396 English Supplement

A GET-TOGETHER OF OUR LANDSMEN IN HAIFA



A get-together of former residents of China who live in Haifa and the Northern part of Israel took place in the "Nof" hotel on June 16, 2008.

The officials of the Embassy of China visited Amikam



Eiran Rosen tells the story of Amikam



In the hall of the library



Visit to the aqueduct in Caesaria



At the monument to heroes who fell in the wars of Israel



At the memorial board of our compatriot Ron Tandet who met death like a hero in the ranks of the Israeli army

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THEMES OF THE DAY

By Teddy Kaufman *China and the Jews*

This year in August the Olympic Games will be held in Beijing, the capital of China. Correcting a historical error these Games will, first time ever, take place in this great country. The Israeli delegation and numerous Jewish sportsmen from many countries, together with thousands of Jewish tourists from Israel and from all over the world, will attend the Games.

All those arriving in China during the month of August should be aware of the brief but momentous history of the Jewish life in contemporary China, that short but truly exceptional story of our people beyond the Great Wall of China.

By the end of the Opium War in 1842, the first Jews from Iraq (called Baghdadis) settled in Shanghai. They founded a Sephardic Jewish community which flourished in this great city from 1842 until 1963, and contributed significantly to the development and building of Shanghai.

Coinciding with that, in the course of 65 years from 1898, the beginning of the construction of the East China Railway, and until the year 1963 the dynamic Jewish community of Harbin should also be mentioned. In a number of other cities of the north-eastern provinces located in the territory of former Manchuria additional Jewish communities existed, as well.

The influx of the Jewish refugees from Europe in the second half of 1930's from Germany, Austria, Poland, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia and other countries, created new communities which existed from 1935 to 1949. Approximately twenty thousand refugees found a safe haven in Shanghai, and another three hundred in Harbin and Tianjin.

During the 120 years of Jewish life in modern China, waves of Jewish refugees from Russia and Europe found sanctuary in Chinese cities. The accepted fact is that twenty thousand refugees escaped to China at the outbreak of the Second World War. It's true, but it's not the whole story. From the beginning of the 20th century many refugees arrived from Russia. They fled from the south of Russia in 1904 as a result of pogroms, and then in 1914 as

a result of deportations from the frontline at the beginning of the First World War. From the year 1917 there was a flood of refugees as a consequence of the Revolution, Civil War and pogroms carried out by both the Red troops and the White troops. So actually, close to 50 thousand Jews from Russia found refuge in China.

It should be emphasized that the people of China and the governments of various regimes have never obstructed the civil or the religious rights of the Jews in any way. Today, after the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between China and Israel, the Chinese government is investing in the preservation of the Jewish past in China.

The synagogues in Shanghai and Harbin have been restored, and so has the Jewish cemetery in Harbin. Furthermore, exhibitions dedicated to the history of the Jewish communities in Shanghai and Harbin are constantly held. Numerous albums in Chinese and English, describing the life of Jews in China, are being published and centers devoted to the study of the Jewish history in China have been founded in cities like Nanjing, Shanghai, Harbin, Kaifeng, and Jinan in the Shandong province. All these are a testimony to the positive attitude of China to Jews in the past and the present.

The Jewish sportsmen and tourists, many of whom will be visiting China for the first time, are traveling to a country which has never known anti-Semitism, a country which welcomed Jews in the most difficult and trying times for our people. This should be remembered not only by us, born in China and its former residents, but this fact should be inscribed in letters of gold in the chronicles of the Jewish people.

We should forever remember and never forget the evil inflicted on our people in Europe during the terrible period of the Nazi regime. However, we should also forever remember and never forget that during those dark times there were countries and people who offered a sanctuary to our brothers. Such a country and such a people was China and the Chinese people.

From The Album of The Past

Tientsin Jewish School - 1944



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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

"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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In publishing the Bulletin the IYS in Israel aims to meet the following needs:

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.

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Portrait of Misha Kogan
by artist
L. Smushkovitch

Scholarship Fund in Memory of Misha Kogan

Scholarships to 50 students
every year

The Misha Kogan Social Aid Fund

Monthly social aid to 20 families

The Funds were established

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
MISHA KOGAN

by his wife
ASYA KOGAN
(Tokyo)

My China

by Amram Olmert

The book "My China" is about to be published by Amram Olmert. In his book Amram Olmert describes the 90 year connection between the Olmert family and China, and his own personal 20 year direct ties with China.

The book presents a personal and non intermediary expression of events experienced by Amram Olmert during his many years of activity in China.

During his stay in China Amram Olmert established the first Israeli model agricultural farm in China. In addition, the two other farms he set up served as a base for the export of the Israeli agricultural technology to China.

In his book Amram Olmert depicts his years of service as a senior diplomat

in China. He portrays the Harbin Jewry, and underlines the role played by Igud Yotzei Sin in preserving the heritage of the Harbin Jewry and China.

The book deals with a wide range of subjects such as; customs, unique sites to visit, various encounters with Chinese from all walks of life in the society and the government. He also describes the beneficial activities of different Jews in China and evaluates various approaches to business ties between China and Israel, with their chances of success.

The Chinese Ambassador to Israel (2000-2004), His Excellency Mr. Chin Long Yong, wrote an introduction to the book.

The book will be published before the coming Olympic Games in August.

People and Events

The Rashinsky family celebrates a happy event

Our good friend Rafi Rashinsky formerly of Harbin and his wife Edna recently celebrated a happy event – the birth of a granddaughter. The newly born is the daughter of Niva (nee Rashinsky) and Eitan Nave.

IYS congratulates both families with the happy event.

A Happy Event in the Zilberg Family

Meefa (nee Goldberg) and Boris Zilberg, formerly of Shanghai, became great grandparents to Omer Igud Yotzei Sin sends the Zilbergs and all their family Mazal Tov and best wishes.

A Happy Event in the Shafran Family

Eva Shafran from Hongkew, Shanghai, the widow of our dear and good friend the late Boris Shafran (Harbin, Shanghai) became a great grandmother to Snir born to Yaniv and Yefet Sheerit



and grandparents Dorit (nee Shafran) and Nissim Sheerit.

Snir was born on the day his late great grandfather Boris would have been 88 years old.

Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Eva and her family with the happy event.

GET-TOGETHER OF FRIENDS

On June 22 a regular get-together took

place at the “Beit-Ponve” club. The get-together was attended by our landmen from abroad. In the picture from right to left are Flora (nee Klarer) and Bob Freiman of Australia, T. Kaufman, Prof. Peter Berton (Zaika Berstein) of Los Angeles, Freddy Heiman of Haifa and Misha Fleischmann of Ramat-Gan.

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS: SOCIAL AID TO LANDSMEN

Dear Friends,

Rosh Hashana is approaching, and Igud Yotzei Sin, as in previous years, continues to give additional sums of money to the recipients of monthly social aid. We do it twice a year: for Rosh Hashana and Pessah. According to our data for June 1, 2008 we grant monthly social aid to 87 needy landmen. Mostly, they are elderly, lonely or ailing people, part of them are new immigrants from the former USSR who left China either when the Far-Eastern Railway employees were evacuated, or after the year 1946. The situation of many of our landmen is very grave, and without IYS' assistance they would not be able to make ends meet. In recent years, the number of contributors has dwindled, both in Israel and abroad, and, therefore, the sums of money that we get for the Social Aid Fund have become considerably smaller. Nevertheless, the number of the needy remains as high as ever. Our social aid totals US\$ 100,000 per a year. Herewith we apply to you with a request to donate to the Social Aid Fund in lieu of flowers to Pessah and to other holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and other family occasions, or any other festive dates. We will also send a proper notification to the person in whose honor the donation is given. We are aware that our contributors will derive great satisfaction from participating in the noble cause of helping our needy. Flowers wither soon but a good deed lasts long. Your help will make the days of elderly and lonely persons brighter.

Please, send your donation to the following address:

Igud Yotzei Sin
P.O.B. 29786
Tel Aviv 61297

**With friendly regards and all the best wishes for Rosh Hashana,
Board of Directors of IYS**

Chairman:
T.Kaufman
Deputy Chairman and Treasurer:
J. Klein

With gratitude and joy we are celebrating Joe's 85th Birthday.

To honor a life well led, the Wainer family
would like to donate \$850 to the Synagogue Fund.

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The Board of Directors of Igud Yotzei Sin congratulate Joe Wainer on his
85th Birthday and wish him good health and happiness till 120!

To our very dear brother-in-law and uncle

Joe Wainer

We send our love and very best wishes on your 85th birthday.

May you enjoy many happy returns!

Rasha and Teddy Kaufman

Bella and Avram Goldreich

Ella Goldreich

Ella and Adam Alon Goldreich

Sandra, Even, Michael, Jonathan and Molly Roklen

Tania, Roy, Daniel and Adar Zuretz

ASYA KOGAN: DREAMS DO COME TRUE

ASYA'S DREAM CELEBRATES THE 8TH BIRTHDAY

When Mrs. Asya Kogan was a little girl, she had a dream: she was holding a large spoon and feeding the needy. The years passed, but Asya never forgot her dream. It is said that dreams sometimes do come true, and such was the case with Asya's dream.



At the entrance to "Asya's Dream"

Asya's Dream

Eight years have passed since the establishment of Asya's soup kitchen in Ramle, lovingly and fittingly called "Asya's Dream". Until today, 584,000(!) hot meals have been served there, with over 200 meals

provided daily. The meals consist of a portion of meat, chicken or fish, with side dishes of potatoes, rice, pasta or couscous, steamed vegetables, salad, fresh fruit, bread, cake and beverage. one hundred meals are distributed daily on specially heated trays straight to the homes of the elderly and needy in the city who are unable to come to the soup kitchen. The distribution of the food – either to the soup kitchen or to the homes - is done in conjunction with the Department of Social Welfare of the Municipality of Ramle.

Human Kindness and Warmth

During one of her visits, Mrs. Asya Kogan, Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre's foremost donor, asked to be able to realize her dream. The hospital immediately responded to her request and suggested a project to the Mayor of Ramle, Mr. Yoel Lavie, who was

delighted with and embraced the initiative. The Municipality set aside a suitable building in the Bar Giora neighbourhood and, with Asya's assistance, it was renovated and the soup kitchen was established.

The food is prepared in the kitchens at Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre according to the specifications of a dietician. A special vehicle for transporting food needing refrigeration was purchased and the food is conveyed from Assaf Harofeh to the soup kitchen every day. There, the food is heated and served to the elderly who come daily for their main meal. The remaining meals are delivered in this vehicle directly to the homes.

During the mornings and evenings, the building serves as a Golden Age Clubhouse where the elderly meet and participate in various activities. For those who live alone and who are lonely, this venue provides them with their only opportunity to get out and socialize. And, of course, at noon, lunch is served.



A refrigerator pickup - Asya's gift

Thank you

Mrs. Asya Kogan, nee Kachanovsky, is already an octogenarian herself, but her tireless efforts on behalf of the State of Israel, the people of Israel, in general, and the residents of our



Mrs. Asya Kogan with the diners of "Asya's Dream"



Near the plaque in memory of the Kachanovsky parents. Second from left: Asya's sister Nelly Avinami. Standing next are Dr. Moshe Voron, Asya and Mr. Yoel Lavie, the Mayor of the city of Ramle



Mrs. Asya Kogan with Dr. Benjamin Davidson, the hospital director

area, in particular, would tire much younger persons than herself. It is true that she lives in far away Tokyo, but her heart is here and the soup kitchen she established is just one shining example of her many-faceted activities. Everyone who comes to Assaf Harofeh is exposed, either consciously or subconsciously, to her ongoing philanthropy: the Pediatric Hospital, the Operating Theatres and Recovery Rooms, the Gynecology Building, Obstetrics, the Heart Institute, the Ears, Nose and Throat Department, the Delivery Ward, up-to-date medical equipment, the



Mrs. Asya Kogan with the diners of "Asya's Dream"

new Computerized Tomography, equipment etc. On behalf of the tens of thousands of residents whom she has touched with her kindness and incredible generosity, there is only one thing left to say:
Thank you.



Visit to the club

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

Chapter 11 Section D

There is no end to “events” and “happenings” in the camp. Scandals and fistfights are daily occurrences; some times they end up in murder. One of the prisoners, whose “job” was to transfer notes between the men’s and the women’s areas failed in his job when throwing a batch of notes to the woman’s area, the notes fell in a forbidden area between the fences enclosing the women’s area and the men’s area, The width of this “no man’s land” was about 3 meters. The prisoner tried to fish this batch of notes out of this forbidden area but while doing so he was seen by the guards and the batch of notes was confiscated by the authorities that started to investigate the identities of the writers of the notes. However the notes were signed by the first names only and it was impossible to determine who actually were the writers. However, 20 prisoners were detained and confined to prison for being in contact with women inmates.

Several days later a major scandal erupted when 15 men from the men’s area climbed over the wall into the women’s area. The guards were alerted to this a little too late and had to summon the officers. Meanwhile the boys locked themselves in one of the barracks and spent some pleasant moments with their girlfriends. The officers who arrived with a unit of soldiers demanded that the men leave the barrack immediately but the men refused to carry out the order. The authorities did not have the courage to evict them forcefully as they knew very well that the prisoners were armed with knives and daggers and



were capable of anything. By dawn, the men returned to their area by the same way they came where they were arrested. However prison cells do not scare the men easily and the guards too are overly lenient to them.

After about two weeks some of the girls crossed the barrier into the men’s quarters and by morning returned back to their area. Due to these incidents the camp authorities decided to build a high voltage electric fence over the wall. Then only, no one dared to cross the wall again.

Many misunderstandings occur between the camp authorities and the prisoners of various faiths and religious sects: “Subbothnicks” (Saturday adherents), “Adventists”, “Jehovah’s witnesses”, “Jesus’ Adherents” and many other small sects. Among them were “Christians for Zion” who referred to themselves as “Zionists”, one adherent to this sect visited me and related to me the principles of their beliefs. His explanations were very confused and simplistic: “The truth will emerge

from Zion, from the land where Jesus preached. The children of Israel shall return to Zion, and all the human race shall, including the Jews, embrace the Christian faith”.

The authorities without any reason oppressed all the prisoners of these various sects. Their crosses were confiscated from them, this caused riots and commotions. After the crosses were confiscated they tattooed the sign of the cross on their chests. On Christian holidays the members of the sects did not go to work, because of this they were confined to solitary confinement. The “Subbothnicks” did not work Saturdays and were dragged forcefully, but they used to sprawl on the floor screaming “I shall not go”. They too were confined to solitary confinement. One of these “Subbothnicks” worked in the hospital clinic as a paramedic. This man was serving a sentence of ten years in work camp for anti-revolutionary activities. He wore a long beard, which angered the authorities and they had him shaved forcefully. This paramedic did not work on Saturdays. And the clinic doctor overlooked this matter and let him continue with these weekly absences. One day the commander of the sanitary department got wind of these absences and issued an order that the paramedic be jailed for ten days. After serving those ten days he returned to work, but never agreed, at any cost, to work on Saturdays. Several days later he was transferred to work at hard labor at the quarries. I often met these Saturday Adherents, most of them were settlers from Siberia, but, among them, were

also residents of Central Russia, the descendents of the “secluded ones” that lived in Russia in 18th and 17th Centuries. They were persecuted by the Tsars of these periods. But even now, under the rule of those who proclaimed to establish freedom of worship for everyone, they were not included.

The interior prison of this camp was very small, it comprised 26 cots attached to the wall, but as time passed more and more prisoners were jailed there, as a result a bigger prison was built in the camp. The inmates called this building “Petro-Pavlovsk Castle”. When some prisoner in this jail became seriously ill I was usually called to tend to him. A “free” doctor, and the commander of the sanitary department, usually accompanied me. I used to examine the patient and recommend whether he should be sent to the hospital, the commander, however, decided on yes or no. The final decision was not in my hands, as I too was a prisoner and therefore under suspicion in the eyes of the authorities that my decision might be too lenient and merciful. Many times I found myself in a difficult situation as many prisoners were just pretending to be very ill, especially among the criminal prisoners. The conditions in this prison were terrible - filth, lice, rats. The food rations were 300 grams of bread a day and sour cabbage, twice a week – that’s all the food the prisoners received. One day I was summoned to the jail and as usual, was accompanied by the commander of the sanitary department and a paramedic. Ten inmates complained of being ill and requested to be seen by a doctor. The commander decided that only three of the prisoners are in need of hospitalization, while the rest are only pretending to be ill. The prisoners immediately raised a scandal. I told the commander that it would be advisable to examine all those complaining of illness that perhaps a few of the others might really be ill “Don’t pity them”

replied the commander “The camp commandant told me that they are just pretending...they do not have anything, all this is just pretence”. Nevertheless I examined all the complainants, and two additional ones. One of them was diagnosed with infectious jaundice who, was also transferred to the hospital to my ward. The commander made it my responsibility to see that they would not escape from the hospital. I answered, that I cannot take this responsibility on myself as there are no guards or overseers in the hospital and my responsibility is to cure the ill and not to guard them. That same day I went to the hospital commander and repeated again what I said previously that I couldn’t take the responsibility put on me about the possibility of the escape of the prisoners. Two weeks later I was informed that one of the rooms in my ward would be turned into a closed jail room. In one of the rooms they installed double doors with an iron bolt and iron gratings over the windows, and the room was turned into a real prison cell. On the next day one of the prisoners was confined to this cell, a Ukrainian that was imprisoned in the camp jail and fell ill there. He was taken to the hospital by the demand of his fellow prisoners, who caused a minor riot screaming that he was “moribund”. One of the overseers had a key to this cell, he used to open that door three times a day to bring food to the prisoners, and I then had the opportunity to check the patients in this cell. On the next day the prison commander demanded that I do not keep that patient not even a day longer than necessary, while the patient himself, on the other hand, was raving in this room demanding that I come to him as “his fever has gone up to over 40 degrees and he will soon die”. This is of course was not true at all, his fever was completely normal and it was clear to me that he was pretending to be ill. But, earlier that day two of

the criminal leaders, also Ukrainians, called me to their barrack, seated me between them and one of them said to me:

“We have a matter to talk to you about doctor... do not hurry to release our colleague from the hospital, it would be better that he remain with you for about two weeks more...this is necessary, do you understand?”

I explained to them that their friend was not sick at all, and the commander of the hospital was demanding of me to release him from the hospital, no matter what.

“What can I do? I too am a prisoner like yourselves”.

“What we are asking of you is not just for ourselves” was their response “but in the name of all the Ukrainian prisoners... we know what we are asking... understand?”

On that same day I received strict orders to remove that patient immediately from the hospital cell. When I suggested that he should remain a few more days so as to have him checked another time, this was rebuffed too. I then told the superintendent “If this is what you want, please write in his ‘illness report’ form that the patient is being released according to your instructions”. The superintendent did not answer and without looking at me exited the room. I left the patient in this room for one more week, but the whole matter caused me a lot of worries.

The load of work enforced upon me was growing heavier by the day. I was appointed to be the head doctor for internal ailments and advisor for the whole hospital. Every day I am called to various departments and I participate daily in advisory meetings of the hospital doctors. I am also called from time to time to treat patients outside the hospital area. And on top of that my ward, for contagious illnesses, is overcrowded with sick patients.

One day a rumor circulated in the camp that the “history” and

sentences of all the prisoners were being reviewed by the authorities. Everyone is hoping that his case will be rechecked too and his innocence will come up like oil floating in the sea and they will be released from prison. One day, the "Ophir" called me too and started interrogating me like they did in earlier days: Where I was arrested, according to which paragraph, where I lived, what my employment was, in which school I studied and to what political party I was affiliated. The interrogation lasted for four hours.

What was the purpose of all this questioning, after I have already been in prison for seven years? The interrogator called me several more times. Once he asked me about one person from Harbin. He wanted to know about his "Anti Soviet" activities.

"I know nothing about this," I answered. The interrogator was not satisfied with my answer but wrote it down. Once he asked about another person and his activities with the "Brit Trumpeldor sabotage and espionage" organization. Again I answered that I knew nothing about this person and "Brit Trumpeldor" did not deal with all the things he mentioned. For what purpose and why did they remember, after so many years, to ask about these people? Were they perhaps arrested?

The regime in this camp is becoming stricter by the day. Every two weeks searches are carried out in the prisoner's barracks and the hospital, the searches are especially more severe before the holidays on the 7th of October and the 1st of May. They are searching for firearms, daggers, and iron rods. In every room they stick their feelers into the floor in the hope of revealing anything unusual. Before the holidays every piece of glass, bottle, self made knives and forks are confiscated from the prisoners. Knives or forks are not to be found in the camp or the prison, and the inmates are given a spoon only.

In one of the searches they took from the doctors even the medical books that were in their possession. After the dispute with Tito they began to check all the books and pamphlets and to tear out all the pages where his name was mentioned. In the meager library of the camp they used to cross out all the names of the authors that were arrested and serving prison terms. For example, in the book by Prof. Plitneev "Ailments of the Blood", his name was erased and only the title "Professor" remained.

Murders in the camp are increasing. One day an "elder" of one of the barracks was murdered. There were rumors that he used to inform the authorities on his prison mates, so they murdered him. A horrifying murder occurred in my barrack, in the hospital. One day about noon two men came to the hospital and turned to my ward, The man on duty, an old Greek, who tried to bar their entrance, was pushed aside by them and they entered one of the rooms and asked loudly:

"Who is L'?

When L' answered, one of the men approached him and started to stab him in all parts of his body while the second man stayed at the entrance as a look out. When they completed their bloody work they walked through the corridor with one of them holding a dagger covered in blood. The corridor was full of people, but all of them cringed in terror and fear and did not move from their places. Outside the barrack the two men walked past supervisors, prison guards and the duty officer but they all ran aside and hid. One of the murderers ran away while the other walked in the direction of the command building, went in and informed them that he had just murdered L'. In his interrogation it transpired that he carried out a death sentence imposed on him by a Ukrainian organization in the camp. The victim too was a member of this organization but secretly acted against it, and was,

consequently sentenced to death by them. Despite all their efforts the authorities could not determine the identity of the accomplice. The murderer was sentenced to a jail term of 15 years. At that time there was no death sentences in the Soviet Union. In time, however, the death sentence was reinstated and every one of the thousands of prisoners in the camp had to confirm in writing that it was brought to his attention that the death sentence would be imposed on any one to be found guilty of murder.

To be continued

Anne Frank Exhibition in Hong Kong

The final details are being looked after in preparation for the opening of the Anne Frank Photographic Diary Exhibition. The one month long exhibition will open its doors to the public on 8 November. Approximately three thousand five hundred students have been registered for the event. Additional schools have since requested slots and the committee is doing their best to accommodate them.

The intent was for this exhibit to reach as many local residents as possible in order to open their eyes to the atrocities committed by the Germans during the Holocaust. In addition to the school field-trips, speakers will be making visits to local schools and there is a series of lectures and workshops being presented as well. Some of the supplemental programme highlights include a discussion by Rabbi Abraham Cooper on the 12 & 17 November, educational programming coordinated by directors from the Anne Frank UK trust, and the screening of the Anne Frank Remembered film at Hong Kong's IFC cinema on 25 November. The aim is to involve as many people as possible and allow them to witness for themselves.

Jewish Times Asia

A Chinese Jewish Wedding... in Jerusalem

by INN Staff

In a joyous ceremony held at Jerusalem's Great Synagogue Thursday night, a descendant of the once-flourishing Jewish community of Kaifeng, China, was married under the hupah (wedding canopy) to a recent immigrant from the United States.

Shoshana Rebecca Li, 29, made Aliyah [immigrated to Israel] two years ago from China, and recently underwent formal conversion by Israel's Chief Rabbinate. "For me, to have a proper religious Jewish wedding in Israel, it is a dream come true. I am very excited," Li said prior to the ceremony. "I was raised knowing that I am a Jew and I made Aliyah because of our tradition."

Li's husband, Ami Emmanuel, 25, arrived in Israel two years ago from Florida after studying film and directing. "No one in the world is as happy as I am," said Emmanuel. "I thought it impossible to marry a Jewish woman from China. However, it seems miracles do happen, and this is the biggest miracle of my life."

The newlywed couple plan to make their home on Kibbutz Ketura in

Israel's Arava region, north of Eilat. More than 150 friends and relatives took part in the wedding festivities, which were organized by Shavei Israel Chairman Michael Freund. The Shavei Israel organization, which helped arrange Shoshana's Aliyah, assists "lost Jews" seeking to return to the Jewish people. "This wedding symbolizes the beginning of the return of the remnants of the Jewish community of Kaifeng, China to the Jewish people and to the State of Israel," Freund said.

Jews first settled in Kaifeng, China, over 1,000 years ago when it was an important stop along the Silk Route. The community flourished, and numbered as many as 5,000 people during the Middle Ages. After the last rabbi of Kaifeng died in the first half of the 19th century, assimilation and intermarriage took their toll, eventually leading to the collapse of the community. Nonetheless, around 700 to 1,000 Jewish descendants still live today in Kaifeng, and many of them are seeking to reclaim their Jewish identity

"150 years after the Kaifeng Jewish

community essentially ceased to exist," Freund said, "a wonderful young woman descended from that community is getting married to a new immigrant from the United States under a Jewish wedding canopy in Jerusalem. I cannot think of a more poignant example of *kibbutz galuyot* – the Ingathering of the Exiles."

Based in Jerusalem, Shavei Israel works with various groups around the world that have a historical connection with the Jewish people. These include the Bnei Menashe of northeastern India, who claim descent from a lost tribe of Israel, the Bnai Anousim ("Marranos") of Spain, Portugal and South America, the Subbotnik Jews of Russia, and the "Hidden Jews" of Poland from the time of the Holocaust. The organization also assists with the absorption of new immigrants in Israel, including providing assistance with housing, employment, and professional training. For more information, contact office@shavei.org.

New Guangzhou Chabad Centre Opens

Chabad Guangzhou has opened its new permanent location just in time for the Canton Fair. The new community centre will announce a formal dedication ceremony soon.

The Centre is already up and running and hard at work serving up meals in their new Glatt Kosher restaurant, to the throngs of Jewish businessmen in town for the Fair. They are utilizing their new catering capabilities and space to its full capacity.

The new premise replaces their

temporary location and it is fitted with all the modern conveniences including a beautiful new mikveh and a Sunday school. Rabbi Eliyahu Rozenberg, who runs the centre with his wife Pnina, is guaranteed a full house of worship.

Jewish Times Asia

Legends of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng

18. Where is Israel

Even though neither he nor his parents nor his grandparents have ever seen the land of their forefathers, a child claims Israel as his homeland – and in doing so reveals his family's origin.

The incident related in this chapter occurred in the late 1930s, during China's war with Japan, when many people from areas threatened by the enemy had relocated to inland cities like Kaifeng to escape the invaders.

It was the first day of September, the traditional date for Chinese boys and girls who had reached school age to go to school for the first time. The elementary school near the Earth Market Street in Kaifeng was filled with people. Over forty boys and girls, accompanied by their parents, were waiting eagerly, filled with anticipation because everything seemed so new and interesting. Among them was a boy of seven named Shi Yulian. He was a member of the Shi family, one of the seven Jewish families whose surnames had been bestowed upon them by the Song emperor more than seven hundred years before. He was accompanied by his mother, since his father, a shop owner, was occupied with his business.

"My child," his mother said quietly, "Class will begin shortly. Be good at school and be friendly with your classmates."

"Yes, Mom, I will," said he. "You may go home now. Please don't come to pick me up. I'm a bib boy and know my way home."

"OK. But be careful on your way home. Bye-bye."

"Bye, Mom."



Shi Ylian had long been looking forward to going to school and was very happy to be there at last. Along with the other children, he took a seat in the classroom and wondered what would happen next.

A young woman walked in when the bell rang. She was their teacher.]

"Good morning, boys and girls," she greeted the class with a smile on her face.

"Good morning, Miss Wang." All the pupils stood up to salute their teacher.

"Sit down, please," said she. "Today is the first day of your schooling. I am very happy to be your first teacher."

All the kids listened attentively.

"From today on, we are all brothers and sisters. Now I want each of you to tell me and your friends in the class your name, your home address, and where you are from, so that we will know one another. OK?"

"Fine," they all said.

"Let's start with you. Is that all right?" She pointed to a boy sitting

on the left of the front row.

"My name is Wang Jiang," he stood up and said loudly. "I live on South Gate Street. My hometown is right here, in Kaifeng."

"Thank you, Wang Jiang. Sit down, please. Next." The teacher looked at the girl next to him.

"My name is Li Hua," the girl stood up and said quietly. "I live on Peony Street. But my family is from Peking."

"Why has your family come to Kaifeng, then?" The teacher asked.

"Because the Japanese occupied Peking. So my family came here two years ago."

"Thank you, Li Hua. Sit down, please."

The process went on. Now it was Shi Yulian's turn.

"My name is Shi Yulian." He stood up and began to introduce himself.

"I live on Earth Market Street, not far from here. My family is from ..."

He hesitated for a moment and then remembered what his mother had so often told him.

"My family is from Israel."

The whole class burst into laughter at the word "Israel". It was such a strange word; they had never heard it before. Moreover, they had never heard of a place called Israel.

But Shi was puzzled. He did not understand why his classmates were laughing at him.

"What's wrong?" He wondered.

A very bold boy sitting at the back of the room was so surprised that he could not help asking: "Did you say your family is from Yi-ci-li? He

could not pronounce the word Israel properly.

"Yes, that's right." Shi did not catch the meaning of the question.

"Then, tell us where Yi-ci-li is." The boy said.

Now Shi was in great trouble. He was at a total loss and did not know what to say because he had never asked his mother where Israel was. He had simply accepted it without question when his mother told him that they were Jews and that their ancestors had come to China from Israel.

"Uh ...uh ...," he blushed at the thought. But he did not want to give in.

"My mother says our family is from Israel. You may go and ask her if you don't believe me." But his voice became lower and lower.

The whole class laughed again.

"Don't be silly, Shi Yulian." Now came the teacher's voice.

"There is no such place in the world." She said this because she too had never heard of Israel.

"But don't feel bad. Go back home and ask your mother when school is over. Next time you can tell us where your family is from."

But the teacher's comforting words made Shi even more ashamed. It sounded as if he did not know anything at all. He wished that his mother were there to prove that what he had said was true and accurate. Unfortunately, his mother was not there and nobody could help him. He sat down silently. He was so sad that he was on the verge of tears. He tried very hard not to cry because he knew his classmates would laugh even more if he cried.

When the bell chimed, the class took its recess. The children went outside. Shi's little friends had not forgotten what he had said in class. Some of them were very naughty; just for fun, they began calling him "Israel". All of a sudden, a group of kids surrounded him and began to sing. Israel, Israel.

Please tell us,
Where is Israel?
Where is Israel?

This was the last straw, and he could no longer stand the insult. Feeling deeply humiliated, he dashed into the classroom, took his school bag, and fled home.

His mother was in the kitchen preparing lunch for the family when he entered. She was surprised when she unexpectedly heard the front door being kicked open and something being thrown to the floor. She hurried out of the kitchen. Before she reached the yard, she heard her son shouting at the top of his voice:

"Mom, where are you? You are a bad mom!"

She was surprised to see him back so early and astonished to see him so upset.

"What's the matter, dear? What's wrong with you?" she asked.

The boy threw himself at his mother when he saw her and began to cry.

"You are a bad mom. You are a bad mom," he repeated.

"Tell mom what has happened." She held him in her arms.

He did not answer but just cried.

"Did anyone bully you at school?"

"No."

"Then what's wrong?"

"It's you who made me ashamed," he finally poured out.

"What did I do?" his mother was puzzled.

Now he stopped crying. "Didn't you tell me our family is from Israel?"

"Yes. That's right."

"But everybody at school laughed at me when I told them that. Even the teacher said it was nonsense. She says there is no such place in the world. Everyone laughed at me and some called me Israel." He told the whole story to his mother.

"Oh, you're a silly little boy." Now his mother began to understand.

"Why am I silly? It's what you told me."

"Yes, a family secret. We must remember it ourselves but not tell others."

"Why?"

"Because it is only a family matter."

He did not understand the reason given by his mother. But he asked another question: "Is our family really from Israel?"

"Oh, yes."

"But how do you know?"

"My mother told me."

"Do you know where it is?" He suddenly remembered his classmate's question.

"It's in the West."

"Have you been there?"

"No. None of us has ever been there."

"How come?"

"We're not allowed."

Then the mother began to tell him the story of their people. Finally, she said to him, "So we are Jews. We are originally from Israel. But it's a family matter. Just keep it in your heart. Don't tell anyone else. Understand?" He did not say anything but nodded his head.

The story was not completely new to him because he had been told it many times before. But this time he seemed to understand a lot more.

"Then what should I say when people ask where we're from?" he said.

"Just tell them we're from Kaifeng."

"I see."

"Why did my teacher say there is no such place in the world?" He asked his mother when he recalled what the teacher had said in class.

"Oh, Israel is an ancient name. Now the country is called Palestine. But to us, it is always the land of Israel."

"Why is it always the land of Israel?"

"That's what our ancestors always called it." He was deep in thought while repeating the words.

The Ghosts of Shanghai

By Ron Gluckman/Shanghai

A vibrant Jewish community appeared on the banks of the Huangpu River in old Shanghai, for a brief flash in history. Now scholars and former refugees of this amazing enclave are trying to make sense of it all

YU WEIDONG BRINGS HIS bicycle to a stop alongside a corner dress shop. On the wall behind three mannequins is a tiny brass plaque. Puffing with excitement, Yu recites the inscription, a memorial to his favorite Shanghai ghosts. Three weeks later, on the other side of the world, Judith Moranz rests her head upon her husband Karl's shoulder. Time peels away in Las Vegas's MGM Grand Hotel ballroom as they sway to big band tunes, soundtracks of their youth. Her eyes grow misty. The songs are sentimental favorites from wartime America, but they take Moranz back to that same street corner in Shanghai.

Moranz was eight years old when she left Shanghai in 1949, decades before Yu was born. They have never met, but are linked in an odd way. Yu has spent his life studying people like the Moranzes and the couples dancing around them. In Vegas, they look like average tourists. Yu, though, sees them as holy spirits of a rich and mysterious age. A half century ago, they inhabited an intriguing corner of China: Shanghai's boisterous Jewish ghetto. Viennese gentlemen sipped coffee outside Austrian bakeries so authentic that the neighborhood was called Little Vienna. Nearby were kosher butcher shops and German delicatessens. Diners read Shanghai papers printed in German,

Polish, even Yiddish. Candles for Jewish holidays were sold nearby at Abraham's Dry Goods, and the tango was danced nightly at Max Sperber's Silk Hat.

A unique Jewish community once thrived in Shanghai, where Jews had worked since the opening of China's largest treaty port in 1842. A century later, European Jews fleeing Adolf Hitler poured into Shanghai where, even among the large international settlements, they stood out, a distinct community with its own hospitals, theaters, schools and sports leagues. Life wasn't always jolly, of course. Jewish refugees were later herded into Hongkou ghetto in the city's northeast, where food was scarce and disease rampant. But in Shanghai, unlike much of the world, nearly all the Jews survived the war.

Shanghai's role as savior of these souls is the stuff of classic cinema -- indeed, many books and films are being produced to tell a tale that makes Schindler's List pale in comparison. Before and during World War II, some of Shanghai's richest men conspired to save tens of thousands of Jews. Exactly how many is not known, but some historians say Shanghai saved more Jews from the Nazi Holocaust than all Commonwealth countries combined. Among them were hundreds of religious scholars. A wartime chaplain in Shanghai wrote that 500 scholars in Shanghai maintained the nearly 6,000-year tradition of Jewish teaching, making it at that time one of the world's great Jewish cities. Ironically, this remarkable religious community

vanished even more rapidly than it took root. When civil war enveloped China, the refugees fled again. By the end of the 1950s, Shanghai's synagogues were shuttered and its Jews gone.

And that should have been the end to this little-known tale. But, in another twist to the saga, about a decade ago Jewish culture returned to China, where religion has been suppressed for half a century. Stories from the Talmud are being retold and Hebrew scriptures studied again. Most remarkable of all, Shanghai's new Jewish scholars are all Chinese. Yu is one of them. He is a graduate of China's first Jewish-studies program, which was pioneering in every way. Students used old Hebrew newspapers and concocted lessons themselves when no Jewish teachers could be found. Five other students joined the pilot program of Jewish and Hebrew studies launched by Peking University in the mid-1980s. The other students later went abroad, to Israel or the U.S., leaving Yu with an odd distinction: he's probably the sole Hebrew-speaking college graduate in a country of 1.2 billion people.

For years that distinction was meaningless. Yu found some work as a tour guide for a trickle of curious American Jews seeking what signs remained of the Jewish community in Shanghai. Yu also practiced Hebrew with visitors from Israel. But, up until a few years ago, they were even rarer. China and Israel, two ancient nations reborn after World War II, lacked ties until 1992. Since then, there has

been a steady increase in exchanges between sinologists studying Shanghai's Jewish community, and the local academics who are trying to make sense of the odd little Jewish settlement that flourished in their midst. "We have to rescue this history," insists Xu Buzeng, 70-year-old doyen of Jewish scholars in Shanghai, who realized a lifelong dream last fall when he visited Israel on a fellowship to Hebrew University. "We must research and write about this rich period of our history," he says. "Otherwise, in 10 to 20 years, when we are gone, this history will be lost forever."

Also desperate to salvage Shanghai's Jewish heritage are thousands of survivors of the wartime refuge. They have been meeting with greater urgency in the last few years. In Las Vegas last September, nearly 400 attended one gathering, the fourth and largest ever Old China Hands Reunion. Tables were piled with books, mostly self-published memoirs. Betty Grebenshikoff said she wrote *Once My Name Was Sara* for her children and grandchildren, "so they would know what happened. The Shanghai experience was amazing, and few in the world know about it." Added Evelyn Pike, author of *Ghetto Shanghai*: "I tell people to write. These stories ought to be told." Jewish history in China dates to at least the 8th century, when West Asian traders roamed the Silk Road. A Jewish settlement was established in the city of Kaifeng, in what is now Henan province, where a synagogue was built in 1163 and thousands of Jews worshiped openly. Kaifeng today boasts some Hebrew writing on tombstones, but no living link to its Jewish past (although some residents claim Jewish blood). By the 20th century, the community in Kaifeng was eclipsed by cities like Harbin, Ningbo and Tianjin, which all had sizable Jewish settlements. None rivaled Shanghai. Herman Dicker's *Wanderers and Settlers* in the

Far East details three distinct periods of Jewish immigration to Shanghai. The first began in the 1800s, with the arrival of Jewish businessmen from West Asia, mainly Baghdad. Among them were the Sassoons and Kadoories, the latter one of Hong Kong's wealthiest families. They financed some of Shanghai's finest colonial architecture, including the magnificent Children's Palace (formerly the Kadoorie estate, Marble Hall), the art deco Peace Hotel (then the Cathay Hotel) and Shanghai Mansions, a Sassoon building that was used to process, and illegally house at times, hundreds of refugees. In 1932, the Shanghai Stock Exchange listed almost 100 members; nearly 40% were Sephardic Jews. They joined the city's finest clubs, a privilege denied Jews even in liberal parts of Europe and America. As a measure of their security in Shanghai, flamboyant Victor Sassoon reportedly boasted, "There is only one race greater than the Jews, and that is the Derby."

This small Jewish circle was affected in the early 1900s by a second wave of immigration that brought Russian Jews fleeing the pogroms (campaigns of repression) and, later, the Russian Revolution.

Most settled in northern China. By 1910, Harbin had 1,500 Jews, but the number grew to 13,000 by 1929. Many moved south to Shanghai after the Japanese took Manchuria in the early 1930s.

The Russians did not mix much with Shanghai's Jewish elite. Russian Jews ran their own stores and restaurants, read Russian newspapers and enjoyed their own music and theater. Many settled in the French quarter, where they founded the Jewish Music Club. There were conflicts, especially over religious issues, but the Jews were no different than Shanghai's tens of thousands of other foreigners, whether British, American, French, German or Japanese. All kept to classes defined by ethnic and economic lines. Otherwise, rules were few in

Shanghai, and opportunities endless. "We lived our lives with great panache," says Shanghai-born Mario Machado (pictured left in front of a bulletin board where old friends post messages to and mementos of long-lost Shanghai pals) a longtime Hollywood broadcaster who organized last year's Old China Hands conference. "Shanghai was magical. We were a proud group of people, a diverse group, bound by a special camaraderie."

The community was self-contained. There were seven synagogues, four cemeteries and a club where performances were given by some of Europe's finest musicians. Children attended a Jewish school financed by Horace Kadoorie. They joined Jewish scout troops, competed in Jewish football leagues and chess tournaments. Those with pocket money could ride one of 2,000 rickshaws -- Asia's largest fleet -- owned by A. Cohen. The building that housed his Star Garage still stands on Nanjing Road. And they cheered as Jewish boxers like Sam Lefko, Kid Ruckenstein and Laco Kohn pounded their opponents.

Why Shanghai? As the rest of the world closed to desperate Jews seeking escape from the Nazis, Shanghai remained one of the rare free transit ports. Explains *The Muses Flee Hitler*, a book by Washington's Smithsonian Institute released to honor the centennial of the birth of Albert Einstein (who visited Shanghai twice in the 1920s): "Shanghai required neither visas nor police certificates. It did not ask for affidavits of health, nor proof of financial independence. There were no quotas."

Thus began the third phase of Jewish migration; an estimated 20,000 poured into Shanghai from 1937 to 1939. Some merely passed through, en route to the Americas, Palestine or Australia, but about 90% stayed. Restrictions were put on immigration in August 1939, but still they came in droves as war consumed Europe

and other avenues of escape closed. Thousands arrived in rags, with neither entry permits nor any means of support. Housing for latecomers was extremely sparse -- hundreds languished in temporary shelters. The four-person family of Ralph Hirsch, who escaped from Berlin to Shanghai as a boy in 1940, had a tiny apartment for six months, then lived in one small room for six years. Other refugees recall sharing one room with several families.

It was a constant struggle, but the community took care of itself until Pearl Harbor in 1941. Foreigners from Allied nations were sent to prison camps. German and Austrian Jews, the largest group, were considered stateless refugees, and were confined to Hongkou ghetto in 1943. "There was no barbed wire and it wasn't heavily patrolled, but adults needed passes to go out," says Hirsch, American director of a group called the Council on the Jewish Experience in Shanghai. Yet, with all its deprivations, Hongkou was like summer camp compared with ghettos in Europe, where Jews were penned in by the Nazis, who eventually sent most to their deaths.

In Shanghai, the Jewish community quickly rebuilt itself after the war, but the city would never be the same. The Japanese were defeated, yet fighting continued in the civil war between the Nationalists and Communists. An exodus of foreigners began immediately. Options were puzzling. Zoya Shlakis fled Lithuania to escape the Nazis, only to find his nation occupied by the Soviets after the war. "I was considered a Russian immigrant," he says, "but I wanted nothing to do with the Communists." Shlakis went to Taiwan and later emigrated to the U.S., "where I was termed a Chinese immigrant!"

Some Shanghai-born Jews were sent to third countries. Israel evacuated several ships of Jews from Shanghai as Mao Zedong's Red Army crept closer in 1948. Several towns in Israel

were settled entirely by Shanghai survivors. The U.S. was the most desired destination; San Francisco has a synagogue founded by, and whose congregation is still largely made up of, former Shanghai residents.

Karl and Judy Moranz left in 1949 for Italy on the same boat. "We were from Vienna. We lived three blocks apart," Karl says. Yet they didn't meet until a decade later in New York, at a 10th-anniversary ball for Shanghai survivors. She was 17, he nearly 30. "I bought her a drink and she gave me her number." A year later, they were married. Not all stories ended happily. By 1953, 440 Jews remained in Shanghai, and the number fell to 84 by 1958. Most were sick or elderly, and in the care of the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai, which ran a shelter until 1959.

Afterward, virtually all trace of Jewish life in Shanghai was wiped away. Schools and shops closed, and most synagogues were demolished by China's new rulers. Shanghai remained unobservant of its Jewish legacy for three decades. Then, one by one, the spirits began stirring. I felt their presence during my first visit to the city in 1990. And little wonder, since I was staying at the old Jewish Music Club, now the Shanghai Music Conservatory. A foreign student mentioned some old professors who had formed a Jewish study association. After numerous calls, I finally tracked them down.

In a dingy basement, I found a dozen mostly retired teachers arguing odd points from the Bible. Odd, because it was apparent few, if any, had ever read a Bible. They had half a dozen associations, with ambitious names like the Center of Israel and Jewish Studies of the Chinese Institute For Peace and Development Studies. But all involved the same men, exchanging the same second-hand scholarly gossip. Genuine information was rare, and for good reason: Such study was not sanctioned by the government.

"We've produced more than two dozen papers to date," one retired professor told me. When I asked for copies, he sheepishly admitted: "None of them has been published. We don't have permission." Some were thrilled to actually be meeting a Jew, and one with a Chinese connection -- my father and his parents also escaped from Germany through China, but not by way of Shanghai. Still, many were genuine scholars, with a keen interest in sharing information. I found this out after a meeting with one of the men. We sipped tea for hours, discussing practically anything but our common interest. Then at the door, the professor paused to casually mention a report from the city archives, barred to foreigners. Holding excitement in check, I said farewell. Just before the door closed, though, he pulled some papers from under his shirt and handed me the report. It sounds funny now, but China was a nervous place at the time.

Since then, I have kept in touch with these scholars, watching with fascination as their field slowly gained credibility. As it did, so too did their lives improve. By my next visit, they had moved from their basement office to a large estate. On the doorway was a smart brass nameplate. And, best of all, the professors proudly showed me their first book, a collection of essays on Jewish subjects, written in Chinese.

By then, the various associations had blended into the Center of Jewish Studies, headed by Pan Guang. A young history professor from the Shanghai Academy of Social Service, Pan is the official spokesman on this subject, and it is a sign of the times that he travels much of the year, a feted guest at Jewish conferences eager to have a Chinese speaker on board. Pan recently published *The Jews of Shanghai*, the first book about the community in English and Chinese.

Nor have the other academics

been passed over. Xu Buzeng, who translated into Chinese David Kranzler's definitive 1976 work, Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945, has also lived to see published several of his papers on prominent refugee musicians and composers. Xu Xin, perhaps China's leading Judaic scholar, heads a Jewish-studies program in Nanjing. He recently coordinated the release of an abridged Chinese version of the Encyclopedia Judaica, a 900-page volume that took three years and the work of 40 scholars to complete. And Yu tutors Shanghai residents in Hebrew. "People are interested in Jews," he says. "Everyone has heard about them and how they are good with money."

China and Israel have only had diplomatic relations for five years. Politics kept them in separate spheres, even though Israel was among the first nations to recognize Communist China. "There's a lot of curiosity," says former Consul General Moshe Ram, who has been regularly reminded of the wartime Jewish community since opening the Israel mission in Shanghai in 1994. "But let's put things in perspective. It's a good story. In fact, it's a great story. But it's small, and the impact is minimal." He tries to focus on the present, particularly on increasing trade between Israel and China.

"The Jews and China were always good friends," notes Pan Guang. Indeed, China was an early supporter of the concept of a Jewish state, according to Reno Krasno, a Shanghai refugee and author. In a paper published by the 12-year-old Sino-Judaic Institute in California, Krasno reprints a letter of support from a founder of modern China, Sun Yat-sen. China was among members of the League of Nations that in 1922 voted in favor of the Palestine Mandate, proposing a Jewish homeland.

All this history wells up in Shanghai, where a determined researcher can

still find Stars of David decorating old tenements in the French quarter. And interest is being rekindled by a growing number of Jewish businessmen, who hold regular religious services in the city. "There's a real cultural connection between the Chinese and the Jews," Pan says. "Many people write about this. The Chinese have been called the Jews of Asia, you know. Both emphasize family and education. And both build cultures, the oldest in the world. Both peoples also live in many places, but the people never change."

Last year, Shanghai opened its first Jewish museum, inside the old Ohel Moishe temple. There is no real collection, only a few framed photos of refugees and some of the prominent Jews who have visited. But outside, the narrow streets of Hongkou are as alive as ever.

In 1994, Hirsch returned to the city with a few former refugees. It was an odd step forward in Chinese-Jewish relations. The officially sponsored visit failed to take in many of the old Jewish sites, but did include a tour of Pudong and a pitch for investment. Still, most were smiling: Shanghai's ghosts had come home. "Hardly anything has changed," Hirsch said, "least of all the people. It's cleaner now, but Shanghai looks the same, it sounds the same, and it smells the same."

FAMOUS SONS

Among the Jewish community of Shanghai were many who made a mark on China, the region or the world. Among the famous sons and daughters of Shanghai were:

The Kadoories - This family made its fortune in Shanghai and Hong Kong real estate and utilities; their Hong Kong and Shanghai Hotel chain (including the Peninsula) is among the finest in the world.

The Sassoons - They went big-time into trading and property.

Morris Cohen - Known by his nickname Two-Gun Cohen, he served as bodyguard and aide-de-camp to

Sun Yat-sen, eventually becoming a Chinese general.

Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld - An Austrian who spent nine years overseeing health care for the Communist army.

Michael Medavoy - Lived in Shanghai until age 7, he went onto a career as Hollywood mogul at Columbia, Orion and TriStar Pictures.

Peter Max - Influential American pop artist was born in Germany, but spent 10 years in Shanghai.

Mike Blumenthal - Became U.S. Treasury Secretary.

Eric Halpern - With other Shanghai Jews, he founded the Far Eastern Economic Review, and was its first editor.

Ron Gluckman is a reporter from San Francisco, the "Shanghai of the West," who first came to China while retracing the route of escape from Hitler taken by his own Jewish father and grandparents. They left Nazi Germany in Sept 1940 and traveled by train through Eastern Europe, across Russia and via China to Korea, Japan, then boat across the Pacific. He spent six years, on and off, researching this story, which ran in Asiaweek in June 1997.

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Rehov Amrami Kfar Saba

By Gloria Deutsch

In a new column, the 'Post' takes a look at the people behind our country's street names.

Living on a street which bears the same name as you has something of a cachet about it. It's a bit like being lord of the manor in England and makes you something of a local aristocrat.

Yael Amrami lives on Rehov Amrami in Kfar Saba. She is the daughter-in-law of the man after whom the street was named, Baruch Amrami, who came to Palestine in the Second Aliya, in 1921. Now 85, she remembers her father-in-law well. Any gaps in her memory were filled in by her son, also Baruch Amrami, a well-known lawyer in the town.

The first Baruch Amrami was born in 1888 in Novozikov, Russia, to a religious family and studied in yeshivot until the age of 17. The 1905 pogroms turned him into a Zionist and he left

the yeshiva world and joined the Poalei Zion movement. He fled to America but continued with his Zionist activity, which he regarded as the solution to Jewish suffering in Russia. According to his grandson, he studied dentistry and left Russia for Manchuria after the revolution, settling in Harbin, like many Russian Jews.

He established the first Hebrew school in the Far East and insisted that his three children speak only Hebrew at home. In China he held several public positions, including being on the board of a Russian-language newspaper and delegate to the local Zionist conference. In 1921 he brought his family—his wife Fenia and three children, including Yael's future husband Eliezer—to Palestine. Yael says they brought rubles from Russia but discovered that they were worth nothing after the revolution and threw them away.

At first they settled in Petah Tikva but he disliked the fact that Arab labor was used there. He looked for another place to fulfill his dream of Jewish labor and a few months later arrived in Kfar Saba, which had been abandoned at the time of the Arab riots of 1920 and had not yet been rehabilitated.

"He was friendly with (Jewish National Fund president Menahem) Ussishkin who offered him a clerical job in Jerusalem," Yael says. "But he refused. He said, 'I didn't come to sit; I came to build the country.'" He was invited to the opening of the Hebrew University in 1925, which he attended, but he was clearly determined to leave the world of letters and learning to work the land.

As soon as he settled in Kfar Saba, he began his career as a farmer, planting orange groves in the area where Yael still lives. The family started life in a tent but quickly moved to the comparative luxury of a stable, sharing accommodation with the chickens and the cows. Although he had the best of intentions, he was not a very successful farmer and was always in debt.

"Look at him," says his grandson Baruch, pointing to a faded photograph taken in the 1920s. "He's wearing shorts and trying to look like a man of the land, but he's really a nich-nich (nerd) who was more at home in his public life as the first chairman of the village committee. In the early days, there were no more than 50 families, so you couldn't call him the first mayor as it wasn't a town.



People and Events

Olivia Grant, granddaughter of Mercia Grant (nee Hillaly) formerly of Shanghai, was featured in an article published in the Jewish Chronicle on February 1, 2008:

PEOPLE - WHO'S UP TO WHAT IN THE JEWISH WORLD THIS WEEK
Olivia Grant jumps from student drama society to TV star – and gives Michelle Pfeiffer a fashion tip

If you have been following the BBC's latest corsets-and-crinolines costume drama *Lark Rise to Candleford* you will have noticed Olivia Grant's aristocratic contribution in the form of Lady Adelaide Midwinter. Miss

Grant, 24, an English-literature graduate, was plucked from Oxford University's drama society a year and half ago by an acting agency. She has already appeared alongside Michelle Pfeiffer and Claire Danes in the Hollywood movie *Stardust*.

"When we were on set at Pinewood Studios, Michelle Pfeiffer very much loved my cowboy boots, which I was very pleased about", Ms. Grant tells *People*. "I got a call from her assistant while I was in my trailer. I thought, 'Oh no, she doesn't like me. I've messed up. She's going to have me sacked". But she wanted to know where I got my boots from. I told her and she went out and got two pairs."

Lark Rise to Candleford – a ten-part adaptation of Flora Thompson's memoir of her Oxfordshire childhood – is Miss Grant's first big TV series. Her character is the squire's wife. "She's caught up in a love triangle between herself, the squire and Dorcas Lane, played by Julia Sawalha".

But while her character is unhappy and lonesome, Miss Grant, who has been shooting in Wiltshire for the past six months with a cast that includes comedian Dawn French, says the experience is amazing. She lives in Fulham.

***Lark Rise to Candleford* is on BBC1 on Sundays at 7.40 p.m.**

Rehov Amrami Kfar Saba (continued from page 22)

One of his first achievements was to transfer administration of the Kfar Saba settlement from Petah Tikva to a local committee. He founded the water company and the first bank of the village.

Baruch points to a copy of a document signed by all the elders of the town in 1923. "If you look, you'll see that they all kept their European names and he was the only one who took a Hebrew name," he says. "The family name was Yellinson and as he was a Levi, he took the name of the first Levi – Moshe Ben Amram, which became Amrami. You find the name among the Yemenites, but it's unexpected for an Ashkenazi."

Baruch has letters in his possession which his namesake sent to his son Eliezer asking him to send money as the farm was not doing well financially. "I have many debts," he wrote to his son who worked in a packing plant. "Please could you send me one lira to help cover my expenses." As money

was so short, only one of the three children could be sent away for an education.

By all accounts, Fenia was also a remarkable woman. After her husband died at 52 in 1938, she ran a library from their home and would travel regularly to Tel Aviv to bring books in five languages for her clients. Her young daughter-in-law, Yael, who married Eliezer when she was 17, would often accompany her, and remembers her well, riding back from Tel Aviv on the bus, with a sack full of books and always dressed impeccably with a big straw hat.

"I remember a long queue of people waiting outside to change their books," she says.

In 1948, soon after the establishment of the state, the street, still unpaved but soon to become a through road



parallel to the main drag, Weizmann, was given the name *Rehov Amrami*. Today it is a pretty tree-

lined street with very few high-rise buildings and only a few shops. Yael and Eliezer moved out of the stable they had lived in and built the house which still stands. Eliezer followed in his father's footsteps as a farmer and, although he never held office, was very active in the various volunteer activities of the town. In 1991 he was awarded the title of *Yakir Kfar Saba*. His two sons are both prominent lawyers in the town, which now numbers 85,000 people.

The street is named after Baruch Amrani, the first chairman of the village committee. He also founded the water company and the first bank of Kfar Saba

On the Jewish Silk Trail

By Gloria Deutsch

A tour of modern China was seasoned with its Yiddishe past

All of a sudden, everyone you know has either been or is going to China, and it has become a popular destination for wandering Jews.

Although climbing the Great Wall and visiting the Forbidden City have become the in-thing to do, my recent two-week visit with a group of Jews from England had an extra dimension, and the tour, organized by the quarterly publication Jewish Renaissance, took us to places of particular Jewish interest. The centuries-old connection between the Jews and China is well documented, so I would like to concentrate on the personal contact we made, a group of 30 Anglos, mainly Jews of every stripe from Orthodox to Liberal, and our confrontation with the ancient and modern manifestations of Jewish life in China.

The main centers we visited were Harbin in the northeast, where a Russian-Jewish community thrived from the end of the 19th century until the 1950s; Kaifeng, where Jews lived from the 10th century and where only tantalizing vestiges of Jewish life remain (and where the 'Jews' of the place today are more correctly considered descendants of Jews); and Shanghai, where two distinct groups settled: the rich Iraqi Jews in the middle of the 19th century and the German and Viennese Jews fleeing Hitler who found refuge there [There was also a large and well-established Russian community in Shanghai—ed.] All the different faces of Jewish life in China, but with fascinating histories it was enthralling to encounter.

Our first stop was Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang Province and about 500 kilometers from the Russian border. One of our group, Mimi Rolbant, was looking forward to seeing the town where her father had been born and educated before leaving for Israel in the early '50s.

The town welcomed Jews with open arms at the beginning of the 20th century when the Chinese Far East railroad, part of Russia's Trans-Siberian Railway, was being built. The community thrived, with schools, synagogues, community buildings, a hospital, a retirement home and many newspapers in both Russian and Yiddish. Today all the Jewish areas have been carefully restored. The cemetery with 800 graves was our first stop. It was moving to see all the men get out their yarmulkes to visit this place where Ehud Olmert's grandfather is buried and which the prime minister himself visited a few years ago.

We picked our way among the gravestones, trying to decipher the faded Hebrew letters and get an overall picture of the families who had lived and died in this place. A photographer followed us around and we thought he was going to try to sell us our pictures, but he was taking photos to add to the already well-stocked Jewish museum, which we visited later.

When we first saw that that portraits, small photographs behind glass at the top of the tombstones, had been smashed, we assumed it was done out of anti-Semitism. However, our guide assured us that it had been done by the Red Guards on one of

their rampages during the Cultural Revolution. In fact, anti-Semitism is practically unknown in China, and we bumped into several kippa-wearing groups whose members assured us that the Chinese have no idea of the significance of their head coverings. Leaving the cemetery, we were then driven to the center of town to visit the Harbin Museum for Jewish History and Culture. Constructed in 1921, it was originally a synagogue and was recently restored by the Harbin Municipality and presents a mainly photographic record of the city's rich Jewish life before the last Jews left in 1985. The weddings, parties, Zionist (Betar) meetings, concerts and plays are all well documented. The many Jewish-owned banks and shops housed in European-style buildings are pictured, and one can look out the window and see the same buildings now advertising their wares in Chinese characters.

We visited another old synagogue, now used as offices, and the Jewish day school next door, still a school. Magen David motifs are prominently seen on wrought-iron railings and window frames.

A quick visit to Mimi's paternal home on a nearby street ended this part of our tour.

The story of Kaifeng and its Jews could not be more different. Today, the 500 to 800 people identifying with a Jewish heritage are not halachically Jewish but consider themselves descendants of a once flourishing community. A few have found their way to Israel and officially converted, while some, like our articulate guide Shi Lei, who took the name Tsur

while studying in Israel for two years, is making efforts to revive Jewish consciousness in the city.

Jews arrived in Kaifeng in the 10th century when it was a thriving stop on the silk route and the capital of the Song dynasty. The first Jews were probably Persian merchants, and a synagogue was built in 1163 and rebuilt in 1663 after the flooding of the Yellow River destroyed the city. The decline of the Jews of Kaifeng began in the 18th century. Travelers and missionaries describe their poverty which, among other things, forced them over the years to sell their 12 Torah scrolls, one of which is in the British Museum and the rest in Canada and the US.

The tour bus drove us to a rundown part of the town, and Tsur led us along narrow streets until we arrived at a small cobbled alley which he proudly pointed out was called "Teaching the Torah Lane". It was the site of the synagogue, of which nothing remains and which now has a rather grungy hospital built over it. However he did take us to what the Kaifeng Jews claim was once a mikve, a hole in the ground of one of the hospital outbuildings, which we duly photographed. We were also taken to a poor dwelling nearby where the non-Jewish widow of one of the last acknowledged Jews lives and sells paper cuts of what was the synagogue.

We know what the synagogue looked like, as it had been painted in 1792 by a French priest, Jean Domenge, and a large-scale model of this pagoda-like building can be seen in the Disney-like Millennium City Park where, among the recreated pageants of Chinese history and the endless stalls selling souvenirs, two rooms have been set aside exhibiting drawings of the Jewish history of Kaifeng. There is also a model in Beth Hatefusoth [Diaspora Museum] in Tel Aviv.

Part of the Kaifeng museum contains several steles from the 16th century which are engraved in a now very

faded Chinese script with historical accounts of the Jewish community. The museum, which also contains a model of the synagogue and pictures of past Kaifeng Jews, was closed, but we did have a very inspiring visit to the University of Henan where the Institute of Jewish Studies was founded in 2000.

For me this was an astonishing aspect of our visit to China. Here were Chinese students majoring in Jewish studies with a special interest in the Holocaust. Another group was doing post-graduate studies. We asked Dr. Zhang Qianhong, dean of the college, who had studied in Israel, what motivated these youngsters to delve into Jewish history, and we asked the students themselves.

Some answered that they admired the Jews and their contribution to mankind. One had read the diary of Anne Frank and wondered how one nation could plot the genocide of another. (Although one of our group cynically pointed out that Mao Zedong had murdered 70 million Chinese). This was her starting point for her interest in the Jews. We met another staff member, Deqing Zang, who called himself Duncan for our benefit, and had been bowled over by his visit to Yad Vashem and Haifa, among other places. The meeting took place in the faculty library and we were amused to see Jewish cookbooks rubbing shoulders with Jewish philosophy, volumes of Rashi next to Herman Wouk. Several members of the group had brought some Jewish publications to swell the library's holdings.

That evening at dinner in our hotel (another mountain of steamed kale for the kashrut observers), Tsur brought his father and several other descendants of Kaifeng Jews to dine with us. He translated their answers to our questions. In terms of observance almost nothing remains. They do not have circumcision or shehita, but do not eat pork. In recent years Tsur has organized some lessons in Judaism

and uses his late grandmother's apartment as a kind of community center. He also leads a Pessah Seder with home-baked matzot.

In Shanghai we found evidence of a glorious Jewish past, with the story of the rich Sephardim who settled there at the beginning of the 20th century, but were also given a graphic description of the hardships endured by the German refugees who fled Hitler in 1938 and found refuge here. Our guide was Dvir Bar-Gal, an Israeli who has lived in China for the last six years and has set himself the task of finding and retrieving the tombstones of Jews vandalized during the Cultural Revolution. So far he has tracked down dozens and plans to create a memorial in the park which stands next to what was the Jewish quarter of Shanghai.

For now, the city of Shanghai has put up a stone memorial in the park where the ubiquitous old folks of China do their morning tai chi exercises. We stood there while Bar-Gal narrated how the rich Baghdadi Jews like the Kadourie and Sassoon families made their mark, building synagogues and contributing their wealth to help the government. One of them, the Ohel Moshe Synagogue [It was built by and for the large Russian-Jewish community in Shanghai and only during WWII was it used by the European refugee community— ed.] has recently been restored after being used for years as a warehouse, and we sat in it and listened to the story of the refugees who arrived in Shanghai in the '30s, largely due to the heroism of the Chinese consul in Vienna, Dr. Ho Feng-Shan, who issued more than 20,000 visas.

In 1942, under Japanese occupation, the Gestapo sent people to oversee the Final Solution but the Japanese refused. Some speculate that it was out of gratitude for Jewish financial help 30 years before to help Japan modernize; some say they simply did not know what anti-Semitism was. However, they did establish an

Kosher Food comes to Beijing

Just in Time for the 2008 Olympics

By Hana Levy Julian (AP)

Kosher diners won't have to bring their own food to the 2008 Olympics: a new kosher restaurant opened within the past year in the Chinese capital, catering to foreign Jewish residents, tourists, a handful of Muslims and even a few Chinese citizens.

Dini's Kosher Restaurant owner Lewis Sperber told the Associated Press that he might also set up a second restaurant in the northern section of Beijing, closer to the area in which the Olympic Games will be held. "If people leave the Olympics and want a kosher meal, we could have a place for them," said Sperber. The Games are expected to draw some 55,000 tourists to the city, a potential bonanza for the new kosher start-up. A growing number of Chinese food manufacturers have joined the

kosher certification bandwagon cue to international concerns over the safety of Chinese products. Recent contamination scares have significantly affected exports such as toothpaste, seafood and pet food. The financial impact of stores around the world pulling off the shelves has also made a dent in the credibility of other Chinese manufacturers as well. As a result, a growing number of Asian food products factory owners who are seeking a way to boost the credibility of their safety standards have begun to seek kosher certification as the international standard in quality assurance. Kosher certification involves a rigorous process in which rabbis experienced in the Jewish laws relating to food inspect the production facilities as

well as the ingredients used in the manufacturing process.

According to the Mintel market research firm, 4,719 new kosher items made their debut in the US market in 2007. The data underscores figures showing that kosher food sales rose by an estimated 15 percent per year over the past decade. US News and World Report weekly magazine quoted Mintel senior research analyst Marcia Mogelonsky, who agreed that consumers view kosher certification as the gold standard in quality assurance.

"It's the belief among all consumers that kosher food is safer, a critical thing right now with worries about the integrity of the food supply," said Mogelonsky.

On the Jewish Silk Trail (Continued from page 25)

area designated for stateless refugees, and 25,000 Jews were crowded into an area of less than a square mile already occupied by 100,000 Chinese. "Sometimes there were about 33 people living in one room", Bar-Gal told us.

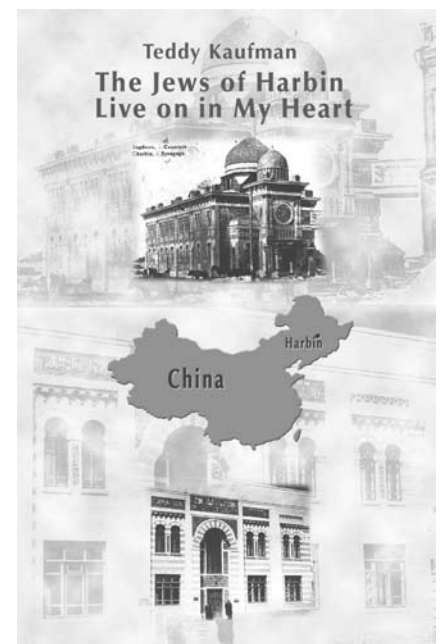
From what one can see, little has changed in the last 60 years in what was called the Hongkou ghetto. From these impossible conditions came people like Mike Blumenthal, US Secretary of the Treasury under Jimmy Carter and today director of the Berlin Jewish Museum, [or like] my Israeli silk artist friend Ruth Shany.

Chabad now has seven houses across China and we visited the one in Shanghai, and had a Friday night dinner there. Our group, which had spent the previous two weeks

following up long-dead communities and dubious Jews, found themselves in culture shock at the sight of these very-much-alive Orthodox Jews.

Finally, one cannot write about the Jews in China without mentioning Prof. Xu Xin of Nanjing University, who was to have been our guide but sadly fell ill before the tour. Today acknowledged as China's top expert on his country's Jews, he is president of the China Judaic Studies Association, editor of the Chinese edition of the Encyclopedia Judaica and author of several books on the Jews of China. In May 2003 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Bar-Ilan University.

(From The Jerusalem Post, November 23, 2007)





**Book Review Republished from
Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies:**

***Almost Englishmen:
Baghdadi Jews in British
Burma***

***Reviewed by Jonathan
Goldstein****

Ruth Fredman Cernea, *Almost Englishmen: Baghdadi Jews in British Burma* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), xxvi pp. plus 141 pp. plus 33 pp. of bibliography, index, notes on the author, and appendices. Cloth bound edition: ISBN 0-7391-1646-0 \$58; Paperback edition: ISBN 0-7391-1647-9 \$24.95. Contains illustrations.

In this book anthropologist Ruth Fredman Cernea uses the records of Rangoon's Musmeah Yeshua synagogue, the unpublished memoir of long-term resident Ellis Sofaer, and other arcane primary sources to explain how, despite war and geographic isolation, Baghdadi-Jewish identity was maintained in British Burma. Cernea thereby enlarges the already-substantial corpus of literature on Burmese Jewry and on the related topics of Burmese-Jewish emigration and Burmese-Israeli relations. That literature includes travelogues by Salomon Rinman [1884] and Israel Cohen [1925, 1956]; memoirs and analyses by Israeli diplomats Moshe Sharett [1957], David Hacohen [1963, 1974, 1985], and Moshe Yegar [1984, 2004]; and historical accounts by Reuven Kashani [1982], Nathan Katz and Ellen Goldberg [1988, 1989], Joan Roland [1989], and Cernea

herself [1988, 1995]. [1]

Cernea isolates specific mechanisms that reinforced Baghdadi-Jewish identity in Burma. First and foremost was the constant communication, travel, intermarriage, and commercial dealing, over centuries, with co-religionists mainly in Calcutta but also in Mesopotamia/Iraq, Bombay, Hong Kong, London, Shanghai, Singapore, Surabaya, Sydney, and the United States. She describes inter-communal celebrations of rites of passage and religious festivals, concluding that "such were the spiritual and communal ties between Baghdadi Jews that though physically separated they were never apart...[whether] in a small town in upper Burma, in the delta of the Irrawaddy River, or on the Andaman Sea." [p. xvi] "Memory" was a central feature of these celebrations. Real and idealized recollections of Baghdad, and even of Biblical Babylonia, became significant components of Baghdadi-Jewish consciousness in Burma. [p. xvi]

Cernea also describes externally- and internally-imposed sanctions which reinforced Baghdadi-Jewish identity. Some Burmese Baghdadis strove to be accepted by their Anglo-Saxon colonial masters by disassociating themselves from "lower class/caste" dark-skinned Jews of Bene Israel and Cochini origin. The efforts of these Baghdadis caused some Bene Israel to bring a case before the British High Court in Rangoon contesting their exclusion from the Musmeah Yeshua synagogue. The attempt to exclude the Bene Israel backfired. In April 1935,

Judge Alfred Leach ruled that the Bene Israel could both vote and hold office in Musmeah Yeshua despite the claims of the synagogue that the Bene Israel were non-Jews. Ultimately, according to Cernea, the British "locked the door of the country club" to all Burmese Jews of whatever religiosity or complexion. Cernea concludes that "like children reaching for a soap bubble, the Baghdadis reached for total acceptance by the British—an elusive goal that conditioned their experiences in Burma and even beyond." [pp. 10, 73-75].

Cernea also discerns a robust diversity within the Rangoon Baghdadi community. A dissident group at Musmeah Yeshua led by Gabriel Solomon accepted the Bene Israel as full Jews. These maverick Baghdadis broke with their synagogue elders and established a congregation of their own, Beth El, in 1932. Here Bene Israel were treated exactly like other Jews.

Cernea provides much information which goes beyond her specific objective of explaining the retention of Baghdadi identity. Although the book is entitled *Almost Englishmen: Baghdadi Jews in British Burma*, in fact it overarches the date of October 17, 1947, when Thakin Nu and Clement Atlee signed documents in which Britain granted Burma full independence. The volume, as already noted, contains much information on Burma's non-Baghdadi Jews, specifically its Bene Israel, Cochini, and Ashkenazi populations; on the immigration of Burmese Jews to Israel,

which received its independence from British rule on May 15, 1948, shortly after Burma did; and on post-independence Burmese Jewry. Cernea describes Burmese Jews who now live in Australia, Europe, and the United States. They retain strong, perhaps idealized, memories of their birthplace much in the way that their ancestors fantasized about Baghdad and Babylon.

A final strength of the book is that Cernea, in several appendices, has put into print for the first time a substantial corpus of primary source material about Burmese Jewry.[2] Throughout the text she provides extensive excerpts from unpublished letters and memoirs of Burmese Jews. Looking beyond these many strengths, the book suffers from a few methodological and interpretative shortcomings.

First, Cernea makes no mention of Burmese-language sources. Was there any mention of the synagogue case, for example, in Burmese-language newspapers? If Burmese-language sources are irrelevant or non-existent, that should be stated explicitly. The same consideration applies to Japanese-language sources, especially for the critical four years of Japanese occupation. Did Japanese intelligence reports mention a Jewish community in this major military arena? Jewish communities in China, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, and Singapore are mentioned extensively in Japanese intelligence reports.

It is also unclear if Cernea has a command of the Hebrew, not to mention the Judeo-Arabic, sources for this study. On p. 52 she uncritically reproduces a quotation that Neviim and Ketubim are “sections of the Talmud.” In fact they are sections of the Tanach. The usual Romanization of the Hebrew word for phylacteries is tefillin, not tefillen [p. 92]. Perhaps most seriously, on p. xvii she writes that “the integration of the exiles from Spain into the trading networks and settlements of the Middle East

can be traced through names such as Sasson [Sassoon] and Gubbay, which were once common in Spain and centuries later in India and Burma.” In reality, the name “Sasson” probably derives from the Hebrew *sasson* (joy) as in *sasson ve-simchah kol hatan ve-kol kallah* in the *sheva berakhot* (seven blessings recited at weddings). “Gubbay” probably derives from *gabbai*, as the *gabbai* of a synagogue. In Medieval Hebrew *gabbai* could refer to any administrative position in the community. The existence of these Hebrew names among Baghdadis is in no way illustrative of a passage through Spain.

Although the book has much useful information on Burmese-Israeli cultural and agricultural ties, the author does not explain that these connections evolved out of ideological affinity. In 1952 Burma and Israel were the only two countries in Asia in which Socialist [as opposed to Communist] parties were in power. The early meetings between Reuven Barkatt, Moshe Sharett, David Ben Gurion, David Hacohen, U Nu, U Kyaw Nyein, and Bo Shein--to which Cernea briefly refers—derived from that fundamental ideological affinity. Cernea refers only briefly to Burmese-Israeli military ties, noting “military aviation” and “the training of... parachutists for the Burmese Army.” [p. 123] Is the author unaware of the extent of the military relationship? She should at least allude to the corpus of unclassified information on the subject in the works of Andrew Selth and Mary Callahan.[3]

Finally, there are mechanical errors. Cernea refers to a “Colesworth” [p. 18] and a “Colesworthy” [p. 162] Grant. The correct name is “Colesworthy.” Rabbi Ezekiel Musleah’s seminal *On the Banks of the Ganga* was published in 1975, not 1955 [p. xxv]. Bibliographical citations on pages 96 and 97 simply say “personal communication,” hardly a scholarly reference. Cernea should specify the name of the communicator and the

date, place, and length of those phone conversations, letters, or interviews. Ellis Sofaer’s *Gaya: His Childhood* should be noted in the bibliography as a multi-volume work, as it is on pp. 35 and 49. Yitzchak Kerem’s *History of Jewish Settlement in Burma*, cited on p. 18, and *Israel Today and Tomorrow*, cited on p. 125, should also appear in the bibliography. On p. 21 Cernea refers to Baghdadis employing “Hindustanis in their stores” and “in their homes.” “Hindustani” is either the noun form of the major language of Northern India or an adjectival reference to that language. “Hindus” [or “Indians”] were the people who spoke the Hindustani language and worked for the Baghdadis.

These weaknesses can easily be remedied in a second edition of this otherwise excellent study. Cernea and the publisher Rowman & Littlefield, a relative newcomer to the fields of both Judaic and Asian academic publishing, are to be congratulated for bringing out this useful volume.

PETER BERTON

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

“Cultural Life in Harbin in the 1930s,” paper presented at the conference on “Paris of the Orient? The Worlds of Harbin, 1895-1945,” UCLA Center for Chinese Studies, January 23, 1999.

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Conference on «The Far East of Russia and The North East of China: Historical Experience of Cooperation and Perspectives of Collaboration» (Dal'nii Vostok Rossi-Severo-Vostok Kitaia: Istoricheskii Opyt Vzaimodeistviia i Perspektivy Sotrudnichestva), Khabarovsk, Russian Far East, June 1998.

“A Trip Khabarovsk,” English Supplement, Bulletin of the Igud Yotsei Sin (Association of Former Residents of China) (Tel Aviv), No. 357 (January-February, 1999), pp. 11-13, “About the Author,” p. 14; “A Trip to Khabarovsk, Birobidzhan, and a Nostalgic Return to Harbin After Fifty-Seven Years,” No. 358 (March-April,

1999), pp. 5-6; ditto, No. 359 (May-June, 1999), pp. 4-8; ditto, No. 360 (September-October, 1999), pp.11-15, "Epilogue," p. 15.

The editors of the Bulletin translated into Russian the parts of this series, which dealt with Harbin and Birobidzhan in five installments: "V Kharbine" (In Harbin), *Biulleten'—Assotsiatsiia vykhodtsev iz Kitaia v Izraile* (Bulletin – The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel) (Tel Aviv), No. 360 (September-October, 1999), pp. 22-23; "Nostal'gicheskoe vozvrashchenie v Kharbin spustia 57 let" (Nostalgic Return to Harbin After Fifty-Seven Years), *ibid.*, No. 361 (November-December, 1999), pp. 100-102; ditto in *ibid.*, No. 362 (February-March, 2000), pp. 46-47; ditto in *ibid.*, No. 363 (April-May, 2000), p. 30; "Birobidzhan," in *ibid.*, No. 364 (June-July, 2000), p. 30.

Alexander Menquez (pseud.), «Growing Up Jewish in Manchuria in the 1930s: Personal Vignettes,» chapter II.C in Jonathan Goldstein (ed.), *The Jews of China*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), Vol. II, pp. 70-84.

"Contributions of Jews to the Musical and Cultural Life in Harbin in the 1930s and Early 1940s," Published in the proceedings of the First International Seminar on the History and Culture of Harbin Jews, Harbin, China, August-September 2004, in Chinese (pp. 160-163) and English (pp. 164-169).

This chapter was also translated into Russian and published in Israel:

"Vklad evreev v muzykal'nuiu i kul'turnuiu zhizn' Kharbina (1930-e gody – nachalo 1940-kh godov)" (Contributions of Jews to the Musical and Cultural Life in Harbin [1930s – Beginning of 1940s], *Biulleten'—Assotsiatsiia vykhodtsev iz Kitaia v Izraile* (Bulletin – The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel) (Tel Aviv), No. 382 (November-December, 2004), pp. 15-17.

"Report from China" English Supplement, *Bulletin of the Igud Yotsei Sin* (Association of Former Residents of

China) (Tel Aviv), No. 381 (September-October, 2004); ditto in *ibid.*, No. 382 (November-December, 2004), pp. 37. Translated in to Russian:

"Soobshchenie iz Kitaia – Osen' 2003" (Report from China – Fall 2003), *Biulleten'—Assotsiatsiia vykhodtsev iz Kitaia v Izraile* (Bulletin – The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel) (Tel Aviv), No. 381 (September-October 2004), pp. 76-81; biography [of the author], pp. 81-82.

"Pre-War, Occupation, Post-Occupation Japan: Three Vignettes," *International House of Japan Bulletin*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Spring 2005), pp. 6-21.

Also available on the web site of the Japan Policy Research Institute: <http://www.jpri.org/publications> (click on "Occasional Papers")

See also the Japanese-language IHJ bulletin, *Kokusay Bunka Kaikan Kaiho*, pp. 26-38.

The first vignette was also published in Israel "Harbin Symphony Orchestra Tour of Japan in March 1939," *Bulletin – Igud Yotsei Sin – Association of Former Residents of China*, English Supplement (Tel Aviv), No. 385 (September-October 2005), pp. 10-11.

This vignette was also translated into Russian: "Gastrol'i Kharbinskogo Simfonicheskogo Orkestra v Iaponii v marte 1939 goda" (Harbin Symphony Orchestra Tour in Japan in March 1939), *Biulleten'—Assotsiatsiia vykhodtsev iz Kitaia v Izraile* (Bulletin – The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel) (Tel Aviv), No. 384 (June-July 2005), pp. 64-65.

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Originally presented at Symposium and exhibit on the Jews of Harbin, Flanzer Jewish Community Center, Sarasota, Florida, March 17, 2006.

Translated into Russian: *Kharbin v tridsatye gody 20-go veka* (Harbin in the Thirties of the 20th Century),

Biulleten'—Assotsiatsiia vykhodtsev iz Kitaia v Izraile (Bulletin – The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel) (Tel Aviv), No. 390 (November-December 2006), pp. 82-85.

Also published in *Points East* (Sino-Judaic Institute), Vol. 21, 2006, pp.

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT

"China and the Jews," paper presented at the Center for Chinese Studies, UCLA, Fall 2006.

Discussant: Prof. Otto Schnepf, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, University of Southern California. Prof. Schnepf resided in Shanghai, 1938-1947. From 1980-1981, he served as Counselor for Science and Technology at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. He also served as Director of the East Asian Studies Center, University of Southern California, 10076-2004.

This paper is being prepared for publication in an academic journal.

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Chinese and Jews

By Susan Fishman Orlins

It is one of those mornings in Beijing when you can't tell whether it's likely to pour or whether the sun is simply behind a blanket of smog. I stuff a rain jacket into the basket of my new \$40 bicycle and, from my hotel, pedal west to the 10-level Wangfujing Bookstore on Wangfujing Street.

Along a cramped aisle of the business section, heads are bent over books whose cover art includes stars of David, the word "Talmud" in gilded letters and images of Moses embracing the Ten Commandments. I ask a small, fortyish woman if she can translate one title for me. It's the *"Jewish People's Bible for Business and Managing the World,"* she replies, adding that the book is a bestseller.

I pick up a book whose cover reads, in Chinese and English, *The Wisdom of Judaic Trader*, and flip through the pages, which are illustrated with big-nosed caricatures. Other tomes that people around me are reading offer morals via spiritual fables; some barely mention religion. In many, the content is simply fabricated, highlighting, for instance, the success of financier J.P. Morgan (who was Episcopalian, not Jewish). I walk upstairs to peruse the broad selection of child-rearing books and notice a Chinese man, a little boy by his side, engrossed in *The Jewish Way of Raising Children*. I ask why this title interests him. "Because the Jewish people are very clever," he answers.

In this land of 1.4 billion, the widespread perception of Jews as masters of commerce (and much more) has given rise to an entire genre of Jewish how-to literature. While few Chinese can articulate quite what a

Jew is, many believe that if they could emulate, among other things, how Jewish parents raise their children—as though there were a prescription—it would boost their offspring's chances of growing up to own a bank or win Nobel Prizes. Here's how one thread goes: Einstein was Jewish, Einstein was smart; therefore, Jews are smart.

These powerful impressions of Jewish accomplishments are common in the most developed regions of China, all of which are in the midst of an economic explosion; more skyscrapers will have been built across China this year than exist in all of Manhattan. But amid the bamboo scaffolding and the accompanying materialism and corruption, people have also begun to search for moral guidance—which some associate with the Jewish mystique—as they sprint down the path to prosperity.

Outside the bookstore I stroll through the old neighborhood where I lived for a year in 1980. Past the vendors hawking roasted corncocks on sticks and steaming sweet potatoes is the hospital where I picked up my adopted daughter more than 20 years ago. Back then my Chinese friends never mentioned Jews; school texts made scant, if any, reference to Jewish history.

Then, as now, the only Chinese who called themselves Jewish—numbering in the hundreds—were the descendants of Persians who traveled the Silk Road a millennium ago. They had arrived with camels, bearing cottons to trade for silks, and many never left. Several thousand settled in Kaifeng, the capital of the Song Dynasty that hummed with teahouses and restaurants. Today the Kaifeng Jews know little about Judaism and

look indistinguishable from their neighbors, though some—without understanding exactly why—follow dietary laws that resemble kashrut.

As for the Jewish expatriates I knew in Beijing in 1980, there were barely enough of us to form a minyan. On Yom Kippur, we gathered for makeshift services in our suite overlooking the glazed tile rooftops of the Forbidden City. Now, however, there are many Jewish expatriate communities in China, and some educated Chinese are even studying Hebrew, a practice which began in 1985, when Beijing University first offered a Hebrew language major. Simon Yu, a member of that class of eight, wanted to learn more than the little available in high school history books. "Friends thought it was strange that I was studying Hebrew," he acknowledges, "but now people think it's very charming and special."

Simon Yu, an associate professor at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences' Center for Jewish Studies, can speak Hebrew, but he cannot attend Jewish services. Independent religion does not exist in China; even the five sanctioned religions—Buddhism, Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Taoism—are controlled by the government. (The Vatican, for example, does not fully recognize Catholicism in China because, for one thing, China refuses to cede authority over selecting bishops.) It is hard to conceive of Judaism joining the ranks of government-approved religions, considering, for instance, that the government authorities do not allow Chinese citizens to attend religious services led by outsiders.

One night at a Shabbat dinner at the

home of Rabbi Avraham Greenberg, his pregnant wife Nechama and their two toddlers, I ask the bearded 26-year-old Israeli rabbi whether Chinese ever show up at his services. "When I arrived, my brother was already a rabbi here," he says. "After a local Chinese attended his service, the authorities approached my brother, telling him to pack up and leave. But he calmed them down by promising to turn away any such 'visitors' in the future. After that, a few tried, but my brother asked them to leave."

After five days in Beijing, I board an overnight train bound for Shanghai. In my sleeping compartment, I open *River Town*, Peter Hessler's memoir about teaching in China from 1996 to 1998. I reach a passage in which Hessler is also on a train, engrossed in a book. A woman approaches and comments on how diligently he is working. "She peered at me," he writes, "and it was clear that she was thinking hard about something. 'Are you Jewish?' she finally asked. 'No,' I said, and something in her expression made me want to apologize. I sensed her disappointment as she returned to her berth."

How, then, to reconcile this reverence for Jews with the appreciation for Adolf Hitler that Hessler mentions elsewhere in his book? Hessler writes that alongside "a deep respect for the Jewish people," Chinese appreciate the icon of Hitler mainly because of Charlie Chaplain's portrayal in *The Great Dictator*, which many have seen multiple times. How are they able to overlook that small matter of the Holocaust? For one thing, until recently, it simply hadn't been taught. For another, the politically controlled Chinese educational system valued rote learning and discouraged much independent thought. It similarly trained Chinese to revere the revolutionary Chinese leader Mao Zedong: At least a dozen educated Chinese I ask for their view of Mao, give an identical answer, that Mao was "70 percent good and

30 percent bad." Even though Mao had a major hand in substantially more deaths than Hitler in the excesses of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, this has been the Communist Party line since 1981. But this is changing: Fewer Chinese are ignorant of the dark fate of many Jews of the last century. In Shanghai, the port city to which many Jewish refugees fled the Nazis, I meet Yang Peiming, an avid historian and the proprietor of the Propaganda Poster Art Centre. He shows me his private collection of 70-year-old passports that he acquired at a local flea market. Each is stamped with swastikas and a large red "J," indicating it had belonged to a European Jew who had made it to Shanghai, one of the few shores open to these refugees. "Shanghai's history cannot be complete without Jewish history," he tells me. "We learn from Jewish people."

Fudan Fuzhong, the school where my daughter Emily teaches English conversation, consists of low-rise dormitory and classroom buildings on a lush campus. Today I am teaching a Jewish culture lesson to five of Emily's 12 weekly classes. The seeming identicalness of these groups startles me: each a six-by-eight matrix of 10th-graders with shiny black hair, all wearing navy warm-up suits trimmed in orange. Teachers rather than students are the ones to move, so in every classroom 48 girls and boys—some of China's most promising—remain in the same tight rows from 7:50 a.m. until 3:55 p.m. with breaks only for physical education and lunch. Twice a day they do eye exercises in their seats, five minutes of impassively massaging around the eyes with fingertips per instructions from a sing-song voice on the public address system. In the evenings they return to their rows from 6:30 until 9:00 for enforced study hall.

Emily had alerted me to the students' reluctance to speak in

class so, 15 minutes into the 40-minute session, I hand out paper and ask three questions that I hope will spark discussion: What are your impressions of Jewish people? Where did you get those impressions? What questions do you have for us?

Throughout the week, I repeat this lesson, which yields 576 responses. Around 90 percent of the students write that Jews are clever, and approximately half of those add that Jewish people are good at business. Though the consensus is that Jews are rich, some who have seen the Holocaust movie *The Pianist* say that Jews are poor. A couple of perceptions of Jews as bullies come from government-controlled TV news, during which reporters often portray Palestinians as victims and refer to Israelis as Jews, as though the two are interchangeable.

Some students question how Jewish people feel about Germans today. A few want to know how you can tell whether someone is Jewish. Several ask how they can get "rich like the Jews," including a boy who writes, "Jews own 50 percent of the wealth in America. How do they do this?" There are numerous comments along the lines of: "Jews are friendly, because Emily and Susan are friendly."

The four-hour train ride to Nanjing, a blur of browns and greens, is a welcome contrast to Shanghai's city skyline reconfigured daily by lofty, dangling cranes. I had emailed the founder of Nanjing University's Institute for Jewish Studies, Xu Xin (pronounced Shoo Shin), and asked what motivates Chinese students to pursue Jewish studies. He invited me to visit, suggesting a Friday so I could attend his undergraduate Jewish culture class as well as meet his graduate students. Xu Xin greets me in the hotel lobby. At approximately five feet five inches, he walks with a light step in brown leather Docksidlers that seem more Nantucket than Nanjing. "As a scholar of American literature, I became interested in Jewish writers

after Saul Bellow won the Nobel Prize," he explains in fluent English. In 1976, Xu began researching Jewish American history and culture, translating works of Norman Mailer, Clifford Odets and others into Chinese and publishing articles such as "Jewish Humor" and "The Image of the Schlemiel in Jewish Literature," in which he likens the schlemiel to the wise fool in Chinese literature.

"In 1985 an American named James Friend arrived here to teach literature for six months," he explains as we enter the 105-year-old university's campus. "I had never known a Jew before." The two professors formed a bond, and Friend invited Xu to live with his family and teach at Chicago State University, where Friend was chairman of the English department. While in the United States Xu attended a bar mitzvah, seders and even Jewish funerals, including that of Professor Friend, whose untimely death from a heart attack occurred toward the end of Xu's stay.

"My time with the Friends provided me with a great opportunity to look at Jewish people," says Xu. He was impressed that Jews follow laws, rather than an individual or just a set of beliefs. "Their way of living and thinking made me aware that Jewish culture has many lessons Chinese people could learn on their way to becoming a responsible part of the international society."

To that end, with one room and a few books, he created a Jewish studies center at Nanjing University in 1992, shortly after China and Israel established diplomatic relations. Xu—who at age 18 was sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution—was a pioneer; today at least ten other academic institutions offer Judaic studies.

Xu leads the way into a tall, new building and into an elevator which opens only a few steps from a brass wall plaque that says Institute for Jewish Studies in Chinese, English and Hebrew. "Each year we add

two M.A. and two Ph.D. students. And we try to provide a scholarship for our Ph.D. candidates to study in Israel," explains Xu, motioning for me to follow him into the library. The students want to understand, he says, how Jewish culture has survived, indeed flourished, often in the face of adversity. With a sweep of his arm, Xu shows off more than 10,000 titles that range from /Encyclopedia of Midrash/ to /Jewish Wit for all Occasions/. The stacks also hold volumes Xu has written or translated, including an abridged version of the /Encyclopedia Judaica/.

Down a spotless hallway is a conference room where glass cabinets display assorted Judaica—a Kiddush cup, a tallit, a small Torah-evoking the quiet ambience of an upscale temple gift shop. Professor Song Lihong and six of the program's 12 graduate students are waiting for us.

After easing into a chair at the head of the long, rectangular table, Xu leans forward and folds his hands in front of him. "Once Western studies became part of the curriculum in Chinese universities," he says, "in literature, philosophy, science—inevitably you came across a Jewish name." He notes the disproportionate number of Jewish Nobel Prize recipients and adds, "You don't see that many Norwegians with Nobel Prizes."

Xu seems to delight in the shared aspects of our two cultures, saying, "Both have had a great impact in the world, both have suffered and in both cases, parents do anything they could to give their children better education. Jewish and Chinese are the only major cultures to retain their traditions unbroken for thousands of years."

We board a crowded bus that takes us across the Yangtze River to a satellite campus for Xu's freshman Jewish Culture class. He tells me that I will be the first Jew most of the undergraduates have ever met. In the spacious classroom, Xu introduces

me and hands me the microphone and the 100 students applaud vigorously. They then become utterly silent, riveted before I say a word. In English, I tell them about my semi-secular style of Judaism, a slice of life unlikely to show up in their textbooks. They seem to follow, smiling appropriately when I mention my teenage struggle with my father, who forbade me to date a non-Jewish football player from my school. Their attention is so focused that I wonder if they are scrutinizing me to figure out what distinguishes my Jewishness. Forty-five minutes later, I invite them to ask questions.

A slender girl wearing glasses and a ponytail approaches and says, "The biggest difference between Chinese and Jewish culture is that you believe in religion." I ask about Confucius, and she answers, "He was an educator, not in your heart." Another adds, "For us, spirituality does not exist." Later on, at a nearby restaurant. I sit beside Professor Song, a.k.a. Akiba, at the round table where Moshe, Yam, Gal, Omer and Alon, the graduate students I met earlier, have already gathered. Just as the Chinese infatuation with the West has led many to take English names, these students have assumed Hebrew names.

The bespectacled Akiba, uses his chopsticks to place a mound of spicy pork with vegetables on my plate. "We don't have Judeophobia, we have Judeophilia," he says with a smile. It was the Roman historian and warrior, Flavius Josephus, who inspired his interest in Jewish studies. "There were many renegade Chinese; Josephus was the first renegade Jew I discovered," he explains.

The students join in, explaining the origins of their fascination. One student tells me that she "became interested because of a special year, 135 A.D., when most of the people left Palestine and began diaspora. In spite of anti-Semitism, the Jewish people survived and kept their

Securing a Jewish voice in Asia

traditions." Another is interested in the parallels between the Holocaust and the Nanjing massacre, during which Japanese troops killed as many as 300,000 Chinese, including thousands of women and children. Akiba adds, "The Japanese still have not pled guilty to this crime. In Germany the president knelt at Auschwitz; this is a sharp contrast."

As I survey the table, it's evident how comfortable these students are in sharing their passion for Judaism. And though each has a different focus, I am struck that I am witnessing such a deep appreciation of Jewish culture.

I think of a remark Xu made earlier that although he is proud of the similarities that Chinese culture shares with Jewish culture, he believes Jews have exceeded the Chinese in one valuable quality: Morality. He cited the pirated DVDs sold openly on China's streets as an example of shamelessness that he finds all too prevalent in his country. I suggested that Xu's conception of Jews might be a tad idealistic, since I imagined that I myself would willingly buy such DVDs-though I admitted I would feel guilty. "When you buy, you feel guilty," Xu told me. "You have this moral sense; when Chinese buy it, they never feel guilty. That's the moral challenge." He grew solemn and, with the conviction of a rabbi, added, "We could learn to achieve a moral society from Jewish people."

The day winds down and we emerge into the humid air. The aroma of fresh fruit wafts from the back of a faded green pickup truck where students have lined up to buy whole neatly peeled pineapples for around 30 cents apiece. Back at the main campus, I walk with Xu to his bicycle along a tree-lined path. It is the end of the workweek, and a teacher heading the other way nods and says, "Ni hao. Shabbat shalom."

Jewish Times Asia is celebrating its second year anniversary this issue. The title still has a long way to go to be fully "accepted" amongst other Jewish newspapers around the globe. The more established Jewish community papers around the world have been household names for centuries.

Jewish Times Asia is quite new as far as Jewish news titles are concerned. This is surprising, however, considering the age of many of these communities. Hong Kong's Ohel Leah Synagogue, for example, has been in existence for over 100 years. With no previous titles in existence or points of comparison, Mr. Philip Jay, Publisher and Founder, had a vision to try to create something from scratch. Keeping with a specific objective and style for the paper, he wanted to provide local Jewish content not only to the local residents but more significantly to thousands of Jewish business travelers and vacationers that come into Asia. The paper also covers international news, business, a spotlight on a local Jewish community, spirituality and many other topical themes.

"People are generally surprised that we have synagogues, kosher restaurants, shops and centres for Jewish life in Asia. Most of these developments have been very recent. As Asia takes an increasingly more central role in the world economy, communities continue to spring up. By stroke of good fortune, this was the time for this paper to emerge. There is now a newspaper highlighting community life past and present in Asia," comments Philip Jay.

Currently the paper is a monthly tabloid, but it has the capacity

to eventually become a weekly, which is the norm amongst the major newspapers. Jewish Times Asia is very unique in its editorial independence. It reports on all the Jewish communities in the region and maintains a balanced and unbiased outlook, recognising each group's contribution to Jewish life in Asia. It is clear that Asia has a very diverse and mixed spiritual community, ranging from Progressive to the ultra-Orthodox.

The newspaper is distributed free throughout Asia to Jewish residents and to all the community centres. As all media companies, old and newly established, create more value added distribution channels, Jewish Times Asia is now available to the global Jewish community as it recently launched its website: www.jewishtimesasia.org

Now everybody can keep in touch with Jewish news in Asia around the world and around the clock. Although located in Hong Kong, the title has the capacity to travel the world. With the rapid growth of Jewish life in Asia, the publication can strive and grow to meet its needs.

"We truly see ourselves as a paper that reports on the community and belongs to the community. I am excited to be in the business of Jewish news and glad to be there to watch us grow and develop as a community united by our history, our faith and our connection to Israel".

(From Jewish Times Asia, April 2008)

The Jewish Cultural Elite of Shanghai

By Xu Buzeng

The history of Jews in China, especially the experience of Austrian-German Jews taking refuge in Shanghai during World War II, has become a subject of increasing interest. Many books have been published in the past few years narrating this experience and telling the stories of the warm hospitality that the refugees received from the local residents. But little has been mentioned by these publications regarding the remarkable contributions of the Jewish intellectual elite to the culture of Shanghai and modern China in general. Nor has much been said about the deep friendship forged between this intellectual elite and their Chinese counterparts. As a matter of fact, the Jewish contributions to the culture of Shanghai in the realms of music, art, film, puppet theater, education, medicine, urban planning, and architectural design have been truly substantial.

Both the Chinese and the Jewish civilizations have an uninterrupted history of more than five thousand years. The two nations share many common values: both set great store by education, both cherish the family, and both keep good faith. In recent history, both nations suffered untold humiliations. The Jewish people, having lost their homeland, lived under other people's eyes for nearly three thousand years and were almost extinguished in Europe by Nazi Germany. It was not until 1948 that their dream of a restored nationhood came true. The Chinese people kept their homeland, but due to prolonged weakness of the state, their land was repeatedly ravished by foreign powers until 1949 when they finally overthrew their oppressors and founded the People's Republic.

The Chinese and the Jews are both

hard-working and intelligent peoples who have respectively created their glorious civilizations in the course of history. It was history that brought tens of thousands Jews to Shanghai to live with their Chinese hosts as friends in need. Together they co-created a whole spectrum of cultural wonders.

When I began my research on Jewish contributions to Chinese culture more than twenty years ago, I felt a strong sense of urgency because all the Jewish sojourners who had long left Shanghai aged, while the relevant historical documents that were extant were extremely scarce. Even those Chinese who had had contacts with the Jews (as the latter's colleagues, students, or friends) were all advanced in years and interviewing them and taping their oral history had become an emergency mission not to be delayed. Since then, I have attended several conferences and symposiums, both at home and abroad, concerning the Jews in Shanghai and other parts of China. I have visited Israel on a scholarly tour, participated in the shooting of a documentary in Austria, and become acquainted with many former Jewish residents in Shanghai and many scholars in the field. In this race against time I have learned many things and felt better equipped.

Unfortunately, in the middle of this race I suffered a setback due to a failed surgical procedure on my cataract. As a result my vision has deteriorated to near-blindness. In my depression, however, I was inspired by the shining examples of the ancient Chinese historian Zuo Qiuming, Homer, John Milton, and modern Chinese scholar Chen Yingque, all of whom completed their immortal works despite their blindness. I overcame all the obstacles and finally brought this

work to a close.

I have included in this book one chapter whose subject was Jews but not residents in Shanghai. Albert Einstein never stayed in Shanghai for very long, but thanks to the enthusiastic promotion of his theories of relativism by Chinese scientists and intellectuals, his two short visits in 1922 left an extensive and far-reaching impact on the study and teaching of physics in China. His lasting influence is evidenced by the emergence of Nobel Laureates Chen Ning Yang, Tsung-Dao Lee, and Samuel C. C. Ting among Chinese physicists, and in the large number of Chinese scientists and engineers who helped create China's nuclear bombs and satellites.

Since China adopted the policy of reform and openness, Jews from different parts of the world have come again to help the Chinese build a prosperous new Shanghai. Of all the joint ventures, the Shanghai Yaohua Pilkington Glass Company and the Shanghai Diamond Exchange are among the better known. I feel greatly honored and grateful to Mr. Wang Shu and Mr. Teddy Kaufman for the forewords they have written for this book. Mr. Wang is former Chinese ambassador to Germany and Austria, the two countries where most of the Jewish people discussed in this book come from. Mr. Kaufman is the Chairman of Igud Yotzei Sin and Israel-China Friendship Society. Both organizations have extensive contacts with the diasporas of former Jewish residents in China.

I am deeply indebted to my wife Zheng Feng, whose love and tireless support have turned the completion of this book from a shared dream to reality.

Thanks are due to the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press for agreeing to publish this book.



THE ISAIAH JACOB FAMILY SAGA

By Leah Jacob Garrick

The Jacob family came to Shanghai from Baghdad via Bombay in the late 1800s following the wealthy Sassoons. Grandfather, Jacob Isaiah Jacob, worked in the accounting department of David Sassoon and Great-grandfather, Sasson Abraham became the Hazan of the Beth Aharon Synagogue. (where the Mir Yeshiva was later housed during WWII). His daughter, Aziza (Granny) was the only one of five born in Iraq. She married Jidu (Grandfather) in 1903 in the British Consulate (following a religious ceremony). Dad was the eldest child of this union and the first of nine brothers (one died in infancy) and a sister to be born in Shanghai.

Becky (Rebecca) – my mother - was born in Simferopol, Crimea. Her family, the Soloduhins (parents, 3 brothers: Misha (Haim), Saul and Zecharia, and two sisters -- Tania (Frishman) and Acia (Chernomorsky) fled the Czarist pogroms in Russia in the early 1900s (she was 9 months old). They went via the Trans Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, Manchuria and Harbin and then, several years later, (all except her eldest sister Tania who was married) continued on to Brisbane, Australia, where she was raised and educated. On a visit to Shanghai as a young lady she met Dad and they were soon wed. Dad's father forbade the marriage as Mummy was not Sephardic. Theirs was only the second "intra-

marriage" between a Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jew in Shanghai. Neither his parents nor any members of his family attended Dad's wedding, nor were they allowed to have any contact with him until a year later, when I was born - their first grandchild - and all were reconciled. My sister Ritchie (for Rachel) followed shortly after, and brother Jack eight years after her. I dub myself "Ashka-phardic". The Jacob brothers, all 8 of them, played on one football (soccer) team:

The Jacobs Against the Rest (made up with a few additional members from other Jacob families, though not related. It was a popular sport attended by the local Sephardic community with much enthusiasm. The games usually took place in the R.D. Abraham fields. Dad was the goalie and uncle Sam (Ellis), the best player and captain of the JRC (Jewish Recreation Club) and Palestine Team played center, so they had an advantage. The opposing team was composed of other members of the



A family photo taken in 1935 at the dedication of my Grandfather's new apartment building in Shanghai (the French Concession on Rte. Dufour off Ave. Petain). Standing L to R: Aaron, Isaiah (Dad), Solly, Hilda, Ellis (Sammy) Moses, David, Joe. Seated: Becky (Mummy), Jidu (Grandfather), Leah, Aziza (Granny), Hazan Sasson Abraham (Great-grandfather), Ritchie in front of him, Auntie Rosie (Joe's wife) and son Sonny (Ellis).

local Sephardic Jewish community. The Jewish holidays were glorious occasions. On Pesach we all took a day off from work or school in order to bake our own Mussah in a clay oven called a tanoor. I recall an uncle singeing the hair on one arm when he slapped the mussah too close to the open fire. The Hagaddah was read in three languages – Hebrew, and partially in English and Judeo-Arabic. Our Ashkenazi friends wouldn't eat in our home on Pesach because we ate rice, which was permitted by Sephardic custom but considered "hamess" by the Ashkenazim.

On Purim our table was laden with flowers and candy to send to family and friends for Shalah Manot. And on Simhat Torah, when our beautiful Torahs, encased in gold, silver and velvet were brought out of the Ark, it was a sight to behold. On Kippur, I remember coming home in the car between Grandfather, dressed in top hat, tails, and tennis shoes, and Great-grandfather in bowler hat, tux, and tennis shoes. It was prohibited to wear leather on Kippur. When observant guests at our home wanted to pray, they would only ask two words: "Which way?" And father would simply point. It was towards Jerusalem they wanted to face!

In 1936, after Yuma's (Great-grandmother) death, Great-grandfather, who had raised a young Chinese boy servant who learned to speak fluent Arabic named Hunchah, accompanied him to Palestine where he died and was buried. Hunchah returned to Shanghai and when we once met years later he addressed me in fluent Arabic and was surprised that I didn't understand a word (to my great regret)!

Dad had a silk stocking factory and manufactured stockings for a size 4 Chinese foot. Well, I never had any to wear. Our days often began by a call to his associate, Mr. Wong, asking him if he was dyeing today. (Of course he meant, stockings.) Dad lost three of his factories due to bombings in the wars. During the Sino-Japanese war in

1937 there was starvation in the land. And when Japan bombed a British naval gunboat in Chinese waters on December 8, 1941 (Pearl Harbor - - we were one day ahead), things got progressively worse. Food was rationed and once when Ritchie volunteered to pick up our 25 lbs of rice and flour on a rainy day, her bike (our only means of transportation) skid and the contents of the bags spilt on the wet pavement. Quite a disaster for us that month. Ritchie also sometimes carried Granny on the back of her bike to her mahjong games. I wish I had a picture of that! Dad and his brothers spent the war years under Japanese occupation playing



Leaving Shanghai

bridge. And there again, my uncle Joe, who was the Asian champion, had an edge over them. All the British and Americans were required to wear red armbands with a B or A and eventually interned in camps by the Japanese, but on the whole were not physically harmed. The Iraqi Jews were NOT interned, NOT allowed to work, nor in any public places such as parks, cafes, movies, were also required to wear armbands but with an X. So they were very much worse off. Granny had to sell her jewelry and personal property in order to help maintain the family for the duration of the war.

Between 1939-41 the European refugees – about 20,000 – who were fortunate to get visas to exit Europe (NO visa was required to enter Shanghai), found a safe haven there from the unspeakable horrors of Nazi persecution. They came, many with only two suitcases, and the local Jewish community was there to meet the ships, house and rehabilitate them. Soup kitchens,

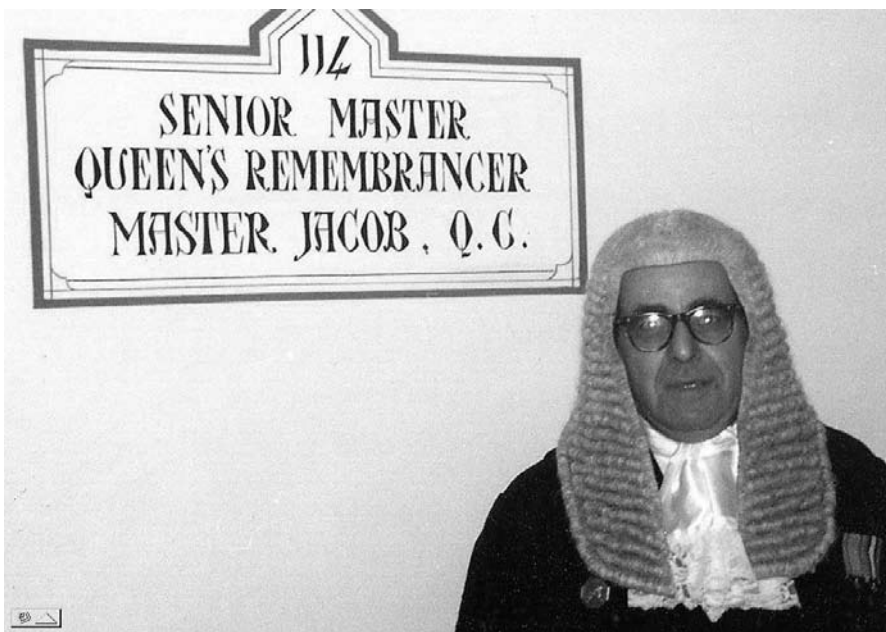
schools, hospitals were set up and although they lived under very primitive conditions during the war neither they nor we, ever experienced any anti-Semitism from the Chinese people. Chinese were not allowed in the public parks unless accompanied by a white child, where signs to the effect reading "No Dogs and Chinese Allowed" hung at the entrances. A shameful blot on the reputation of the white community.

Ritchie and I left Shanghai as students for the States in April 1947 on the converted American army transport the SS General Gordon. We arrived on a Friday and the next day being Shabbat, went to Magen David, the only Sephardic synagogue in San Francisco, where Ritchie met her husband-to-be, Joe Safdie -- our first day in America -- where they made their home. They would have been married 60 years in April '08. (She passed away November 2007.)

Dad, Mummy and Jack fled to Hong Kong in 1949 just as the Chinese Communists entered Shanghai but were not allowed to remain for more than two days by the then British authorities, since they were Stateless Chinese Nationals... Where to go? Fortunately, Macao, an open Portuguese port across the China Sea had no restrictions and they made their home there as the only Jews for 18 years... Once Chaim Herzog, a former President of Israel, visited Macao and wanted to meet the Jewish Community. He was directed to my father! Years later I found his card in one of Dad's prayer books.

Apang, his servant, once told me on a visit to Macao, that Dad used to come home from work on Friday afternoons, shower, change, put a clean white hankie in his jacket pocket, and sit down to dinner all alone when Mummy was away. (She came to the States with Jack in order for him to further his education and returned to Macao when she received her U.S. citizenship five years later.)

Dad always built a Sukkah, all the 18 years he lived there, and conducted his own services. Ezekiel (R.D.) Abraham



Uncle Isaac, who was sent to London to further his education. He was knighted in 1972 for his work in Civil Law.

sometimes sent him kosher chickens (which he himself slaughtered) from Hong Kong. It would be 20 years before we'd see our father again.

Granny and my aunt Hilda went to Israel in December, 1948 on the SS Wooster Victory. It took them 51 days via S. Africa and through the Mediterranean. They were not allowed to sail through the Suez Canal as Egypt was at war with Israel. When the ship docked for a day in Cape Town, South Africa, the entire Jewish community met them with food, fruit and flowers. My Uncle David and his family also went to Israel, where they still live today. I recall being told that he was the youngest student to graduate Cambridge matriculations at the age of 14 with top honors. Yet he couldn't find work when he arrived in Israel. He sold bread from the back of a cart for a number of years, pulled by a donkey (which kicked him a couple of times). He, too, was a great bridge player. When I first went to Israel for a year (1957-58, as a Young Judaea leader on a Hadassah scholarship) I was privileged to watch my cousin Dan, Uncle David's son, march into Jerusalem in Israel's 10th Anniversary Parade.

My cousin Joe (Yosef Yaakov) was the

English language broadcaster for Kol Yisrael at that time and I recall the country stopping at 1:00 p.m. to listen to his mellifluous deep baritone voice and superb diction. He later had several top government posts in London, Ontario, Canada and the position of Israel Consul in Washington, DC.

I used to write to Granny during my lunch break every Friday for 40 years. Once, on a visit (usually every other year) she complained bitterly, looking me straight in the eyes, that she didn't get a letter from Leah that week! What a sense of humor she had.

On my first visit to Shanghai after 40 years I found all our servants in the last place where we had lived. And recently, my niece Regina and I went there together and were reunited with them. We now correspond via email! A four-generation connection! We had a cook who was a Baghdadian chef par excellence... he learnt how to cook from my mother who learnt it from the best cook on earth -- Granny! Once we "lent" him to friends for a few days and when he returned to us he seemed terribly upset. When asked why, he said "They mix all the meat and milk together. I no can cook" (They

obviously didn't keep a kosher home.) We thought it funny. And what a variety of delectable foods had we! Ritchie, Regina and I visited Australia recently and met 50 members of Mummy's family there, descendants of her three brothers. Her father Israel was buried in Brisbane in 1917. Her sisters remained in China... one in Harbin and the other in Shanghai.

Babushka, Mom's mother, later lived with us and in 1937, when Japan bombed and occupied Shanghai, we, being British then, were evacuated to Hong Kong. One cannot escape one's fate. Babushka went into town one day and was killed in a violent motor accident in October, 1937. She is buried there.

My cousin Isia Chernomorsky (known as Cherry by his friends) also lived with us for a while. Auntie Acia, his mother, sent him to us from Harbin to further his English education, and also to escape a threat that he would be kidnapped for ransom. Mummy often favored him to make up for his separation from his parents, and it sometimes caused friction among us kids. He and his family also went to Israel where they now live.

The date of the establishment of the blessed State of Israel was a miracle in itself. Less than a year before the "liberation" by the Chinese Communists of Shanghai in 1949. Since most of the Jews were stateless, they had difficulty in obtaining visas to other countries. Those who could not flee elsewhere, all went to Israel. Less than a year's difference! Another miracle?

I feel blessed to have been raised in such a loving family and have many happy memories of my childhood. There was war, difficult times and long separations but the hardest to bear are the family losses and I feel diminished by each one, my beloved sister's, the latest. May she, and all our loved ones, rest in peace and may their memories be blessed. They are much missed.

Leah lives in San Francisco and can be reached at: leahjg@sbcglobal.net

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1908
March 1908

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THE ELLIS KADOORIE SCHOOLS.

[FROM "THE SHANGHAI TIMES."]

It will be remembered that a short time ago a proposal from Mr. Ellis Kadoorie was placed before the Municipal Council that the Council should take over the excellent school which has been conducted under his auspices, and make of it a Municipal Council school. The matter was favourably received by the Council, but the undertaking was at the moment inopportune and it was decided to let the matter rest until the advent of the Chinese New Year, and the reopening of the Council's present school had indicated how far the new development was called for. In view of the probable immediate interest of the matter the following particulars of the work of Ellis Kadoorie Schools in Hongkong and Canton will be useful as indicating the scope and character of the work in these schools.

The Ellis Kadoorie Chinese Schools Society was organised in 1901 to establish schools in Hongkong and China, the object of the schools being to give a thorough education in the English and Chinese languages, and in the usual subjects of the curriculum of a modern public school. Within three years of the founding of the Society voluntary subscriptions to the amount of \$180,000 were collected, of which amount Mr. Ellis Kadoorie himself furnished about one half. Six schools were originally founded but for purposes of efficiency and strength it was found advisable to amalgamate some of these institutions, and there are now three main schools, one in Hongkong, one in Canton, and one in Shanghai. Each of these schools has branch schools, under the supervision of the head-masters of their parent schools, which serve as feeders of the larger institutions. The appreciation by the Chinese of the work done in these schools has been most marked, no less than 300 Chinese gentlemen having given subscriptions of \$100 each towards the work of the schools. The late Viceroy of the Two Kwangs, H. E. Tao Mu, was interested in the plans of the Society and up to the time of his death showed himself a warm sympathiser and a helpful friend of the enterprise. A uniform curriculum has been adopted for all the schools of the Society, each of which has an elementary department and a higher school, the first of which is divided into five classes, and the other into four. A special certificate of attainment is given to each student who passes the annual examination of the higher department, and a very cursory inspection of the curriculum shews that those who obtain this certificate are qualified either for official appointment or a commercial career.

From recent Hongkong papers we are able to gather a number of particulars with reference to the progress of the schools in the Crown Colony and in Hongkong. The Hongkong College, which was only established seven years

ago, had in 1908 an average attendance of 186 students which had been increased last year to 392, that is, it had more than doubled; whilst in the six months immediately preceding the Chinese New Year the average had risen to 467. This alone is excellent testimony to the work done by the institution, which is second only to the old-established Queen's College amongst the educational institutions of the Crown Colony. During last year large new buildings were erected, and the staff largely increased. At the recent Prize Distribution His Excellency the Governor of Hongkong spoke in the highest terms of the work done by the school, and of its successes on the sports field. There is in connection with the school a valuable school library, which is extensively used by the students.

From the senior Hongkong institution we may turn to the Honan College at Canton, under the same auspices, with an average attendance of over four hundred students. Here also the work is so highly appreciated that new wings are being built to accommodate the increased number of pupils. Mr. R. W. Mansfield, C. M. G., H.B.M.'s Consul-General at Canton, speaking at the recent prize distribution, referred to the excellent work of the school, and to the enthusiastic way in which it was supported by all those Chinese who had any knowledge of the work it was doing. The great success of the work is as remarkable in Canton as in Hongkong, and Mr. Ellis Kadoorie should be proud of the success which had attended his truly philanthropic efforts.

The Shanghai school has been at work under discouraging conditions, for some five years, during nearly the whole of which time the school, in its cramped and unsuitable buildings, has had more applicants for entry than it could admit. The work done is of a high order especially in English, and the general testimony of the principals of institutions of higher learning is that Ellis Kadoorie students who come to them rank easily ahead of students from other schools. The work has been carried on modestly and without any self-advertising function or theatrical parades, but it has been thorough and effective, nevertheless. There is little doubt, in the minds of those able to judge, that the school here is as deserving of high praise as its sister schools in the South, and that in undertaking the school the Municipal Council would have two nucleus of a flourishing institution, admirably fitted to serve the Chinese community.

HONGKONG

Mr. C. S. GUBBAY, of Messrs E. D. SASSOON & Co., has become a director of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation in the place of Mr. A. J. RAYMOND who has resigned owing to his impending departure to Bombay.

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CHUSAN ROAD CHATTER

Issue 396

IYS Hongkew Division

Editor: Kurt Maimann

The Hongkew Ghetto in Shanghai

By James Ross (From: *Escape to Shanghai*)

Three refugees, two Poles and a German, were arrested on March 3, one for being outside the ghetto without a pass and two others for living outside the designated area. They were sentenced to one or two days in the Wayside Police Station and held in a cell that had been used to detain Chinese beggars. Over the next two months, eighty-seven more refugees were arrested, most of them Poles. The sentences were normally one or two days, but several were held for as long as thirty days.

Subinspector Okura was in charge of enforcing the order. He often beat prisoners before throwing them into the cell. The cell was filled with typhus-infecting lice. In April, one of the Polish refugees who had been held in the police station contracted typhus and died. Word spread that a sentence in the Wayside Police Station meant almost certain death. Okura continued to send violators to the so-called death cell. Seven more refugees who had been jailed there died in May; eight others contracted typhus but survived. The Japanese had accomplished their goal. By the spring of 1944, only about 250 refugees were living outside the ghetto.

The Stateless Refugees Affairs Bureau had another function. As of August 10, 1943, any refugee who wished to leave the ghetto had to apply for a pass. Those with jobs or businesses outside the designated area could ask the bureau for authorization to leave Hongkew during the day. The passes were limited to specified areas outside the district; signs were posted on the border

reading: "STATELESS REFUGEES ARE PROHIBITED TO PASS HERE WITHOUT PERMISSION". The man in charge of issuing most of the passes was less vicious but far more unpredictable than Okura. He was a short, schizophrenic Japanese named Kanoh Ghoya, who liked to call himself King of the Jews. The refugees called him the Monkey. Few refugees knew much about Kanoh Ghoya's past. He had been a police chief in a district of Kyushu before coming to Shanghai. He was an aficionado of Western culture, in particular classical music, and spoke English well. Before the proclamation, he had lived on Chaoufoong Road in Hongkew with his wife and two children. They had shared the house with the Simons, Jewish refugees from Germany, who arrive in Shanghai in March 1939. Ghoya often would visit the Simons when young Ruth practiced her violin or when he heard Beethoven on their radio. They considered him a kind and friendly neighbor. Ghoya's wife had been quite ill and died before the Pacific war started. He later remarried and moved with his new wife to 810 East Seward Road, just outside the ghetto. When the Japanese appointed him to supervise the pass system in August 1943, he gradually became a different man. At first Ghoya granted most requests for passes from the refugees who lined up daily at the Stateless Refugees Affairs Bureau at 171 Muirhead Road. (Ghoya had the authority to issue passes valid for one to three months). Okura was responsible for issuing daily passes, valid for less than two weeks). Most

passes were restricted to the International Settlement, French Concession, Western District, or Hongkew and Yangtzepoo. All pass holders were required to wear a round blue-and-white badge, inscribed with the Chinese character for "pass" on their right lapel when they were outside the ghetto area.

But after a few months, Ghoya appeared to grow increasingly suspicious and even paranoid. He screamed at some of the refugees and accused them of being spies or liars. Often he demanded that applicants bring him proof of their employment. "Bring me a list of customers," he would say. (Refugees joked that he once demanded such a list from an undertaker). He accused some women applicants of being prostitutes. Ghoya, only four feet tall, particularly hated tall men and would sometimes jump up on his desk and beat a taller refugee who applied for a pass. During some of his fits of rage, Ghoya would drag a refugee to an office window and threaten to throw him off the second-floor balcony. Several Jewish refugees worked in the outer office and tried to warn applicants if Ghoya was in a particularly bad mood. "Does he beat today?" people in line would ask.

Ghoya made some refugees wait in line all day and then come back each day for two or three weeks before making a decision. His moods swung wildly – on rare occasions he granted nearly every request for a pass. He used his power to abuse and intimidate the refugees, many of whom were dependent on the passes for their daily survival. He was equally

unpredictable outside of his office. Ghoya would occasionally disappear for an entire day, and no one was able to get a pass. Sometimes he beat refugees on the street or in cafés if they were not wearing their badges. (The regulations required only that they wear badges outside the ghetto). On other days, he played with refugee children and posed for pictures in front of the line of people waiting for passes. He often showed up at refugee soccer matches and concerts and plays performed by the refugees, yet he sometimes prohibited a performance for no apparent reason. He loved to talk with refugees about classical music and often visited a refugee doctor's home to play violin while the doctor's wife accompanied him on the piano. Yet once, when his harmony clashed with the playing of one of the refugees, virtuoso violinist Alfred Wittenberg, Ghoya yelled at him: "You play as I direct, or I kill you".

Ghoya was not the most brutal of the Japanese, but, for many refugees, he was their most visible oppressor. Refugee artists, such as Fritz Melchior, drew caricatures of him and comedians told jokes about him. Ghoya became a symbol of the refugees' oppression, a tyrant whose deeds were compared to the evil Haman of the Book of Esther.

There were other forms of oppression as well. The Japanese used both paid informers and a self-policing force to control the ghetto. The best-known – and most obvious – refugee informer was Ewald Drucker, who was believed to be working for the kempetai, the refugee bureau, and possibly the Nazis. Robert Peritz continued to work as an informer and advised the Japanese to jail refugees who complained about the quality of the bread or other relief services of the Kitchen Fund he headed ...

The ghetto years were the low point for the Hongkew refugees. Malnutrition and disease were widespread as more families lost their sources of income and sold off what remaining valuables and household goods they still owned. Theft became more common, too – refugees would sometimes return home to find nearly everything they owned had been stolen. Rampant inflation

magnified the problem. Prices sometimes doubled in a matter of hours.

By the spring of 1944, eggs cost more than \$1 (U.S.) apiece, pork near \$20 a pound, a loaf of bread \$2.50, and milk nearly \$10 a quart. Refugees adapted to the inflation by hoarding commodities, such as flints and kerosene, because cash had become almost worthless. The commodities themselves sometimes proved to have little value. One refugee bought several tins of kerosene from a Chinese friend as a hedge against inflation, but decided to splurge during a cold winter week and use one tin as fuel. He opened it to find it filled with water. The refugee returned the tin to his friend and demanded an explanation. "I thought you wanted this as a commodity, not to use," his friend said. "If you wanted kerosene for heating, you should have told me".

An increasing number of refugees depended on the limited resources of the Kitchen Fund – little was left from the funds that Laura M. Margolis and Manny Siegel, representatives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) had arranged to borrow before they were interned – and on the reluctant assistance of SACRA, which had taken control of the Kitchen Fund in September 1943. The quality and quantity of the food deteriorated steadily as funds ran out. After the JDC had cut off funds in May 1942, no outside money – except those funds sent to the yeshivas – had reached the Shanghai refugees ...

In the summer and fall of 1944, Shanghai was only a secondary target for American bombers based in Burma and Chengtu. The first attacks came in June; the bombing grew heavier and more frequent in the fall and winter. The planes bombed docks, warehouses, and shipping. By the beginning of 1945, most of the bombing raids came during the day.

Thousands of Chinese moved from Shanghai to the countryside to escape the attacks, and many of the Japanese still living in Hongkew moved into the French Concession where they believed they would be safe from the bombing. The Japanese had located munitions depots and communications equipment

throughout Hongkew. They had also placed a radio station near one of the SACRA apartment buildings – also the site of refugee kindergarten – at 826 East Yuhang Road.

By the end of June, U.S. forces had conquered Okinawa and were rapidly constructing air bases there. Shanghai was now an easily accessible target. The Seventh Air Force began to launch daily attacks. On July 17, 1945, twenty-five new twin-engine A-26 bombers from the 319th Bomb Group took off from the Kadena airfield on Okinawa, a little more than five hundred miles from Shanghai, at 9.49 A.M. (Shanghai time), carrying one-hundred-pound bombs. Their mission was to attack the Chiangwan Airdrome, just north of Shanghai. The 319th had just been redeployed from Italy and had flown its first mission in the Pacific, an attack on an airfield on Kyushu, a day earlier. Twenty-three bombers (two had returned after losing contact with the formation) reached Shanghai at 12.09 P.M., flying between 9,600 and 10,600 feet. There was a solid overcast at 6,000 feet, and it was impossible to see the Chiangwan field. Bombardier Robert C. Roberts, flying in the lead plane, could only estimate the site of the target based on their flying time from Okinawa; the other planes released their bombs by following his lead. They dropped 263 bombs.

A few of the bombs had been dropped too early; Hongkew had been hit. Dozens of buildings had collapsed, some solely from the air pressure of the explosions. Refugees and Chinese were wandering in the streets with bloody ears and noses, disoriented by the blast. At the Chinese market on Chusan Road, just past the intersection of Ward Road, dozens of limbs and bodies were scattered in the street. Bloodied corpses had been tossed awkwardly against the walls and atop the stalls of fish and fruit. A few blocks east the SACRA building on East Yuhang Road apparently had taken a direct hit. (Some refugees mistakenly assumed the bombers had targeted the Japanese radio station). Mothers who had children in the kindergarten in the same building had run to the site, but the pao chia [Chinese

(continued on page 52)

Website Correspondence

Simon Smadja

Beijing

Shalom.

I just found your website and I am very supportive for your initiative.

I am a Jewish businessman from France and I live in Beijing since 2005. I keep kosher and shabbat. I lived in Israel many years too.

I love China, the Chinese people and culture. I found a lot of similarities between the Jewish values and the Chinese values, some traditions, popular belief and even more deeper, amazing concordances between the Zohar and the Yi Ching, between Lao Tzi and the Tanna'im.

Anyway, I wish to know if you could help me to contact Chinese people converted or interested to convert in China or Israel who would be interested to correspond with me. Sorry, if I write in English but my Chinese is very poor.

I also want to express my sincere sympathy to the Chinese people for the tragic earthquake that hit China yesterday.

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 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,

Irene Clurman

Email: isee@indra.com

Cibeles Gonzalez

I am a Sephardic Jew and I am writing to ask permission to use some of the photos and the graphic design of the map of China on your website for a book which I wish to write on Chinese Jews. I will mention your website in the picture credits section of course. Please write to me as soon as possible.

Email: gonarhouse@yahoo.com

Iris Dalyell

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Israeli Green Architectural Project

An international architecture competition, sponsored by Living Steel, awarded the first prize to an Israeli Technion project designed for use in China. The now annual competition calls on architects to create sustainable housing options that raise environmental, economic and social aspirations for a growing world population.

The entrants were asked to submit designs for China, Brazil or the United Kingdom that brought innovation and environmentalism to the design process.

Tagit Klimor and David Knafo, lecturers from Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, won the first place for their design in China, which they were able to integrate dwelling units and greenhouses into an apartment complex. The design would allow for growth of enough vegetables for all families living in the development. In addition to a prize of about US\$75,000, the Technion lecturers will also be given the opportunity to construct their project in the Chinese city of Wuhan. This initial development will serve as a construction model for future greenhouse communities.

Jewish Times Asia

Story of Dr. Oswald A. Holzer

Story in 1991 told by Dr. Oswald A. Holzer (1911 - 2000) of Benesov and Prague, Czechoslovakia, to his daughter, Joanie Holzer Schirm, Orlando, Florida jschirm@cfl.rr.com 407 - 425 - 1245

From an interview with my father, Dr. Oswald "Valdik" Holzer: born in 1911 in Benesov, Bohemia/Czechoslovakia; graduated from Charles University in Prague as a doctor, serving in the Czech army in 1939 when Hitler invaded; escaped to China in 1939, married Ruth Alice Lequear in Peking in Oct. 1940, immigrated to USA in 1941, returned to China in 1946-47 with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Adm; lived in Melbourne, Florida from 1952 until his death in January 2000:

"I arrived at Hong Kong on June 24, 1939 and was met in the harbor by Leo Lilling who was a distant relative of mine. Leo had lived in Shanghai and Hong Kong for several years. He had an import/export business and was quite successful. With him meeting me at the boat was Frank Urbanek who was the president of Skoda for the Far East. Urbanek had been in the Far East since the end of World War I. He was an officer in the Czech legion in Siberia. He was married to the daughter of a white Russian general who was a delightful lady. She was the only Russian I know who spoke Czech without a Russian accent. They invited me to stay in Hong Kong, so I disembarked and moved into the Peninsula Hotel in Kowloon.

I left Hong Kong for Shanghai on the next French ship and arrived there the first week of July 1939. I was thinking right away that nobody in their right mind would have wanted to be in this humid, hot and smelly city in July and August. In Shanghai I moved into a boarding house in the French

concession. This establishment was run by Madame Du Pont who claimed to be French but spoke Russian to most of her tenants. I believe she was white Russian married to a Frenchman in Shanghai. I was situated quite comfortably. Accommodations were relatively cheap.

The boarding house also was within walking distance to the "Czech Circle", an organization of Czechoslovakians living in Shanghai. At that time there must have been almost 200 Czechs living there. Since I was an officer in the Czechoslovakian army, I had to register with the military organization at the Circle. They used to go to the race course once a week and exercise. I never attended any of these military exercises as it seemed fruitless.

I also looked for a fellow that I knew in Prague. His name was Rebhun. He was a textile engineer, about my age, who had graduated from textile school in Cardiff. He went to Shanghai before the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. His father was a friend of my father. My father had told me he was supposed to work in Shanghai for some textile mill. When I found him, he didn't work for any British textile mill, but with a Viennese friend by the name of Walter Schiller who had opened a laundry in Shanghai. I thought it a very bright idea to open a mechanical laundry in China since all the Chinese did laundry by hand.

In the Czech Circle I met an elderly fellow named Malecek who was also in the Czech Siberia legion during the war. He didn't go home but stayed in the Far East to open a little "restaurant" with a bar in the French concession. He suggested that I come to his place for lunch sometime. When I arrived there he asked me what I wanted to eat, and I asked, "What do you have?"

Well, he said, "Do you want duck and dumplings with sauerkraut?" (The Czech national dish was goose and dumplings). I hadn't had any since I left Czechoslovakia, so this suggestion was very tempting and I accepted. He then just turned around and started calling out in Czech: "Francis, we have a guest here who wants duck with dumpling and sauerkraut". I asked him "who speaks Czech around here"? "All my Chinese speak Czech." he replied, "I'm not going to learn Chinese so they have to learn Czech when they work for me".

At that time Malecek was leaving for Tsingtao, and invited me to go with him for the month of August. We left in a small Japanese coastal steamer from Shanghai to Tsingtao. As he advised me, I brought a folding cot so that I could sleep on the deck as the inside of the cabin was too hot for any comfortable sleeping. Most of the people on the ship bought the cheapest steerage transportation and slept on the deck. A lot of them were White Russians. Among them was a Russian chess champion who had played chess simultaneously with 20 opponents. He then tried with 10 opponents, blindfolded, but he did not prevail. It didn't take very long for the ship to get to Tsingtao, and the trip was quite enjoyable.

In Tsingtao I found a room with a White Russian family from Shanghai. I enjoyed my stay there, especially the lovely beaches. We were supposed to return to Shanghai around September 2 or 3. As a matter of fact, after returning to Shanghai, I was supposed to arrive on October 1 in Peking to go to work as a research physician at the Peiping Union Medical College Hospital, a job I was anxious to start. On September 1, 1939 the Germans invaded Poland and the war in Europe started. Coastal steamers along the

east China coast disappeared. The British moved down to Hong Kong and Singapore, and the Japanese just stayed in port. Nobody knew what would happen next.

Instead of returning to Shanghai on the day of our passage, we were stuck in Tsingtao for about five days before the traffic along the coast returned to normal. I went back to Shanghai and in a couple of days I took off from Shanghai for Tientsin and Peking. In Peking I reported to the Peiping/Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMC). I moved into a dormitory for Chinese students, medical students, interns and residents. I also had the privilege of eating in the cafeteria which served Chinese food.

I was assigned to the Department of Dermatology, which at that time was doing some vitamin research. Of course, vitamins in 1939 needed lots of research, specifically, Vitamin A and one Vitamin D deficiency. China was an excellent territory to do so. For Vitamin A deficiency we collected hundreds of patients with Follicular hyperkeratosis (a condition that I had never seen before) which was quite common in north China. The Vitamin D deficiency in adults, which was endemic in Shansi province of China, is identified itself as Osteomalacia (a softening of the bones due to defective bone mineralization) and shows sometimes as a gross deformity of the pelvis in females. The women have difficulty bearing children.

In Peking I also soon met a number of interesting people. I became friendly with an Austrian dentist, Dr. Leo Kandel. There was an American of Hungarian ancestry, Dr. Matias Comor, who was the purchasing agent for several museums in the United States. He was buying Chinese antiques and shipping them to the States.

Another person of interest was a Czech named Max Engel. Max was a chemist who graduated around 1908 from Technical University in Prague in chemistry. He came to China and first lived in Kaifeng where he

started manufacturing milk substitute cheeses and meat substitutes out of soy beans. Some of his products were exported out of China, and he became quite successful. He was married to a Japanese lady. By talking to him, I found out that I met her son and daughter in Prague. She left Max and married some other Czech and returned with that fellow to Prague.

Max also had ran into all kinds of problems with the Japanese. They had confiscated his factory, so he moved to Peking. After WWI he became an ambassador for the New Czechoslovakian Republic in Peking. Max liked to make money. There was an opportunity as Ambassador to issue passports to people who would pay handsomely for them. Sometime in the early 1920s, they arrested a Hungarian spy in New York with a Czechoslovakian passport issued in Peking so the foreign minister in Prague revoked Engel's Peking office and kicked him out.

This ouster didn't upset him at all because he set up his own Republic. He had passports printed in Peking for "Republic Czecho-Moravic". It was recognized by all the Far Eastern countries who were issuing visas. The Japanese would allowed people to enter Japan with these phony passports and Max had a lucrative business.

In the meantime he took about three or four Chinese women to live with him. I don't believe he was married to any of them. He had a regular Chinese household with a bunch of Eurasian kids running around. One of his mistresses brought her mother to live with them and she became wife number one of Max Engel.

While in Peking I joined the Peking Club. This was a social club for foreigners living in Peking. They had a lovely club house with tennis courts in the Legation Quarters. The area was a city within a city exclusively for foreigners. I used to go there for lunch as they also had a supply of foreign newspapers and magazines that I could read during the noon hour.

On several occasions I took Max Engel with me for lunch. He had a private rickshaw so he would meet me at the club.

After lunch I would return to the hospital, but Max would go outside on Chien-men to one of the opium dens with his rickshaw coolie. They would smoke opium and spend a lovely afternoon. He tried to talk me into going with him, and one time he twisted my arm, so I tried it. That was the first and last time. I got so deadly sick from it that I didn't go back. After his visits at the club (maybe five or six visits), I was called into the office and requested not to bring him back there - he was a persona non grata. I also had some better friends than Max but he was interesting to talk to anyhow.

I also got to know a retired Professor of Geology (a Columbia professor) whose name was Amadeus Grabau.

At the time he was a professor at the Peking National University, Professor Grabau had an open house every Sunday afternoon, and many of the international intellectuals who were living in Peking went there for tea.

Grabau was one of the co-discoverers of the "Peking Man", an early man homo erectus. He was also a world renowned expert on the Chinese Laos country. One of his Chinese colleagues in the Peking discovery was Dr. Lee and he was frequently present.

Another person often there was Pierre Teilhard De Chardin. He was a French philosopher and paleontologist and also took a part in the discovery of the Peking Man. He was also a Jesuit priest and a grandnephew of Voltaire who had lived in Tientsin from 1926 until 1932, before moving to Peking.

Another visitor to Dr. Grabau's home was a German, Dr. von Hunhausen, who was a very fascinating man. He was a high government official in Imperial Germany before WWI. I think he was living in some town named Biliz. When he was living there, a German who had lived in Peking and was rather wealthy, died and he left his fortune to his relative in

(continued on page 44)

The North China Daily News, Sunday, January 28, 1951 - ROUNDAABOUT

A large congregation of relatives and friends gathered in the Ohel Rachel Synagogue on Tuesday, January 23, 1951 at 4.30 p.m. for the marriage of Miss Flori Isaac with Isaiah Meyer Cohen. Mr. Moses Cohen, the bridegroom's brother officiated.

The bride was attended by Misses Rahma and Esther Isaac, her sisters, as bridesmaids and little Eddie Cohen and Eddie Moses as page boys, while the groom was attended by Mr. David S. Ezekiel as best man. Matron of Honour was Mrs. C.D. Moses and Mr. C.D. Moses gave away the bride. The bride wore a beautiful dress of white satin trimmed with pearls and stones and orange blossoms. She wore a Juliet cap also trimmed with pearls and stones and orange blossoms attached to a long veil and carried a bouquet of white lilies. The bridesmaids in ice-blue taffeta and Juliet caps, carrying bouquets of roses made very charming attendants.

Following the ceremony a reception was held in the auditorium of the Shanghai Jewish School, where the happy couple received the congratulations and good wishes of more than 300 friends.



The wedding of Flori and Isaiah Cohen was the last wedding held at the Ohel Rachel Synagogue before it was taken over by the Communist regime in early 1952. Mr. Moses Cohen, Head of the Sephardi Jewish Community and a few remaining members of the Sephardi Jewish Community were present at the time the synagogue was handed over.

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Story of Dr. Oswald A. Holzer (continued from page 43)

Biliz. The relative asked Hunhausen to help them settle the estate, so he went to Peking. Things happened in such a way that he just stayed in Peking. He bought a little island outside the city walls on a lake and built himself a house. He brought a group of Chinese workmen over to the island who farmed the land. When he settled in the house, he started writing books and translating German classics like Gerte and Schiller into Chinese. He was teaching at the German University (a Catholic University) in Peking.

On the island he considered himself absolutely self sufficient as he grew enough food for himself and his Chinese. He also manufactured his paper. He set up a printing plant on the island so he could print his books. His printing plant was also big enough to print all the material for the German/Catholic University.

Occasionally he had other visitors from the foreign colony in Peking. One of

them was Mrs. Johnson who was the wife of the American Ambassador at that time in Chungking. When she was living in Peking she would visit.

Dr. Grabau's secretary was a German refugee from Stuttgart. She also taught English at the Catholic University, so the Chinese students who took her course in Peking spoke English with a German accent.

About every two weeks we had Chinese lunches at the club. They used a Mongolian stove which they put in the garden. Everybody was broiling the lamb and beef on this big Mongolian grill. The people attending these parties were mostly diplomats from different embassies such as the British, American, and French, who were stationed in Peking at that time. Because of my contact with the Chinese patients (in and out patient department of PUMC), I needed a basic knowledge of the Chinese language. The people in PUMC suggested that I attend the College of Chinese

Studies in Peking to learn the basic medical conversation. The College of Chinese Studies was an extension school of the University of Southern California, and university credits were available. I spent about two months at the language school. It was very intensive training. Surprisingly in one week I was able to go out on the street and bargain in stores. In about three weeks I was also able to talk to my patients at the clinic.

We started language class at 8 a.m. with a small interruption at about 10 a.m. when we used to play volleyball for about 15 minutes. At noon we entered the dining room of the school and sat at a table with one of the Chinese teachers. We were not allowed to speak anything else but Chinese. At 1 p.m. we returned to class. At 3 p.m. we had 15 minutes for volleyball again. We left at about 5 p.m. This was the best run language institution that I have ever seen in my life."

New interactive database of Shanghai Jews

A call for information

By Uri Gutman, Consul General of Israel in Shanghai

The Israeli Consulate and the Foreign Affairs Office of the Hongkou District Government are in the process of creating an interactive database about the 30 thousand Jews who lived in Shanghai in the 1930s and 40s.

The objective of this database is to document the history of the city's Jews. The database will be placed at the Ohel Moshe Synagogue, which was restored to its original structure in 2007 and was reopened as **Shanghai's Jewish Refugees Museum**.

The database will be launched on Israel's 60th Independence Day in 2008 and will be accessible to all who visit the museum. In the effort to create this comprehensive collection, the Consulate General of Israel is requesting information about former residents of Shanghai and their relatives.

Such information can include: name, gender, address, nationality, escape route, date of arrival in and departure from Shanghai, vocation, permanent residence/country, photos, contact

information of the former residents or their relatives, related events in written/audio/video and more.

Any such information should be sent to following contact details:

**Hongkou District Government FAO:
Attention Rita**

Tel: +86 21 25657923

Fax: +86 21 25657928

Email: shdfao@163.com

Please CC the Consulate: Info@shanghai.mfa.go.il

Please indicate in your subject: Ohel Moshe Data Base Project + your Family name

The database project is the third phase of a charity campaign initiated in 2007 by the Consulate General of Israel in Shanghai. The purpose of the campaign is to show the appreciation and gratitude of Israel and the world Jewry to Shanghai and the elderly people of Hongkou District, who received the Jews into their neighborhoods during Nazi persecution.

The campaign has involved contributions by the Consulate General and 26 Israeli companies. The first phase was the renovation of an Elders' Activity Center in Houshan

Park, which is located in the former Jewish Ghetto. The project also included equipping the facility with new furniture, computers, a library, entertainment facilities, musical instruments and medical equipment. The center was inaugurated on Israel's 59th Independence Day.

The second phase of the charity project included equipping a home for the elderly in Hongkou with air conditioners on each floor, flat screen TVs in the bedrooms, a piano and projection equipment for the entertainment hall and exercise equipment in the garden. It was heartwarming to see what a significant difference this made in the lives of the residents of this home.

The Israeli Consulate and the Hongkou District government are working jointly to complete the third phase of the campaign, the creation of the interactive database about Shanghai's Jews, at the Ohel Moshe Jewish Refugees Museum. You can help us preserve the history and memory of the Jewish Community in Shanghai by sending information and spreading the word.

Thank you in advance!

10 YEARS AGO

OLD SHANGHAI FRIENDS REUNITED



From Left to Right Seen playing mahjong: Bella Berkovitch (nee Fineland), Ray Ionis (nee Tukachinsky), Ducia Chertok (nee Tukachinsky), at the home of Leah Garrick (nee Jacob). This was taken about ten years ago when Ducia visited San Francisco from Sao Paulo, Brazil where she lived. We mourn the recent loss of Ducia and extend condolences to her family and brother Mark. Her late elder brother Joe, (Yosef Tekoah), served as Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations and was the first president of Ben Gurion University in Beersheva among other top posts.

Letters

Mutsuo Fukushima, Kyoto, Japan

To T. Kaufman:

Thank you for your letter dated Jan. 8, 2008. Seeking to comply with your request to know the address of the daughter of General Higuchi, I called her last night by telephone and spoke with her and her husband. Mrs. Fujiko Hashimoto, the sole daughter left by the general, expressed joy at receiving a copy of your book, which I had sent to her residence in Sapporo, Hokkaido. I think that the Israelis are really respectable because they do not forget people who did good for them.

Her address is as follows:

1-3-25-401 Kita-Jyurokujo, Higashi Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan 065-0016

Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto liked your book and expressed the wish to obtain more copies of your book in order to send them to other relatives of General Higuchi. When I contacted the couple, they had already contacted one of Japan's leading book importers, Kinokuniya Co., in order to place an order for more copies of your book.

They want to share with their relatives the news good of the publication of your book which described General Higuchi's humanitarian act to save the lives of Jewish refugees stranded in Otopor. But the bookstore disappointed the couple by saying that it cannot import your book, because your book was not published by a big publishing house, although it is really an excellent book. I promised to them that I will contact you to help realize their wish to obtain some more copies of your book. Although they said they are ready to buy five copies of the book, I told them that probably Mr. Kaufman will not charge any money for the five copies. Would you be so kind to send five copies of your book to Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto? Mr and Mrs. Hashimoto are happy because of the good courageous act done for suffering people by their father – who is her real father in blood and the father-in-law for her husband.

I pray that the Israelis will live in peace even in the face of its current hostile neighbors and pray that Israel will continue to find good friends to help it whenever it is in trouble.

Francesco Spagnolo, Head of Research

Judah L. Magnes Museum

To T. Kaufman:

On behalf of the Magnes Museum, I am delighted to acknowledge the receipt of the volumes you recently mailed to us. Jews of Harbin and Wo Xinzhong De Haerbin Youtairen are excellent additions to our Library and Archive collections, which include significant materials concerning the Jewish presence in modern China.

Thank you for sending us these important documents.

Address: 2911 Russell Street, Berkeley, CA 94705

Tel: 510 549 6950 x339

Horst Eisfelder

Dear friends,

I have just received the news of the death on 29th April of Mr. Wang Fahliang, who had been the driving force and the guardian of the Ohel Moishe Museum in Shanghai. He would have been about 88 or 89 years old, but never grew tired of talking to the many tourists that came to the Museum, and to tell them the story of the Jewish refugee community that had lived in that locality during the Second World War.

This news came to me from Chen Jian, who is apparently the successor to Mr. Wang.

Kindest regards to all,

Email: eisfelderh@iprimus.com.au

Rabbi Anson Laytner

President - Sino-Judaic Institute

Dear Mr. Kaufman,

At the 9 December 2007 meeting of the Sino-Judaic Institute's Board of Directors, we decided to modify our structure in order to better serve our mission and objectives.

Our revised Mission Statement states:

The Sino Judaic Institute (SJI) is a non-denominational, non-political and non-profit organization, founded in 1985 by an international group of scholars and lay persons for the purpose of promoting understanding between Chinese and Jewish peoples, and to encourage and develop their cooperation in matters of mutual historic and cultural interest.

SJI's objectives are:

- The study of the ancient Jewish community of Kaifeng and assisting its descendants as appropriate
- The study of Jewish life in Shanghai, Harbin, Tianjin and elsewhere in 19th and 20th centuries
- The support of Jewish studies programs in China
- The study of cultural intersections between Chinese and Jews, for example adoptions, literature, diasporas, etc.
- The study of Sino-Israeli relations

With these in mind, our foci for the coming years are:

- Working as appropriate with the Kaifeng Jewish descendants
- Supporting Jewish studies programs in China, and the one at Henan U in particular
- Publishing Points East and Sino-Judaica.
- Improving the SJI website and its links with the Igud Yotzei Sin and the China Judaic Studies Association and pursuing talks with them about cooperative efforts leading to a possible merger.
- Exploring modern Sino-Judaic connections such as adoptions, mixed cultures, contemporary thought, etc.

All of this is a long-winded introduction to asking you to consider serving on our International Board. Your interest and expertise in our areas of interest have long been appreciated and a current Board member nominated you because she thought you would be of terrific value to our work.

What is involved?

The SJI International Board of Directors is comprised of non-North Americans. It complements the 18 member Managing Board from North America. Members of both bodies are chosen for three-year terms by vote of the board itself as vacancies occur.

The only difference between the two bodies is that members of the International Board are not expected to attend the annual Board meeting because of the time and expense involved in traveling to North America. However, teleconferencing is an option and most SJI business during the year is conducted by email. In every way, members of the International Board are full board members.

The Board's purposes are threefold:

1. Conducting the business of SJI.
2. Identifying strategies and projects that contribute to achieving the mission of SJI; and
3. Finding resources to enable the success of those strategies and projects.

Member responsibilities include:

1. Supporting the vision and mission of SJI through personal outreach that advances the work of the Institute, including representing SJI in his/her community or country.
2. Understanding and communicating the values, goals, mission, and objectives of the Sino Judaic Institute.
3. Contributing to the growth of SJI through personal annual contributions, fund-raising efforts, and identifying benefactors who will further the goals of the Institute.
4. Comporting oneself with integrity—including active participation in Board meetings, email exchanges and teleconferences—and respecting opinions and matters discussed in confidentiality.
5. In addition to serving on the full board, each board member is expected to serve on one of the board's working committees (currently in formation).

We deeply value your skills and abilities and believe that you could add greatly to our collective work to educate people about Jews in China and to promote friendship between our two peoples.

We hope you will agree to serve on our International Board.

If you do, please send an affirmative email response to this letter providing your full contact information. FYI, our next Board meeting is planned for August in Seattle.

Christina Fu

Dear Mr. Yossi Klein:

Hello! I am a translator based in Shanghai, a member of Shanghai Translators' Association and a teacher in Shanghai International Studies University. Mr. Guan Xinsheng, a famous author in Shanghai and a friend of mine, asks me to email you an English synopsis of his novel *Malinda's Kiss*, which tells a heroic story of Jewish refugees in Shanghai during the World War II. The novel extols the good relationship between the Jews and local people in Shanghai. Mr. Guan intends to have his novel translated into English and published by an Israeli publishing house. We would be very thankful to you if you can help us find the publishing house. We can mail you the novel *Malinda's Kiss* in Chinese if you desire to have a look at it. Mr. Guan Xinsheng wants to hear your opinion about revising the novel. We look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you very much for your help and cooperation.

Tel: 021-26455731(mobile), 63251276

Address: Room 403, No. 85, North Sichuan Road

Shanghai 200085, P. R. China

Patrick Cranley

Shanghai

Mr. Kaufman, thank you very much for sending your wonderful book, which I am enjoying now. Where shall I send payment – and how much was the postage?

Please note also that I am still in search of a map of Harbin from the old days – hard to figure out how the old street names match up with the new.

Thanks and looking forward to hearing from you.

Roger Fuller

I am the principal of the premier Jewish Day School in America, Milken Community High School. We have recently begun a program in Chinese and would like to develop an "exchange" or visitation program with Jewish Communities in China. Can you help me begin such a program?

Email: rfuller@milkenschool.org

Tel: 310-440-3561

Ella and Arnold Garfinkel

Shalom Mr. Kaufman,

It was an honor and our pleasure meeting you and members of Igud-Sin in your office in November 2006. To refresh your memory – we are Mira and Phil Materman's very good friends.

Your Bulletin is so interesting to Arnold and me and all other Jewish ladies (mostly Hadassah members here in Vegas (I distribute the Bulletins to our members and at one point last year many watched a documentary of Shanghai's Jews). It is historically interesting of Jewish lives around the world. Sometimes I feel like a voyeur looking in a window of a neighbors' home.

Take care. Hope to see you again in the fall. We are planning a visit again.

Email: arnella98@aol.com

Address: P.O.Box 33714, Las Vegas, NV 89133

Mimi (Yemima) Rolband

Dear Teddy,

As you know, I will be going back to China in May, taking a group of people with me. I have just been rung by Jesse Tracton and his wife Naomi who live in Australia and had a lovely chat with them. They suggested that I ask you if it would be possible to advertise our forthcoming trip through the Igud.

Would you be prepared to do this in principle? What would be the best way to bring our trip to the attention of your members/readers? We haven't got the money to put a large ad in the Bulletin, but we would like to do something to advertise the trip as it is taking place very soon. I sent an email to Christie about our visit but still haven't received a reply, but we still need a guide in Harbin to tell us about the Jewish community. Maybe the Chinese tour operator will have better luck contacting them.

I hope you are well and busy as always. I really enjoy reading your Bulletin - it is so full of nostalgia. I only wish my father was still alive.

Yves Berna

I am a Ph.D student from the University of Mainz, Germany and am currently researching about the Escape of European Jews from Europe to Shanghai and am taking a special interest in Ho Fengshan, the consul of the Republic of China in Vienna from 1938-1940 who issued visas for Shanghai to Jews. I already intended to visit your center in Tel Aviv last year, but the visit unfortunately did not materialize. I will now be again in Israel from 15.3-22.3 and would appreciate if I could come and visit the Igud Yotzei Sin this time. I also heard that you had an archive and I also would be very grateful for any information or help. I also wondered if there was a possibility to meet Miss Lilith Sylvia-Doron living in Zahala and / or if by chance you had any contact with Miss Doron. Thank you very much in advance.

Email: berna.yves@gmail.com
Tel: 0049 172 766 2452

Tzachi (Yitzhak Shickman)

Son of Simon Shickman

Grandson of Isaac Shickman

Dear Igud,

Thank you so much for your kind gift this Pesach and Yom Haazmaut. As a combat soldier, life is not always easy and it is so kind of you to remember me at this time and to help me remember my connection to my heritage in China.

Thank you.

Dear Teddy,

Having returned to England, I am writing to thank you very much for so helpfully paving my way in China, and particularly for an unforgettable visit in Harbin. In Nanjing, I was delighted to meet Professor Xu Xin and his team and hear from them about the Jewish Institute. It was very moving to see the Israeli flag and Jewish artifacts and books in the heart of China. The members of the Institute entertained me for lunch, and we had a wonderful discussion. My university has a centre for the study of Jewish History with particular interest in German Jews. I hope very much we will be able to develop a joint project. There was, after all, a significant immigration wave to the East before and during the Second World War. Professor Xu Xin seems in good health and sends his very best wishes. I was also impressed by Professor Song, who I believe will succeed him next year, and the young 'Yirmiya' who speaks excellent Hebrew.

All this was fascinating, yet the journey to Harbin was emotional and important for me in a very deep way. Thanks to you, it was made possible.

I was met in the airport by Chrisie and a driver, organized very kindly by Professor Qu Wei. They took me to the exhibition, which is really amazing.

I was delighted to be able to identify some names and places from family photographs and my father's stories. The Director of the Jewish Centre in the Academy entertained me for dinner and I was happy to meet some students.

On the following day we went to the Jewish cemetery, which is beautifully kept. My grandfather's grave is as you described. I also visited your family graves, and attach pictures. This was very emotional. I only wish my father could be here to hear about it. By the end of the day, I toured through the main Jewish sites, and took many pictures. Professor Qu Wei and his charming Director met me for lunch, and the Director accompanied me in the afternoon. I was very impressed by Professor Qu Wei and his interest in the Jewish community. I will gather whatever photographs and memoirs we have and send copies for the Harbin archive.

So thank you very much once more for enabling me to get to know the Jewish side of China and visit my father's and grandfather's home town.

With warmest wishes,
Naomi Tadmor

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Geoff, Rivka Sue & Miriam Minyi Newman

Tokyo, Japan

Dear Teddy and Rasha,

We hope you had a wonderful Passover.

After I got married, I became a photographer. I am putting together a photo exhibition of my wedding story "East Meets West – A Jewish Wedding In Jerusalem". I send you the file on the attachment. Do you think it could be part of the exhibition you are planning?

Peter Berton

This is a recording of the Russian Easter Overture by the Harbin Symphony Orchestra recorded by Columbia Records Japan at the NHK Studio in Tokyo during the orchestra's tour of Japan in March 1939. It is Spooky to hear the orchestra where I was playing in the first violin section 69 years ago. It is a long, but interesting story how I received the record label and recording, so I will be happy to tell you if you e mail me.

Jewish Life in Shanghai 60 years ago

TAGAR-
—STRUGGLE
—BIWEEKLY
—MAGAZINE



Organ of the United Zionist-Revisionists & Brit Tzampeldor in the Far East

Miss J. Hasser
English Editor
M. Iznir
Russian Editor
L. Tormchinsky
Publisher

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UZR NEWS

A FARWELL dinner was given at the Betar club on February 20, in honor of Haver and Havera M. Morguleff, prior to their departure for Eretz Israel. The couple received the best wishes of all their Revisionist and Betari friends that evening for their new life in the homeland. In his speech, Haver Morguleff stressed the importance of unity and strength. He stated it is imperative first, for all to study Hebrew intensively, and stressed the effectiveness of enforcing discipline in Betar ranks.

A presentation was made to Mara Morguleff by V. Zoubitsky on behalf of the UZR Executive and Mifkada Betar, and to Sarah Morguleff by Mrs. Irene Magit on behalf of the Ladies Committee for Fighting Zion.

Haver Morguleff and his wife carried with them the best wishes of their many friends when they left for Eretz Israel on March 4 aboard the s.s. General Gordon.

A Revisionist meeting and concert was favorably received on the night of Tuesday, March 2 at the Betar Club. Speaker at the meeting included V. Zoubitsky, chairman of the China Executive of the UZR, J. Kolberg, chairman of the UZR's City Committee, and A. Kalmanowitch, Executive member.

The musical program was presented by Mr. Irene Magit, one of the city's leading pianists, and Mr. Joachim at the cello. Mrs. Mira Kaptzan sang several songs, while Mrs. Kolberg recited in Russian.

JRC Mini-Soccer League

ALTHOUGH entering the J.R.C. mini-soccer Cup as the underdogs, we have by virtue of our two wins entered the finals. In the finals we are to meet the best from J.R.C. In the first encounter, although we were losing 1-0, we were awarded the game because the opposing team Hakoah left the field, opposing the referee's decision when we were awarded a penalty, the J.R.C. Committee voted in favour for our win by the score 3-0.

In the semi-finals we edged out the Center Reds, 2-1, enabling us in such a way to enter the finals of the J.R.C. Cup. Both goals in this game were scored by W. Zimmerman. The following represented our team in both games:—I. Miller, A. Krumholtz, P. Miller, R. Binfefeld, W. Zimmerman, E. Cunio, G. Kanzepolsky, S. Poliak, A. Klajman.

ISC Soccer League

THE Betar football team has shown itself to be highly reckoned with, by holding to a draw the two league leading teams, the Foreign "Y" Zeroes and the "Y" Blues. In our first game in the International Sports Club B Division Football League, we played to a draw with the Foreign "Y" Zeroes, who now lead and have virtually clinched the league. Although we were leading 2-0 at half time, the Zeros retaliated with three goals in succession to take the lead. This did not daunt our team, and once more we took the initiative, putting the ball between the goal posts twice to lead again, the score being 4-3 in our favour. With but a few minutes left for play, the Zeros once more scored, to even the score at 4-4. The final whistle blew soon afterwards ending the game. For our first attempt at making a comeback at this game, the result achieved proved very successful. The goal scorers were V. Rojensky (1), E. Cunio (2), and one goal the Zeroes mis-kicked into their own net.

The following players represent our football team:—G. Kanzepolsky, P. Miller, R. Binfefeld, A. Krumholtz, S. Poliak, A. Klajman, J. Pittel, V. Rojensky, A. Miller, E. Cunio, S. Shornik, A. Rodfeld, W. Zimmerman, I. Miller. Although the above names represent fourteen players, yet when a game is to be played, just eleven turn out, hardly ever having a reserve on hand, this because we have had extremely hard luck with the sick list.

In our second game, we had an easy time at the expense of the J.R.C. B, whom we won from by the score of 3-1. The goal scorers in this game were:—S. Poliak, G. Kanzepolsky and E. Cunio.

It was in our third game that we slipped up a chance to win our league division, by dropping an exceedingly close decision to the Clube Lusitano Greens 3-2. Most of the time we were on the offensive, and our forwards, although breaking through many times were unable to score more than twice. The goal scorers were S. Shornik (playing his first game), and E. Cunio. At this stage of play we were leading the league, but dropped to fourth place because of the loss.

In our next game we met the now league leading "Y" Blues. Once more our team was throughout the game on the offensive, and it was only in the second half that A. Rodfeld put the leather between the goalposts after a melee in front of their goal. This tied the goal that the Blues scored in the first half. Twice our ball hit their crossbar and rebounded back into play. But in the last ten minutes of the game, they were bombarding our goal from every side, and only the sterling play of our defense, and the splendid saves by goalkeeper G. Kanzepolsky, stopped the ball many times from passing into the goal. The game ended with our second tie, 1-1. By tying this game we moved one position up, and are now in third place.

In the next game we meet the White Stars, a very strong Jewish team, the result of which will be published in the coming issue.

(Contributed by Joe Levoff)

JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN CHINA

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www.chabadbeijing.com

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www.chinajewish.org

Shenzhen

Chabad: 1st Floor B, 9 Xinbafeng,

Jiabing Road, Cai Wu Wei Bldg,

Luo Hu (Lo Wu) District,

Shenzhen 518001, PR China

Tel: (86) 755 8207 0712

www.chabadhongkong.org

HONG KONG

Jewish Community Centre

One Robinson Place,

70 Robinson Road,

Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2801-5440

www.jcc.org.hk

Chabad Hong Kong:

1/F Hoover Court,

7-9 Macdonell Road,
Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2523 9770

www.chabadhk.org

Ohel Leah Synagogue:

70 Robinson Road,

Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2589 2621

www.ohelleah.org

United Jewish Congregation:

Jewish Community Centre,

One Robinson Place,

70 Robinson Road,

Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2523 2985

www.ujc.org.hk

Shuva Israel:

2/F Fortune House,

61 Connaught Road, Central,
Hong Kong.

Tel: (852) 2851 6300

www.shuva-israel.com

Kehilat Zion:

Unit 105, 1/F, Wing on Plaza,

62 Mody Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East,

Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2368 0061

www.kehilat-zion.org

The Hongkew Ghetto in Shanghai (continued from page 40)

system-cooperative (group) neighborhood association] held them back. A few mothers climbed to the roof of a nearby building and began to cry and scream; they could see that the roof had collapsed and most of the building was levelled.

[Dr. Sam] Didner had joined a team of refugee doctors. Prison guards had opened the gates of the Ward Road jail, and the refugee doctors set up a makeshift operating room in the yard. The hospital in the Ward Road camp already was filled to capacity. First-aid trucks and refugees with stretchers were collecting the wounded Chinese and fellow refugees and delivering them to the prison yard. The nurses and doctors quickly organized a triage system. Most of the victims were in shock. Doctors first sutured the wounds and amputated the limbs of victims with the most serious injuries. Didner saw one

fourteen-year-old Chinese boy covered with blood; his wounded intestines and liver were dangling outside his stomach. Didner could not stand the sight; he knew the boy could not be saved. He quickly filled a syringe with morphine and injected it in the boy's arm. He died peacefully from the fatal dose.

The doctors had only a limited amount of ether for anesthesia and quickly ran out of bandages and dressing. Camp residents brought linens and clothing to the yard and ripped them up for use as bandages. Women refugees prepared tea and coffee for the wounded and brought blankets and pillows for them to rest on. The refugees organized a guard service to prevent looting.

By sundown, all of the wounded had been treated. Didner's clothes were covered in blood as he headed back to his

office. More than two hundred Chinese and thirty-one refugees had been killed, including Felix Kardegg, the head of the Jüdische Gemeinde and organizer of the refugee pao chia. There were more than five hundred wounded, half of them refugees, and hundreds more were homeless. But the kindergarten children had been saved. Their teacher had decided to let the children out early that day, and they had left the SACRA building just minutes before it was hit.

The next day the Chinese residents of Hongkew came to show their gratitude to the refugees. They wheeled dozens of rickshaws loaded with food for the homeless, donated money to the camps, and brought cakes for everyone. The tragedy had momentarily bridged the gulf that had long separated the Chinese from the foreigners.

Shanghai's Ohel Rachel Synagogue Hosts First Wedding in 60 Years

By Erica Lyons - (From Jewish Times Asia, April 2008)

For the first time in sixty years, Shanghai's historic Ohel Rachel Synagogue played host to a Jewish wedding ceremony, the marriage of community members Denis Gi'han

and Audrey Ohana. point of the Shanghai community, it fell under Chinese government control in 1952. Built originally in 1920 by Sir Jacob Elias Sassoon, a Baghdadi Jew, Ohel Rachel once housed over 700

and storage space. The structure itself fell into disrepair, but its role in the history of the Shanghai Jews was not forgotten.

In 1993, the city of Shanghai declared Ohel Rachel to be a historic landmark, allowing it some level of protection. In 1998, the city made minor repairs, though not structural, to Ohel Rachel in order to prepare it for a visit from then-US first lady Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State Madeline Albright.

The government allows the local Jewish community, numbering about three hundred, use of the premises on a limited number of special occasions. The community and its worldwide supporters continue to hope that one day this important piece of our heritage will be returned to the Jewish community.

They continue to hope that Ohel Rachel will again be the centre of Jewish life in Shanghai and this will be only the first of modern Jewish weddings to be celebrated here.

As Rabbi Greenberg said in his address at the chupah, "Any chupah is a happy occasion but when a synagogue has waited for over 60 years and the day arrives, the joy is huge." This life cycle event is representative of the revival of Jewish life throughout China and a sign of things to come.



and Audrey Ohana.

The bride, Audrey Ohana, has lived with her family in Shanghai for ten years. Her father, Maurice Ohana, serves as president of the local Jewish community. The wedding celebrations commenced on 11 March with a henna painting ceremony, a Moroccan custom, when henna is made and the bride and her guests are painted. A traditional mikvah party was held on 12 March.

The chupah was erected and the wedding itself was held on 13 March at Ohel Rachel, the historic synagogue once again played host to a Jewish wedding. Permission to use the synagogue for this event was granted by the Chinese government. Over 250 guests from around the world were present to join in the festivities and be a part of history. Rabbi Shalom Greenberg, who serves as the Chabad emissary in Shanghai, officiated at the ceremony.

The significance of the event is very much tied to the history of the synagogue itself. While it is still a symbolic focal

worshippers and boasted a collection of thirty Sifrei Torah.

Ohel Rachel was once one of seven synagogues in the Shanghai community. Today it is only one of two still standing and neither one is used for the purpose it was originally built for. The other, Ohel Moische, located in the Hongkew district, houses a museum dedicated to memorialising the Jewish experience in Shanghai. Following the flight of most of Shanghai's Jews post-World War II, Ohel Rachel was emptied and converted into government office



Searching and Researching

Andrei Sidorov

My name is Andrei Sidorov and I'm an amateur historian from the city of Vladivostok, Far East of Russia. I learned about you from "Partners" - a Chinese magazine published in Russian. It said that you wrote a book called "Harbin Jews in my heart" which depicts the 63-year-long history of your people stay in Harbin.

Mr. Kaufman, is there a possibility to get this book (if it is in English) and/or other books with data on Jews who lived and died in Harbin?

Email: sidorov@vlc.ru
Tel.: +7 (4232) 222209

Elizabeth Estbergs

To: Association of Former Residents of China

I am unable to ring internationally, so am sending an email.

Could you look up Max and Hildegard Chodowski in the Emigranten Adressbuch Fuer Shanghai Mit Einem Anhang Branchen-Register and email their address? I am going to Shanghai and would like to see where they lived.

Max tried unsuccessfully to come to Australia in 1947 but was sponsored by American relatives and so went there instead. Max is my father's uncle.

Also, I am trying to find out how they travelled to Shanghai. Do you have access to that information?

Email: libby-estbergs@bigpond.com.au

Address: PO Box 64 Captains Flat NSW 2623 Australia

Tel.: +61 2 6207 5726

Laura Zdan

My name is Laura Zdan and I am currently a film student at Ithaca College. This semester, I am fortunate enough to take a special course in which I am part of a documentary

series to be broadcast in Seoul, South Korea. I would be EXTREMELY interested in showing stories from the Shanghai Ghetto during the Holocaust, and I was wondering if there was anyone you could get me into contact with so that I can share their story. Thank you very much and God bless.

Peter Goldberg

I am in the process of digitizing the photo archives of the AJDC here in NYC and have come across a few photos taken aboard the SS Anna Salen in 1950 in Panama. I was wondering if you keep a photo archive and would be interested in my trying to email you JPEGs of these images for your files. There are about 7 images in all. I have also come across a photo of the ship taken in Australia in 1952.

Email: hypergon@aol.com
Tel.: 212-222-0394

Barry Seff

We are trying to find any information on the following relatives:

Srul Srulevich (- died in 1940?), left for Shanghai, China in 1918. Wrote letters and helped son Moris Srulevich, owner of Ship Agency in Shanghai. In 1940 sent last letter after his father died. In 1948 moved to Israel, where he died.

Daughter Anna Srulevich (~1929, Shanghai, lives in Vancouver, Canada ?2004)

Email: barseff@gmail.com
Tel.: 347-341-5264

Charles Lapkoff (Lapkofsky)

I am also interested in the Labkovsky/Lapkofsky ancestors. I have a lot of info but unfortunately nothing about the family in China. Would you be willing to share info?

Address: 247 Oakside Road S.W.

Calgary AB T2V 4H7, Canada
Rafael Kuchmar

My father Josef Kuchmar was born in Harbin in the year 1920, his family came to China at the beginning of the 19th century. I am looking for relatives with a similar family name or heritage.

Email: iris1952@013.net

Address: 5/6 Hanamer Str.

Jerusalem, Israel

Tel: 97226483527, cell
972545300140

Paul Silverstone, New York

It has been suggested to me that I might be able to find a missing relative who was in Shanghai during the war through this address.

The person I am looking for is Evelyn Garbaty, born in Shanghai in 1940. Her parents were Henry Garbaty and Helen Piasetsky, who was the daughter of Moshe Piasetsky and his wife Esther Chrzan, a sister of my grandfather Harris Silverstone.

The Garbaty family came to America in 1947 and then perhaps went to Israel.

The Piasetsky family came from Makow in Poland, leaving there after World War I and going to Harbin via Irkutsk. I believe they went to Shanghai in 1931.

Manja Altenburg

On behalf of Prof. Dr. Madeleine Herren (Dept. of History, University of Heidelberg, Grabengasse 3-5 69117 Heidelberg - <http://www.historisches-seminar.uni-hd.de>)

I do research about Jewish life in Harbin. The project is called Harbin: "Paris of the Orient". We are very interested in the living conditions in Harbin from 1898 to 1949. Besides all the other "Communities" we center our investigation on the Jewish community.

We are very, very enthusiastic about your website and all the information we could get about Harbin. You really did a wonderful work for preserving history.

In context with our research we saw the publication from T. Kaufmann. We would like to ask politely, if it is possible to get the book from T. Kaufmann: "The Jews of Harbin Live on my Heart."

Any costs, (price itself and cost for sending) of course we will pay.

Email: manja.altenburg@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

Tel: +49-6221-485993

Peter Nash, Sydney

I was very pleased to read three significant articles in the latest Bulletin, #394 - one from my friend Andrew Jakubowicz, the extract from James Ross' book and an article by Lydia Aisenberg. It is the last article that I want you to help me with. It is a story about the Gewing family. I would like to get in touch with Ehud or preferably his

twin brother Heinz as we were in the same class together at Shanghai Jewish School. In fact I have a class photo. So please give a contact email address. [My birth name was Nachemstein]

I believe you had an email from Thomas Dorn in Shanghai about his discovery of 19 passports in a Chinese curio shop. Thomas contacted me because one of the passports belonged to my mother and as it also included my name. He was able to find me through the internet. I and also my good friend Sonja Mühlberger in Berlin are trying to locate the other owners or their descendants. At the moment I don't know if I will regain possession.

Nicholas Belzer

Hi, I am wondering if there are any Jewish olim from China living in Jerusalem that I can be put in touch with. I am a student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and I'm writing a paper on the Jews of China and I

would be very grateful for any help.

Email: nicholasbelzer@yahoo.com

Tel : 054-233-7929

Peter Schulhof

I am writing regarding the synagogue building in Tianjin, China and also regarding the Museum of Modern History in Tianjin.

My parents and I lived in Tianjin (Tientsin) from 1941 until November, 1948 having escaped the Nazis from Prague in 1940. My father, Joseph Schulhof, was a member of the presidium of the Jewish community in Tientsin. I attended the Tientsin Jewish School until our departure. My father had been in contact with you and Igud Yotsei Sin Bulletin until his death in March 2005 when he was over 101 years old. In fact, you published our family's escape story in 2005 in a series under the title "From Prague to the Far East" by Joseph Schulhof as told to Lewish Weiner. My mother, Charlotte, continues to live in Middletown, New York. She is 98 years old.

My wife and I visited Tianjin in October, 2007 for the first time since my departure in 1948. I have been in contact with Liu Yue (whose mother apparently established the Tianjin Museum of Modern History) through Dr. Thomas Hahn who was on the staff at Cornell University until recently. My wife and both of our children graduated from Cornell. Dr. Hahn was responsible for organizing an exhibit at Cornell in June 2004 celebrating Tianjin's 600th anniversary. Igud Yotsei Sin had published a letter from Dr. Hahn requesting material about Tianjin Jews to be included in the exhibit. I responded to Dr. Hahn, and my parents agreed to lend a number of documents and photos to Cornell for the exhibit. Subsequently, Liu Yue contacted me since the Tianjin Museum of Modern History is interested in those documents and photos. Liu Yue was kind enough to drive my wife and me around Tianjin during our visit including to the building that was the Tianjin

Synagogue which I remember quite well. I understand from Liu Yue that he has tried to contact you about the possible refurbishment of the Tianjin Synagogue building and about the Tianjin Museum of Modern History. It appears in fair condition from the outside, but I have no idea about the interior. I gather that an extra floor was constructed inside sometime in the past. Unfortunately a set of stairs was constructed at the front.

I would appreciate your and others' thoughts and perspective regarding the status of the Tianjin synagogue building as well as regarding the Tianjin Museum of Modern History, including the possibility of establishing some kind of a forum regarding the history of the Jewish community in Tianjin. I would also appreciate receiving the Igud Yotsei Sin Bulletin. Thank you.

Address: 75 Henry Street, Apt. 24K
Brooklyn, NY 11201, U.S.A.

Joanie Schirm

I am actually searching for information about my late father, Oswald Holzer, who arrived from Czechoslovakia to Shanghai in 1938 and he was aided by a man there named Leo Lilling. I want to know more about Mr. Lilling but if there is any information about my father, that would be great also. Thank you!

To: Igud Yotsei Sin, Association of Former Residents of China I corresponded with you before and you were kind enough to offer to print a letter in your publication about an individual (Mr. Leo Lilling) that I am trying to locate information about who he was. I wanted to share this excerpt below which is from interview tapes that I did with my father about 15 years ago. My father, Dr. Oswald A. Holzer, was a young Czech army doctor when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939. He was able to get a visa for China and traveled to Shanghai first arriving in July 1939 and then moving on to Peking, where he met and married my mother. I offer this information

below to you if you would like to print it in your publication. I have 9 hours of audio tape with interesting stories of my fathers, many of them about China. I am writing a book about my parents very interesting lives. I have 355 letters from years 1939 – 1946, 80 percent of them in Czech, many to and from relatives and friends from his years in China. This is my largest challenge at the moment because I do not read Czech. I am in search of a way to get them translated from Czech to English for their personal and historic value. Our family lost 43 relatives in concentration camps. If there are people or organizations you know of who would like to help, I would appreciate knowing. I have about 15 of the letters translated thus far and I find them amazing. At any rate, I hope this life story from my father is of interest to you for your publication. I would appreciate knowing the best way for me to subscribe to your publication. Please send me information. Thank you very much,

Joanie Holzer Schirm
516 Lakeview Street, Orlando, FL
32804 USA
407-425-1245

Fritz Neubauer

fritz.neubauer@uni-bielefeld.de
X-ASG-Orig-Subj: Report on German Shanghai Jews Subject: [gersig] Report on German Shanghai Jews To: "German Jewish SIG" <gersig@lyris.jewishgen.org>
Sign up now for value-added services at <http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/ValueAdded.asp>
The German Daily "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" printed a three-column story in its edition of today, February 21, page 9, with the title "Mit dem Adler und dem J" on how 19 passports of German Jews have turned up at a Shanghai Antique Dealer. The German manager Thomas Dorn then managed to trace some of the family of these survivors. In particular the story of the NACHEMSTEIN family from Berlin is described. Their son,

Peter NASH, is a GerSIG member who lives in Australia now. The article in German (with a photograph of Peter NASH and Thomas DORN) is accessible on the net through the link <http://www.faz.net>

David Babow (Samsonovich)

Albuquerque, New Mexico

How do I make contact with Henia Kaufman (Samsonovich)?

My grandfather, Alexander Aaron Samsonovich, was the son of Aaron Lazarevich Samsonovich, one of the three brothers who owned the Samsonovich Brothers Department stores in Harbin. My mother and grandfather and grandmother lived in Harbin and then went to Shanghai. They subsequently went to Yokohama, Japan and on to San Francisco, California.

I'm trying to locate as many Samsonovich kin as I can in order to fill in the blanks on our family tree.

Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Peter Nash - Sydney

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 to say 1000, then you get to 20,000.

2. The Emigraten Adressbuch from Nov 1939 only has approx. 5000 names, that is for heads of households, 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?

Email: genealogy@rpnash.com

Audrey Roby

I found your addresses on the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies - Cemetery Project website. I'm really interested in genealogy and I was wondering if any of you could help me.

I don't know much about my great grand father and am looking for some information. His name was Grosman (the spelling might have been changed) Leontissy (Kosmich). He arrived in China, Dailian, in the early 1920s from Vladivostock (Russia) and died between 1936 and 1940 in either China (Dailian?) or Japan (Nagoya maybe?).

My grand mother told me that he used to travel to Japan a lot as he was fluent in Japanese. But she hardly knew him as he died when she was still a little girl.

Where could you I find some information on him?

Geoff, Rivka Sue & Miriam Minyi Newman

Tokyo, Japan

Dear Teddy and Rasha,
We hope you had a wonderful Passover.

After I got married, I became a photographer. I am putting together a photo exhibition of my wedding story "East Meets West – A Jewish Wedding In Jerusalem". I send you the file on the attachment. Do you think it could be part of the exhibition you are planning?

Jewish doctor turned 'Buddha savior' under Mao

Odyssey of young Jewish doctor who became a general under Mao Zedong after fleeing Nazis is focus of new exhibition in Vienna (AFP)

Jakob Rosenfeld, a Viennese physician turned hero of the Chinese revolution, is less well-known than Norman Bethune, a Canadian doctor whose services during the Sino-Japanese war inspired Mao to write an essay that he later made compulsory reading for his People's Republic. But the Jewish doctor – General Luo as he was known in China – was the only one of a handful of foreign volunteers to make it into the upper echelons of the revolutionary army.

"He was even named health minister in the Communist army's provisional government in 1947," Gerd Kaminski, and Austrian expert on Chinese history and the organizer of this new exhibit at Vienna's Jewish Museum, told AFP.

The show is part of a series of events hosted by Austria marking the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties with Beijing in 1971.

'Buddha savior'

Nothing in the background of the young, renowned Viennese gynecologist presaged his future as the 'Buddha savior' of the Red Army, as he was nicknamed. Unlike Bethune, a militant communist who joined Mao as early as 1938, Rosenfeld "aspired only to a comfortable life shuttling between his practice and evenings at the opera," said Kaminski, who has written a book on the Jewish doctor. Born in 1902 in Lemberg – now Lvov, in western Ukraine, but then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire – Rosenberg, the son of a non-commissioned officer in the

imperial army, narrowly escaped the fate of many Jews in Nazi Germany. Deported to the concentration camps at Dachau and then Buchenwald, he was released in 1939 on condition that he will leave the Reich within two weeks.

"The only possibility at the time was to board a ship for Shanghai where no visa was necessary to enter the international concession," Kaminski said.

Soon known as "Little Vienna", Shanghai's Jewish neighborhood provided a refuge to some 25,000 European Jews and Rosenfeld quickly opened a practice there. But following an encounter with a propaganda agent for Comintern, the Soviet-based international communist organization to promote the spread of the proletarian revolution, and after seeing the Chinese persecuted by the Japanese army of occupation, the Austrian decided to join Mao's New Fourth Army in 1941.

Jewish-Chinese legend

The rest is the stuff of legend – endless stories of the young doctor on the frontlines, operating tirelessly on war wounded with only the light from a flashlight. He also waged his own war to improve hygiene and trained dozens of Chinese doctors in the methods of modern medicine.

"He was a great hero and a humanist, admired by the army and the population, who saved thousands of lives and whose role was comparable to that of Bethune," China's ambassador to Austria, Lu Yonghua, told AFP.

Elevated to the rank of general, Rosenfeld tended to the elite in the Communist Party's Central Committee

and forged close ties with Liu Shaoqi and Chen Yi, who would later go on to become respectively president and foreign minister of China.

"But Rosenfeld was never close to Mao himself," Kaminski added. The Austrian "General Luo" chose to remain in China after the fall of the Nazi regime and participated in the Red Army's march on Beijing before returning to Vienna in 1949, the year the People's Republic of China was founded.

Back in Austria, he found a city devastated by war and still rife with anti-Semitism where he could "no longer adapt" following the extermination of his family, he wrote in his diary.

The Jewish doctor tried to return to China in 1950, without a visa, and had to settle in Israel where he died two years later following heart failure.

Hero again

"With the new power in place and the beginning of the Korean War, foreigners were not necessarily welcome in China anymore," Kaminski said. Forgotten after Liu and Chen fell out of favor during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s, Rosenfeld was only gradually rehabilitated after Mao's death in 1976. In recent years, however, his "hero" status was restored, thanks in part to Kaminski's efforts.

"Today, he has a statue, a hospital and Beijing's National Museum of China set up an 800-square-meter (8,600 square feet) exhibit in his honor inaugurated by President Hu Jintao," Kaminski noted. The exhibit on Jakob Rosenfeld at Vienna's Jewish Museum will run until January 14.

ISRAEL CELEBRATES 60th INDEPENDENCE DAY AND LAUNCHES SHANGHAI JEWS DATABASE & EXHIBITION

On June 6, the Consulate General of Israel in Shanghai, in collaboration with the Hongkou District People's Government, held a ceremony to launch the "Shanghai Jews" Database and to open the "Israel-China Relations" Exhibition, marking Israel's 60th Independence Day at the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum (the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue). After a minute of silence for the victims of the earthquake in Sichuan Province, Mr. Uri Gutman, Consul General of Israel and Mr. Yu Beihua, District Mayor of Hongkou both made remarks during the ceremony, and later on launched

the "Shanghai Jews" Database, which was established with donations from Israeli companies and will host information about some 30,000 Jews who took refuge in Shanghai during the 1930s and 1940s.

The "Israel-China Relations" Exhibition was opened on the same day. This exhibition honors the friendship between the two countries and its peoples and exemplifies remarkable achievements in the fields of science, technology, agriculture, academic relations, culture and others.

Some 150 guests were present at the

ceremony, among them were Vice Mayor of Shanghai Shen Xiaoming, Director General of Shanghai Foreign Affairs Office Li Mingjun, District Mayor of Hongkou Yu Beihua, Consuls General, the donor companies, leaders of the Jewish community, several former Jewish refugees in Shanghai during WWII, Manli Ho (the daughter of Ho Fengshan, the Chinese diplomat who saved thousands of Jews when he was posted in Vienna and who was recognized by Israel as a "Righteous Among Nations"), and other distinguished guests.

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Vice Mayor Shen, Director General of the FAO Li, District Mayor Yu, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Morning!

I am happy you could join us today to celebrate Israel's 60th Independence Day and the friendship between China and Israel.

Before we begin, however, we would like to convey our sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims of the Sichuan earthquake. As some of you may know, the Government of Israel contributed 3 million US dollars for humanitarian aid. We hope this will provide some relief and we pray for the speedy recovery of the region and its people.

It is during moments of crisis that nations and people are tested

Consul General Uri Gutman

regarding their humanity. Being here, in Ohel Moshe, we are reminded that the exhibition of humanity in Shanghai and in Hongkou is a central pillar in the relationship between Israel and China that we celebrate today.

Shanghai people received some 20,000 Jewish refugees from Europe at a time when they had nowhere else to go. Despite their own poverty, the war and the foreign occupation – Hongkou residents shared the little they had with our people and this was, in fact, a great exhibition of humanity.

The late Dr. Fengshan Ho, former Consul of China in Vienna during WWII, also showed great humanity, when he provided exit visas for thousands of Jews, enabling them to flee Nazi persecution and find

refuge here. He is – of course – recognized by the State of Israel as a Righteous Amongst the Nations and we are honored to have his daughter Manli Ho, here with us today.

Last year, in our effort to honor the humanity exhibited by China, Shanghai and Hongkou, the State of Israel, together with Israeli companies, embarked on a three-phase project.

We completed the first phase a year ago today – on June 6th – when we inaugurated the renovated and re-equipped elder's activity center in the nearby Huoshan Park – where Jewish refugees and Hongkou residents passed time together during WWII.

In January 2008, we completed the second phase in which we donated



Demonstration of the Database to Vice Mayor Shen

needed equipment to the Hongkou Social Welfare House.

The independent State of Israel emerged out of the ashes of the Holocaust and we have the obligation to document and to keep the stories of the past alive for future generations. So it is in this spirit that we launch here this morning the "Database Project", with our partners and friends at the Hongkou District Government. The database is the third phase of our joint activities, and it will include in it the names and stories of the Jews who lived here in the 1930s and 40s, commemorating our joint history, which is the foundation of our close and rapidly developing relationship.

In this context, too, we are opening today the exhibition on the "China-Israel Friendship". In it you will be able to see the development of our relations over the years – in various fields.

I will not burden you with too

many details but would like to emphasize, that in addition to the sharp increase in trade over the past years, we have engaged in many people-2-people activities, including an Israeli dance week, an Israeli film week, training programs and numerous visits on both sides. For example, as we meet here today, a delegation of some 200 officials and businessmen from Shanghai are currently visiting Israel, participating in a variety of economic and cultural activities in celebration of the 15-year anniversary of the "Sister-City" agreement with Haifa.

Another example that took place last weekend was the renewal of the cooperation agreement between Israel and the Shanghai Children's Medical Center. That agreement was initially signed by Vice Mayor Shen who was then the president of the Center. We are also honored to have Prof. Liu, the current president of the Center, here with us today.

We thank you again for coming to celebrate with us our 60 years of independence. We are proud of Israel's achievements so far and continue to strive for peace in the Middle East, so that we may channel our energies and creativity towards making this world a better place. Finally, we have many to thank here today:

- First, our partners in this venture: the Hongkou District Mayor, the Vice District Mayor and the FAO's DDG Chen, and his team, who have worked closely with us to bring both the charity projects and the database project to fruition.
- I would also like to thank the Israeli companies who have supported these projects. Together we have raised and are giving 88,000 RMB in funds and equipment to the "Database Project" launched here today.

**Thank you all for coming!
HAG ATZMAUT SAMEACH**

China Goes Kosher as Exporters Use Rabbis to Reassure Consumers

by INN Staff

Jan. 18 (Bloomberg) -- Chinese exporters, facing a U.S. backlash over tainted food products, are turning to an unlikely group of inspectors to help clean up their act: Jewish rabbis.

Kosher certifications by rabbis have doubled to more than 300 in China in the past two years, according to the Orthodox Union, a New York-based organization that does inspections. The group expects thousands more plants to get certified in the next few years, covering everything from spices and chemical additives to frozen berries, sliced garlic and beef.

Chinese exporters, eager to gain access to the \$11.5 billion U.S. kosher market, had already begun seeking the certifications before the uproar over contaminated seafood, toothpaste and pet food began last year. Now, after a rush of recalls, the rabbis say the companies are paying for the inspections to ease growing concern among U.S. consumers about imports from China.

"When we certify a product, consumers know there is another pair of eyes" on it, said Mordechai Grunberg, an American rabbi whose seven-member team examines Chinese factories, scans company books, and even drops in for surprise inspections to ensure the biblical dietary laws are followed.

The surge of kosher certifications hasn't come without hiccups. Many Chinese companies were unfamiliar with the concept: One furniture maker asked for kosher certification, drawing a polite rebuff. Another facility asked to get certified as kosher even though it was smoking eel on site, a kosher no-no. The company was turned down; it is now building a separate, kosher-only facility.

Jarred by Grilling

And many companies weren't ready for the grilling the rabbis gave them on their first visits to their plants, seeing it as a sign of distrust. "In China, everything works

on relationships," said Grunberg of the Orthodox Union, which certifies more than 400,000 products worldwide.

Grunberg first traveled to China in 1981 in what would have been the first kosher-certification there. It didn't work out. His translator failed to meet him at the airport and his hotel had rats. Grunberg didn't bother to examine the facility, instead returning to New York the next day.

"It was a trip wasted," he said in a telephone interview from Israel, where he lives. When he returned two decades later, "it was a different China."

Now, kosher "is part of the vernacular" as companies there try to take advantage of the U.S. market, he said.

Fully half the Chinese exports to the U.S. of \$2.5 billion a year in food ingredients, such as coloring agents and preservatives, are kosher, up 150 percent from two years ago, the Orthodox Union estimates.

'Phenomenal'

"We are experiencing phenomenal growth," said Rabbi Moshe Elefant, chief operating officer of the kosher-certification body.

While the rabbis see to it that the products adhere to such laws as prohibitions on pork and the mixing of meat and dairy, they don't perform scientific food-safety tests.

"There is definitely marketing power to have a kosher symbol on products," said Mark Overland, who directs the kosher and organic department at Cargill Inc., the largest U.S. agricultural company. "But it would be a misnomer to equate kosher with food safety."

Many consumers disagree. Buyers of kosher products -- the majority of whom in the U.S. are non-Jews -- are seeking healthy and safe products, according to a 2005 survey by Lubicom, a marketing firm specializing in kosher products.

Plant Codes

And one of the kosher safety measures

has already been seized on by Chinese regulators since the U.S. began cracking down on the imports. Since 2001, the Orthodox Union has required makers of products it certifies as kosher to place a code on their packages identifying the plant where it was made so the product can be traced in a recall. In September, Chinese regulators began requiring the same code on all food exports.

For Chinese companies, the benefits are clear amid increasing scrutiny from foreign consumers. More than two-thirds of Americans say food and product recalls have dimmed their view of Chinese-made products, according to a poll released last month.

For Nanjing Biotgether Co., certification is a prerequisite for selling fructose, salts and amino acids to U.S. makers of sports drinks, pharmaceuticals and food flavoring. Exports may soar to 450 million yuan (\$62 million) in the first year since it got the kosher stamp last June, more than 11 times the previous year's total, said sales manager Wu Yonghong.

'Vote of Confidence'

Zhoushan Genho Food Co., in eastern China's Zhejiang province, got its frozen tuna fillets certified as kosher last August. Its sales have picked up, too.

"At a time of renewed international scrutiny on quality and safety, any additional stamp of approval or certification is equivalent to a vote of confidence," said sales manager Chen Xing.

While food companies say they already use many comprehensive safety procedures, analysts say they have a lot to learn.

"If unsafe food is getting through, then someone has dropped the ball," said James Morehouse, a senior partner at A.T. Kearney in Chicago and lead author of a study on China's food-safety system. "The rabbis are an example of a working inspection system."

DONATIONS

SOCIAL AID FUND

USA

LOS ANGELES

From AMERICAN FAR EASTERN SOCIETY of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA towards
the IYS Social Aid Fund for the PASSOVER US\$ 1365

SAN FRANCISCO

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Golda LAZAROVICH

wishes to express her sincere gratitude to all her dear friends who remembered
her 90th Birthday

From	Mr. and Mrs. Norman SOSKIN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	US\$	500
"	Golda LAZAROVICH towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	100
"	Mark E.KAPTZAN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	50
"	Mark E.KAPTZAN, Anya LUCHOW-LIBERMAN and Vicky JOHNSON in memory of Bella KAPTZAN on her Yahrzeit	"	50



IN MEMORY OF MY BELOVED

LILIAN

ON THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER PASSING

US\$ 5,000

Donation to the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund

AARON BELOKAMEN

USA

From	Ronald and Bonnie FEIN in memory of Deanna and David FEIN	US\$	5000
"	Esther and Paul AGRAN on the occasion of their 60th Wedding Anniversary	"	180
"	Marina CUNNINGHAM, the daughter of Bella Rogovina and David Shlau, towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	50
"	Anna OSTROVSKA in memory of Mrs. A.JACOBSON	"	700
"	Susan SHENNON in memory of her husband Gregory SHENNON on his Yahrzeit	"	50
"	Yaacov LIBERMAN in memory of his mother Gisia LIBERMAN	"	50
"	Bertha ELKIN and family in memory of her beloved parents Solomon and Elizabeth OPPENHEIM	"	100
"	Gregory HODSON in memory of his wife Rose HODSON	"	25
"	Leo K.WINSTON in memory of his parents Kolya and Raya VAINSTEIN	"	100
"	Robert MATERMAN in memory of his beloved parents Dina and Abraham-David MATERMAN	"	360

In lieu of flowers

From	Frank J.WACHSNER	US\$	36	From	Nadia FINKELSTEIN	US\$	100
"	Rolf DAVID	"	50	"	Theodore BELL	"	250
"	Ike M.KEREN	"	120	"	Anna HUDSON	"	100
"	Eva E. Mc COY	"	25	"	Balfoura F.LEVINE	"	50
"	Joy KATZEN-GUTHRIE	"	180	"	Gina STEINBERG	"	50
"	Judith WEINSTEIN	"	54	"	William Patrick CRANLEY	"	30
"	Morrie MINK	"	100	"	Solomon JACOB	"	50

PANAMA

From	Tony WIZNITZER HANONO for the IYS Social Aid Fund	US\$	30
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CANADA

From	Sandra SOUCCAR in memory of her mother Vera YAPPO	Can\$	25
"	Lessy KIMMEL towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	100
"	Lily and Dov LIFSHITZ towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	50
"	John VAINSTEIN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	50

AUSTRALIA

From	R.SHAW towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	US\$	100
"	Rachel RIVKIN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	A\$	1000
"	Samuel SAKKER towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	200
"	Bluma KOTZ and family in memory of a dear husband, father and grandfather Leova KOTZ and Bluma's parents S.N. and Sh.A.SHTEINER	"	100
"	ANONYMOUS towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	30
"	Anta LEVITAN in memory of her father David DINABURG	"	100

On the occasion of Stella UDOVITCH's 82nd Birthday her friends collected A\$ 420 :

From	L.ONIKUL and I.ROGOVOY	A\$	100
"	G. and M.VORON	"	100
"	V.KARLIKOFF	"	50
"	P.THEAKSTON	"	50
"	M.GELBERT	"	50
"	N. and Y.GOOSEV	"	50
"	H.STERN	"	20

ISRAEL

From	Flora and Bob FREIMAN for the Holidays towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	NIS	500
"	The OLMERT family in memory of their late parents Mordechai and Bella OLMERT	"	800
"	Mark and Olga SHIFRIN in memory of their dear parents Sophia Abramovna and Naum Markovich SHIFRIN	"	180
"	Alina KRINKEVITCH in memory of her dear RELATIVES	"	400
"	Teddy PIASTUNOVICH in memory of his father Arie PIASTUNOVICH	"	200
"	Yosef KLEIN in memory of his parents Olga and Shmuel KLEIN	"	360
"	Leonfrid HEIMAN in memory of his wife HENRIETTA	"	100
"	Moshe LICHOMANOV in memory of his father Arie LICHOMANOV	"	150
"	Leah BECKER in memory of her mother Anna Borisovna ALTCLASS and family friend Shimon FUCHS	"	100
"	Timna LILAKH in memory of her father Yitzhak NADEL	"	300
"	Minia TSEM in memory of his dear PARENTS and wife TAMARA	"	180
"	Daniel MORDUHOVICH towards the IYS Social Aid Fund for T.Kaufman's book	"	100
"	Bobby BERSHADSKY in memory of his mother Raya RISKIN on her Yahrzeit	"	100
"	Elya and Dan GODAR in memory of Eliahu BAR-YOSEF	"	100
"	Leah KLURMAN in memory of her cousin Yitzhak CHAIKIN	"	80

In lieu of flowers

From	Shoshana and David AROMA	NIS	300	From	Inga and Kurt NUSSBAUM	NIS	600
"	Garry BROVINSKY	"	500	"	Mira and Israel PISETSKY	"	200
"	Rosa GERSHEVICH	"	200	"	Carmella ROSEN	"	100
"	Elia and Dan GODAR	"	100	"	Sara ROSS	"	100
"	Jacob GURI	"	200	"	Ruth SHAMIR	"	200
"	David GUTMAN	"	200	"	Tatiana and Edward SHEINGAIT	"	50
"	Prof. Daniel KATZNELSON	"	360	"	Rivka SHMERLING	"	200
"	Genia KAUFMAN	"	120	"	Tsipora SCHNEIDERMAN	"	150
"	Mark KREMER	"	100	"	Benny TZUR	"	400
"	Joe LEVOFF	"	200	"	Aviva and Benjamin VEINERMAN	"	500
"	Tamar and Arie MADORSKY	"	100	"	Eli YOFFE	"	100
"	Tamar MEYER-TABACKMAN	"	150	"	Meefa and Boris ZILBERG	"	300
"	Gabriela NACHTOMI	"	150				

SYNAGOGUE FUND

USA

From	Gina STEINBERG towards the Synagogue Fund	US\$	200
"	the WAINER family in honour of JOE's 85th Birthday	"	850

ISRAEL

From	Mark SHIFRIN in memory of his dear mother Sophia Abramovna SHIFRIN on her Yahrzeit	NIS	180
"	David MINDLIN towards the IYS Synagogue Fund	"	100
"	Benny TZUR in memory of his wife Yona TZUR on her Yahrzeit	"	100
"	Reva HOFFMAN in memory of her husband Ludwig HOFFMAN	"	150
"	Reva HOFFMAN in memory of her sister Luba FISHBAIN	"	150
"	Hezkeyahu DVIR in memory of his parents Henrich and Ida DAVIDOVITCH	"	200
"	Shulamit EVEN in memory of her father Mark MORGULEV	"	180
"	Mary KAMIONKA in memory of her beloved parents Motia and Hana SHWARTZ	"	120
"	Genia KAUFMAN in memory of her brother Abraham SAMSONOVICH	"	120

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

AUSTRALIA

From	Lika KAGANER and family in memory of our beloved husband, father-friend and Deda Yasha KAGANER towards the Scholarship Fund in memory of Yasha KAGANER	A\$	100
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We deeply mourn the passing of the old friend from China

HARRY SAVELSON

in Montreal on June 25, 2008,
and express our deepest sympathy to his family.
May he rest in peace

Allan & Dorothy Rayson
Montreal, Canada

Shanghai Restores Historic Synagogue

By **CHRISTOPHER BODEEN**
Associated Press Writer

SHANGHAI, China (AP) - Shanghai has started restoration work on one of its two remaining synagogues as part of China's effort to revive Jewish heritage in a city that provided refuge to tens of thousands of Jews during World War II. In another sign of the new interest, a rabbi ministering to the city's Jewish community said Thursday he believes officials will eventually turn over the other synagogue for regular worship services.

The restoration of the Ohel Moishe synagogue, now a Jewish history museum, is due to take five months. The budget hasn't been revealed, although reports said the government has already spent \$1.3 million on fixing up the surrounding area and promoting it as a tourist site. "Shanghai is a great memory for the Jewish people and it's so much better to have this history in the shape of a building than to simply read about it in a book," said Rabbi Shalom Greenberg, who moved to Shanghai in 1998. He is a representative of the Chabad-Lubavitch World Headquarters, an Orthodox Jewish organization based in New York. Efforts to salvage Shanghai's Jewish history have been driven by both domestic and overseas scholarly interest, as well as by the growing numbers of Jewish expatriates in the booming city. That trend in turn has been embraced by city leaders, who are eager to cast Shanghai as cosmopolitan and welcoming to foreigners.

China's largest city with a population of 20 million, including more than 100,000 foreigners, Shanghai is also a major industrial and commercial

center, home to China's largest stock exchange and other financial markets. Before World War II, the city boasted a large and influential Jewish community with its own schools, newspapers and at least seven synagogues. Most Jews left after World War II and their synagogues were turned to secular uses or torn down.

After several decades of dormancy, the community is growing again, with about 2,000 Jewish foreign residents in the city. Most worship in private homes due to a lack of access to synagogues. China's communist government, which strictly controls religious activities, does not list Judaism among its five officially recognized religions. Work began last month on Ohel Moishe, which housed offices and a bookshop before it was converted into a museum of Jewish history in 1996. The project aims to expand its exhibits and restore the brick collonaded building to its original appearance, removing added structures and repainting its white masonry. While Ohel Moishe will remain a museum, city officials appear to be moving toward allowing regular services at Shanghai's other surviving synagogue, the Ohel Rachel, Greenberg said. Its current owners, the city education bureau, now open it for Jewish services only a few times a year. "The government understands and I'm sure, hopefully sooner than later, that it will allow it to be used for its original purpose," Greenberg said.

Shanghai's Jewish community got its start when the city, one of the world's great seaports, was opened to foreign trade in 1842. Concessions were

granted to Britain, the United States and France, leaving the city carved up between Western powers. The Jewish community, whose leading members were Iraqi immigrants and their descendants, was thriving by the time Jews fleeing the Nazis began arriving a century later. Typical of its success was the real estate tycoon Jacob Elias Sassoon, who built the grander, neoclassical Ohel Rachel in 1920.

Constructed in 1928 by Russian immigrants, Ohel Moishe was the center of a less wealthy but equally cosmopolitan community in the Tilanqiao neighborhood north of the center. The area became even more heavily Jewish during World War II when Shanghai's Japanese overlords, under pressure from their German allies, forced German and Austrian Jews to live there exclusively. About 30,000 European Jews sought refuge in Shanghai from the Nazi genocide. The city was restored to China at the end of the war, with Western powers renouncing their claims.

Along with synagogues, Shanghai also boasts scores of Protestant and Catholic churches, most of which were closed for decades after the 1949 communist takeover but have since been reopened. However, while missionaries converted millions of Chinese to Christianity, the Jewish community was almost exclusively foreign. Officially China is atheistic. Christians, Buddhists, Taoists and Muslims are allowed to worship but only in churches, temples and mosques run by state-monitored groups. Christians who attend underground churches - and most do in China - are often jailed and harassed.

In Memoriam

Efim Krouk

How can I capture in a few words the essence of a life as remarkable as my father's? He is the epitome of the huge highs and lows of the twentieth century, the story of the diaspora placed on its head. He was Russian, Chinese, Jewish, a stateless refugee from political and economic repression, a dynamic intellect with very wide eclectic interests; a loyal dedicated worker, husband, father and friend. He was generous and modest to a fault, selfless, saved the lives of others, but never spoke about it.

Dad was born on January 6, 1914 in Harbin, a Russian enclave in the freezing north of China. He went to a Soviet school, then an American business college in Chefoo. At 21 he arrived in throbbing Shanghai, penniless and no job. He ate second hand bananas and slept in a garage under a blanket in summer to shield himself against mosquitos. He played chess in coffee shops and when he won he got a free dinner.

Six years later he attended a cultural event at the club and clapped his hands off for a 20 year old beauty reciting her own poetry. That was my mother. Their love affair never ended. In 1956 mum and dad moved to Israel, but then gravitated back to where they felt at home: Hong Kong. In 1975 they followed me to sunny Australia to nurse me through my 20's, and when they could see I was almost on the right track, dad resumed his career with an Israeli company Eisenberg.

In the early 1980's mum and dad ran an office out of a hotel room they shared with a family of rats in Hanoi. Dad negotiated deals directly with government ministries to open up trade after the Vietnam War. Then they returned to China, Beijing this time, to help give birth to the impending Chinese economic boom. Dad finally retired due to health issues at age 70.

He then devoted himself to his many intellectual pursuits and passions that kept him highly active until recently. Dad used to confide in me that he was having an affair. With the 'printed word'. He was a multi-layered intellect, a talented portrait artist and stage actor, an international chess master, a keen observer and analyst of world events. He kept filing cabinets and folders on political and economic developments. He travelled widely and spoke several languages, including making up his own words to build bridges into other cultures and across the animal world. Dad spoke naturally with every cat and dog and duck he met, in their own dialect.

Even when dad could hardly speak in hospital last Sunday, he joked that he wanted to take us all out for a Chinese banquet.

Dad strongly identified with and was very proud of being Jewish, even though he never had a bar mitzvah. He had a great respect for other cultures and religions, and his humanity made him a citizen of the world.

As a parent, dad let us be ourselves and explore our own thirst for mischief and adventure. He never disciplined my brother Leo or myself, but showed us by his own example of unyielding honesty, integrity and decency to others.

Dad believed in free choice. Leo decided not to have a bar mitzvah. I did. Leo went to Israel and died in the army. When I said I am going to Israel, mum of course begged me not to. Dad was quiet and neutral.

When I look back on dad's long and fruitful life I see him as a strong, courageous and loyal man who was motivated to achieve good for others above any financial reward for himself. He was a very successful businessman, ironically making wealth for others but not himself.

When the Japanese confiscated the

company's factory in Shanghai in 1941, dad risked his life to recover the machinery across heavily armed checkpoints. The machinery was then sold to ensure the employees would be able to have enough food on the table for the rest of the war. Later, in 1949, when the Communists took over China, dad again took risks to help colleagues and friends escape the oppression of the new regime, and to smuggle the company's assets to its owners in America. Dad was denounced by a frightened employee for whom dad had previously secured antibiotics to cure his tuberculosis. The Communist Government then put dad under house arrest until the company's owners would pay a massive ransom. The company paid nothing and it was while under house arrest that mum and dad learned Spanish together, and in their spare time had me.

Dad's huge heart extended in many different directions. But his biggest love was his family. His own parents and sisters were victims of Stalin's madness. Dad's dad was executed and his sister Gita did eight years of hard labour from age 16. For many years Dad sent parcels to his family in the Soviet Union and in the early 1990's helped his sisters and their families to come to Australia and start a new life there.

In the end dad could not have done all he did, and live such a fulfilling life without mum. Mum and dad's relationship was and always will be deep, romantic and symbiotic. 67 years of marriage. Together they flooded me with their love. They have always been my best friends. Perhaps it was destined that mum and I were together with dad when he moved on.

Dad, I have never in my life felt the pain I have in the last couple of day. I will miss you.

Tony

Mother to All

By Esther Yarho

We immigrated to Israel in 1950. Our family included my mother, father, my mother's parents, and me – a year old baby. We settled in Kfar Tabor where my father's brother was already living. My father began working in construction work in the neighboring kibbutz together with his brother, while my grandfather began working in road construction nearby. My mother and grandmother took care of the house.

After a number of years my grandparents moved to Moshav Amikam to be close to my mother's sister, their eldest daughter. My mother also strongly wished to move to Moshav Amikam in order to join her parents and her sister but my father objected and we stayed in Kfar Tabor.

Later my father left his job in the construction field and went off to study Management and Education in the "Nahalal Teacher's College" while my mother looked after me at home. When my father graduated he was appointed as the school principal of the elementary school in Kfar Tabor. My mother began working in school as a gym teacher and a teacher of handicrafts and arts. She was greatly loved and appreciated by both the pupils and their parents. During all her years as an educator her classes used to be a place of refuge for pupils suspended

from lessons because of discipline problems and inattentiveness. My mother knew how to approach the children and win their trust and their love. She would occupy them in crafts and drawing while she would be teaching her classes – and for this they admired and appreciated her throughout her life until she passed away. My mother used to be the "life of the party" in all the Purim balls held in Kfar Tabor. Her original costumes would always win one of the top prizes, mostly the first ones.

In 1972 the Kfar Tabor elementary school was closed down because of the low number of pupils and as a result my parents transferred to the "Kadoorie" regional elementary school where they worked until their retirement.

Even as pensioners they were busily occupied; my father volunteered as a lecturer to newcomers from the Soviet Union all over Israel, whereas my mother volunteered as an arts and handicrafts instructor in the centers for senior citizens in Kfar Tabor and its surroundings several times a week.

Afterwards my father became seriously ill and my mother nursed him devotedly until he passed away in 16.2.1999. Since then all of her time was dedicated to me – her only daughter – and to caring for the house, gardening and our beloved cats. Occasionally she would attend the "60 Plus" center in Kfar Tabor where she would paint and occupy herself with handicraft.

My mother passed away after a severe illness on Monday, the third of December 2007 just two days before her 82nd birthday (according to the Jewish calendar), and these are the words I inscribed on her tombstone: "Mother, wife, sister, and a friend, loving and beloved. An adored teacher and an outstanding sportswoman" Hundreds followed her on her last journey; relatives, neighbors, friends, teachers and former pupils. Many warmly eulogized her, among them our close and beloved friend Teddy Kaufman who lay a mourning wreath on her grave on behalf of Igud Yotzei Sin. May her memory be blessed.

WANG FALIANG

We regret to announce the demise of Mr. Wang Faliang, a long time Director of the Ohel Moshe Museum in the Shanghai Hongkew District, which was the designated area for the Jewish refugees from Europe.

Mr. Wang contributed many years of his life to the reconstruction of the

presence of the Jewish refugees from the Nazi Europe in Hongkew during the 2nd World War.

Many visitors to the Museum (some of them the former residents of Hongkew) still remember the soft spoken elderly Chinese tourist guide, who told them the story of the life of the Jewish refugees in Hongkew.

Mr. Wang was in contact with Igud Yotzei Sin and the Israel-China Friendship Society till the last days of his life. He was 89 years old.

May his memory be blessed.

The IYS Memorial Synagogue renovated

Pesach prayers were conducted at the IYS Memorial Synagogue, dedicated to the Jewish communities of China, after its full annual renovation.

Walter Arnold Wolff

Walter Arnold Wolff was born in Harbin, China on MAY 23, 1919. He came to Los Angeles at the age of 17. He spent five years in the United States Air Force and worked in the automotive industry upon his honorable discharge.

Walter married Mary Solovey in 1953. They had two children, Victoria and Lawrence. Walter passed away on May 25, 2008 at his home in Burbank, California. Walter will be remembered for his incredible sense of humor, integrity, and love for his family and country/

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)

Joseph Lerner

By Michael Margulis

More than a year ago, after a prolonged illness, Joseph (Joe) Lerner, a noted Zionist and the author of **"Farewell to Russia. Memoirs of an alleged American Spy"** passed away. The book was written in English, and posthumously translated into Russian.

Joe was born in Dairen, Manchuria, in May 1926 to the family of Gregory Lerner, formerly of Odessa. During the Russo-Japanese war (1904 – 1905) Gregory Lerner fought in Port Arthur and was captured by the Japanese together with Joseph Trumpeldor. After the war, Joseph's father emigrated to the U.S., but later returned to Dairen, Manchuria, where he succeeded in becoming a wealthy businessman and the owner of a resort "Beach Hotel".

Joseph attended a local Catholic school, and some time later the Tientsin Jewish School. In Tientsin (North China), Joseph entered a Zionist youth organization, Brit Trumpeldor (Beitar), organized by the followers of Zeev Jabotinsky. He studied Hebrew and the history of the Jewish people, did well in sports and was a popular member of the local Jewish community.

In 1937, a conference of all the Far Eastern Jewish communities was held in Harbin, chaired by the well-known leader of the Far Eastern Jewry, Dr. Abraham Kaufman.

In 1939 Joseph Lerner settled in Yokohama, Japan, where he attended the local St. Joseph School. After having completed his studies in 1945, he returned to Harbin where he was employed by the Soviet occupational forces as an interpreter. His father's "Beach Hotel" was now used to billet the Soviet military personnel.

The Soviet Command began a series of arrests among the Jewish communities of Manchuria. Gregory Lerner was arrested, and died in Harbin of a heart attack shortly after

his release.

Dr. Abram Kaufman was one of the earliest victims. He was arrested on August 21, 1945, deported to the Soviet Union and remained in the GULAGS for the following 16 years. He reached Israel only in 1961. In his famous book "The Camp Doctor", he revealed the inhuman treatment of the prisoners by their wardens. His son, Teddy, Chairman of the China Immigrants Association in Israel, and editor of its mouthpiece Bulletin, is a well known Israeli social activist in the midst of the community of immigrants from China.

The Exodus to Israel from China began in 1948-1949. The two sisters of Joseph were to leave Harbin with the first transports. Joseph himself made a daring attempt to reach Tientsin across the sea in a small Chinese boat, but the attempt failed since he was already under close surveillance of the Soviet agents.

In 1949, while working for "Dalenergo", Joseph met Natasha, a "White" Russian girl. Natasha was a Soviet secret agent and a provocateur. She rented a room in a house belonging to Lerner, watched Joseph and informed the Soviets of his every move. Later it was revealed that in addition to Joseph's arrest she helped to compromise and arrest her two good friends, Laura Panichkina and Tamara Potopayeva.

On 29 November, Joseph was "invited" to his boss' office, was arrested there, and was jailed in the Port Arthur prison fortress. Among the compromising material Natasha delivered to the Soviets were the strictly forbidden American "Life" magazines Joseph was reading.

On 1.1.50 Joseph was transferred from Port Arthur to Voroshilov (Ussurisk), in Russia proper, north of Vladivostok, to be investigated by a Soviet military intelligence officer. Joseph was informed that after four years of surveillance, he was now accused of espionage in favor of the United States.

Question: "Do you admit your having spied for the United States?"

Lerner: "No!"

Q: "But you were acquainted with Patch, the American Vice Consul in Dairen."

Lerner: "Yes, I was."

Q: "We know exactly who is Patch, and that he was an American spy. We also know that you worked for him and delivered information to the US intelligence."

L.: "It's a lie! I never delivered anything to the US."

The investigator began to brutally beat Joseph, "Get up, dirty Jew! Admit your guilt!"

Joe was asked about the "Life" magazines he brought to his sister. Natasha also "confirmed" the contacts Joe "maintained with Patch, and delivered to him information about the military units located in Dairen and Port Arthur."

In January 1950, Joseph was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. By then (in 1950) the highest measure of punishment (death) was abolished by the Soviet jurisdiction.

In February 1951, Lerner was transferred to Camp #31 in the taiga (dense forests) area near Irkutsk (Siberia), to work as a tree feller. It did not take long for Joe to find himself in a hospital, diagnosed as "totally exhausted." He was transferred to the Vanino Bay in the Vladivostok Region, to be transferred further to a camp in Kolyma in the far north. There Joseph met the deported Zionist activists, writers Nathan Zabara and Irma Druker, a well-known Zionist, Avraham Krinsky from Moldavia, the historian Jacob Ettinger (son of Prof. Ettinger, arrested and deported in connection with the "Doctors' affair" to the Gulags, where he died), an architecture student, Vitalii Svehinsky, the author of this article, Michael Margulis, and Roman Bachtman, a student of Arabic studies, arrested for an attempt to flee to Israel via Turkey.

The prisoner often sang the famous

song "Kolyma". Here is an attempt to translate an excerpt:

Five hundred kilometers of taiga,
Men, swaying like shadows,
Cars do not reach here.
Only the deer, stumbling around.
May you be cursed, O Kolyma!
You, who are named "A wonderful planet!"

One can lose one's mind here,
From here there's no way back...

(Russian text by M.M.)

In 1953 Lerner was sent to Arez, 1,500 kilometers from Magadan (Kalyma) to work in the coal mines, 700 meters under the earth surface. He loaded the small railway cars with coal despite his weight being now no more than 45 kilograms. Close to total exhaustion, he refused to work and was locked in what was called BSR (Barrack of Severe Regime), until a former prisoner (a Jew), now working as a geologist, helped to free him and to be sent to the prison hospital. Joseph never forgot him. He used to say: "Someone cared for me, and he was a fellow-Jew. No, blood is not water." He was transferred again, this time to work at a building site. Here he met Zabara again, the architect Vitalii Svechinsky, Joseph Lerner and the writer, Roman Brachtman.

(A note: Upon his having been set free, Nathan Zabara returned to Kiev and wrote an historical novel "The Wheel Continues to Turn" – a panorama of the Jewish life in Spain in the 11 – 13th centuries. He died in Kiev in 1975. Among Zabara's friends living in Israel were the writer of these lines, who illegally brought the films of the text of volumes 1 and 2 of the novel).

In October, 1954 Michael Margulis, Roman Brachtman and Vitali Svechinsky were transferred to Moscow "for reinvestigation", and were set free in 1955. A year later Joseph Lerner was also totally rehabilitated and set free. So were Lerner's friends, Misha Revzin, Avraham Krinsky (died in Israel), and Semion Bodash. Lerner received an

official invitation from his sister to immigrate to Israel. Prior to leaving the camp, Lerner succeeded in getting a complete list of his possessions confiscated by the authorities. He demanded to be paid a compensation of 50,000 rubles, but received only 20,000 as "an advance payment", which was a rare precedent.

At the KGB office, Lerner met his former investigator and told him straight in the face that he expects "all the hangmen to be punished" for the falsified accusations.

Lerner also appeared at the apartment of Natasha, his former traitor girlfriend and said to her mother, Darya Grigorievna: "Your daughter delivered me to the Soviet security agents. I want you to return me my mother's ring, which I had given her as a souvenir." Lerner never saw Natasha again. He also found his camp co-tenant and friend, the architect Vitalii Svechinsky and visited me (Michael Margulis, the writer of this article). He stayed with us for two months, during which time we became fast friends.

When Lerner came to the Israeli embassy in Moscow to get his passport and visa to Israel, he was arrested by the Soviet police and warned not to dare appear there again. Nevertheless, a week later he returned and was arrested again. The third attempt by Lerner to visit the Israeli embassy ended in his deportation to Kalinin (Tver), 150 kilometers away from Moscow. There he was given a room paid by the government and was politely requested to accept Soviet citizenship to facilitate his legally application for an exit visa. Only a threat to transfer him for permanent settlement in a kolkhoz persuaded him to accept the proposal. And yet it took ten additional years for the Soviet authorities to comply with his annual applications for an exit visa to Israel, and it was only on March 15, 1966 that he received notification that he was permitted to leave for Israel.

After 17 (seventeen!) years of captivity in Soviet camps and prisons, Joseph Lerner boarded the Israeli steamer "Moledet" ("Motherland") in Naples, Italy and headed for Haifa, where he was met by relatives and friends. In Israel he worked as a teacher of English until his death on January 12, 2007. He is survived by wife, Miriam and two sons: Danny (a film director) and Allen (a high-tech specialist).

According to her husband's will, Miriam Lerner sent a hundred copies of his book "Farewell, Russia" to the Organization of the "Captives of Zion". The writer of these lines received a copy of it with a complimentary note: "For Misha Margulis and his family! I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Misha Margulis and his father for a helping hand to a Jew, who dreamed to go to Israel and who had no relatives or friends in Moscow after his release from Kolyma. With respect (signed: Joe Lerner).

Walter Wolf

Walter (Vova) Wolf, our friend, formerly of Harbin, passed away in Los Angeles. He was 89.

Vova graduated from the First Harbin Commercial School on its 13th graduation year. He left China for the United States where he married Mary, nee Solovei and settled in LA. Vova had an exceptionally nice personality and was a perfect gentleman. He is survived by wife and children -- a daughter and son -- with families. May his memory be blessed.

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

Thank you

On 15 March 2008 after a long illness

Efim (Fima) KROUK

left us for a deserved rest
Our hearts are full of sorrow

Nora, Tony, Vicky, Rachel,
Dana and T.T., Talia and Sasha.
Lillya, Liza and Volodia, Ilya.
The Great-grandchildren: Alya,
B'naya and Maya are too young
to have known this remarkable man

God rest his soul

Hilia RIVKIN is saddened by the passing of an old friend

Efim KROUK

and wishes to extend her sincerest condolences to NOROCHKA,
ANTHONY and his family and sister LILYA

We are saddened by the passing of our dear friend

Efim KROUK

and express our sincere condolences to dear NORA, TONY and family

Rasha and Teddy KAUFMAN

We are saddened by the death of our dear friend

Efim KROUK

and express our deepest condolences to dear NOROCHKA,
son ANTHONY and his family, sister LILIA,
family in Australia, Israel and USA

Leana LEBOVITCH
Jenny ROSEN
Sonia YEZERSKY
Ania GOODRICH
and family

Sopha SAKKER
Jane RADON
Nora FENBOW

Michael FLEISCHMANN is deeply saddened by the passing
away of an old friend

Efim KROUK

and expresses his condolences to dear NORA, ANTHONY
and the whole family

Heartfelt sympathy to old buddy GEORGE and ALEXANDRA
on the sudden loss of their daughter and sister

Katherine RADBILL

Michael FLEISCHMANN

It is with deep sorrow that we inform of the death
of our dearest husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather

Walter WOLFF

Passed away in his sleep on May 25, 2008

He will be terribly missed by his wife MARY, daughter VICTORIA,
son LARRY, son-in-law SCOTT, grandchildren CHELSEA, HEATHER,
HARRISON, ARIELLE and JESSICA

We deeply mourn the loss of our dear friend

Walter WOLFF

and extend our deepest condolences to MARY,
VICKY, SCOTT, LARRY and their families

Golda LAZAROVICH
Frieda GRAUER
Esther SNODGRASS and family

Our deepest condolences go out to MARY, VICKY, SCOTT, HARRISON, ARIELLE,
JESSICA, LARRY and his daughters CHELSEA and HEATHER
on the loss of their husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather

Walter WOLFF

Mira MRANTZ
Danit, Kevin, Marissa and Meredith NUCKELS

Michael FLEISCHMANN is greatly saddened
by the passing away of a good old friend and classmate

Vova WOLFF

Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved FAMILY

Deeply saddened by the passing of my old friend

Walter WOLFF

My heartfelt condolences to his wife MARY, his children LARRY and
VICKY and their families

Joe MRANTZ

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN

is saddened by the passing of

Walter WOLFF

and extend heartfelt sympathy to his wife MARY and family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN

is saddened by the passing of

Efim KROUK

and extend heartfelt sympathy to his wife NORA and family

We are deeply saddened by the passing of our dear lifelong friend and wonderful human being

Walter WOLFF

and express our heartfelt condolences to his wife MARY, LARRY, VICKY, SCOTT and their families

Olga and Isai KAUFMAN
Rasha and Teddy KAUFMAN
Fania and David MINDLIN

We are saddened by the passing of a dear

Walter WOLFF

and express our sincere condolences to his WIFE and FAMILY

Lillie BERK
Bella BERKOVITCH

Rissia IONIS
Mark KAPTZAN

We are deeply saddened on the loss of our dear friend

Walter WOLFF

and extend our deepest condolences to MARY, VICKY, SCOTT, LARRY and their families

Raissa GOLDIN
Asia and Dalia BERSHADSKY

Please accept our deepest condolences on the passing of your husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather

Walter WOLFF

Dora MEDAVOY
Veronica and Larry DRESSLER

With the feeling of great sorrow and sadness
Mina TOMASHEVSKAYA and Lara BRUTINOT announce the passing
away of their dear mother and grandmother

Tamara TOMASHEVSKAYA

The burial took place in Paris at the cemetery of Ste-Geneviève-des-Bois

In memory of our dear friend

Tamara TOMASHEVSKAYA

Michael FLEISCHMANN

I mourn the passing of an old friend

Meefa JACOBI

and express my sincere condolences to her family

Allan RAYSON
Montreal, Canada

I am deeply saddened by the passing of my old friend from
Harbin and Tientsin, China

Gena LEVITIN

and express my condolences to the family -- he was one of a kind and
will be missed by many

Allan RAYSON
Montreal, Canada

The delegation from Harbin visited the Harbin Jewish cemetery before leaving for Israel

The monument at the entrance to the cemetery



The Head of the delegation Mr. Du Yuxin (in the center), the secretary of the CPC in Harbin, and the Head of the Government of Harbin lay wreaths on the grave of Joseph Olmert, the grandfather of E. Olmert, the Prime Minister of Israel

Before leaving China for Israel the members of the Harbin delegation headed by Mr. Du Yuxin (second on the left) lay flowers on the graves of the Kaufman family (T. Kaufman's mother, sister and grandparents)



THE CELEBRATION OF THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL IN SHANGHAI



Consul General Uri Gutman and guests



On Friday, June 6, 2008, an event celebrating Israel's 60th Anniversary was held at the former "Ohel Moshe" Synagogue, during which time a database on Shanghai Jews during WWII was inaugurated and an exhibition regarding Israel-China Relations was opened.