



Bulletin

Igud Yotzei Sin

Association of Former Residents of China

October-November 2008 ♦ Vol LV ♦ Issue No. 397 English Supplement

HAPPY NEW YEAR! ! שנה טובה ומבורכת !



The Jews in Shanghai

From 1933 to 1941, Shanghai became a modern-day "Noah's Ark" accepting around 30,000 Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust in Europe. In the "Designated Area for Stateless Refugees" in Tilanqiao area of Shanghai, 25,000 Jewish refugees lived harmoniously with local citizens, overcoming numerous difficulties together. By the time the Second World War ended in 1945, most of the Jewish refugees had survived. In the "Tilanqiao Historic Area", the original features of the Jewish settlement are still well preserved. They are the only historic traces of Jewish refugee life inside China during the Second World War.



The former site of Ohel Moshe Synagogue

The Ohel Moshe Synagogue is one of the only two synagogues in Shanghai built by Russian Jews where the Jewish refugees gathered for religious rites during the Second World War. In 2004, it was listed among the fourth set of architectural heritage treasures of Shanghai. Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, ex-premier of Israel, commented during his visit to Shanghai, "To the people of Shanghai for unique humanitarian act of saving thousands of Jews during the Second World War, thanks in the name of the government of Israel."

In March 2007, the People's Government of Hongkou District budgeted more than one million US dollars for a full renovation of the synagogue in accordance with the original architectural drawings found in the city archives. The former site of Ohel Moshe Synagogue has been restored to the same architectural style of when it used as a synagogue in 1928. In addition, the interior structures have also been adjusted according to the drawings. The duplication of the architectural drawings is shown on the first floor. A sign-in machine, a database of the Jewish refugees and video programs are available on the third floor with frequent temporary exhibits.



A. Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum

The museum, located at 62 Changyang Road, Hongkou District, consists of two parts: the former site of Ohel Moshe Synagogue and the gallery. It is an important component of the "Tilanqiao Historic Area" and serves as a witness commemorating the phase of history when the Jewish refugees lived in Shanghai.



2 The Gallery

The gallery was completed at the end of 2007. Over 100 photos are displayed and a multi-screen display system is the first of its kind to be used in Shanghai. The short film about the refugees living in Shanghai accompanied by oil painting and sculptures make that phase of history come alive. In addition, duplication of a refugee's passport, the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, and a large stone tablet engraved with Rabin's inscription are also on display. The joint efforts of historians and artists makes visitors linger on without any thought of leaving.

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THEMES OF THE DAY

By Teddy Kaufman

Happy New Year, dear compatriots! The new 5769 year, according to the Jewish calendar, is at our doorstep. We the Jews, believing in the better future like the incorrigible optimists we are, at all times and in every place had faith and have faith in the good days to come.

Last year was not an easy one for Israel, for the Jewry of the Diaspora, and for our own small historic community.

The country is in a state of war, although this affects directly and daily only 150 thousand Israelis in the vicinity of the Gaza strip who are under constant bombardment. The rest of Israel lives its life undisturbed, as if there were no towns and settlements around Gaza. The threats of the tyrant from Teheran continue, and the danger that this modern Hitler would get hold of a nuclear weapon is a cause for worry to the free, democratic world, and especially to us, the Israelis.

Together with the great achievements of Israel in many fields, those who care for it deeply are worried about social injustices: out of seven million citizens of Israel approximately one and a half million are at poverty level. Concerning our small world of China's expatriates from the distant country behind the Great Wall, we continue our life, our work, and volunteer for the sake of the needy, the young generation, and the conservation of our wonderful past – the past of our communities in China. In truth, our needy compatriots number only 88, according to the September statistics, however we shouldn't forget that our financial aid is a substantial addition to the very modest sum which these elderly and ailing people get from Social Security.

About 150 students – the grandchildren and the great and

children of immigrants from China get an annual scholarship from the Igud Yotzei Sin funds on Hannukah. The IYS "Bulletin" which has been published for 54 years in three languages – Russian, English and Hebrew, and the Internet site, illuminates our work and is a precious contribution towards the commemoration of our exceptional past in China.

The "Beit Ponve" Centre – its office, the editorial staff of the "Bulletin", the Sunday gatherings, and the work in the archives of Igud Yotzei Sin constitute an important achievement and continuity.

Unfortunately, the number of the people from the older generation, those who are the main contributors to our funds, is getting smaller every year, which decreases our funds, affects the scope of our work and makes us reflect as to our future. However faith, our deep and unshakeable belief in the goals of our activity, gives us the strength to continue the path which we have been striding for the 57 years of our Association.

What is it that gives us and the people of Israel the ability to live in this oasis of normality amidst the wasteland of hate and intolerance?

The answer is the belief in the certainty of our life here, our only Homeland which was the aspiration and the dream of generations and where we have the good fortune to live, struggle and wait for the better days for our country and for our people.

Happy New Year, dearest compatriots! Let it be a year of peace and prosperity for Israel and well being for the Jews of the Diaspora!

Shana Tova!

Yossi Klein 70

On July 23rd, our compatriot, Yossi Klein, celebrated his 70th birthday. Yossi Klein holds a very distinguished position among those born in China, arriving at Israel as children, and who joined the activity of Igud Yotzei Sin representing the continuity of a younger generation.

13 years ago he literally joined the "club" and was integrated into the activities of our Association, first as a Deputy Treasurer, then as a Treasurer and a Vice President and for the last 10 years he has served as a Deputy President and the Treasurer of our Association.

Yossi is a loyal public servant who contributes all of his time and energy to IYS. It's not only the two days he spends at the offices of IYS, but the constant worry about our financial position, the connection with the bank, the book keeping and the auditors. He is at the heart of our organization, an intellectual and a man of culture who takes an interest

in all that's happening in Israel and in the world. After retiring 5 years ago he devotes all his time to our Association. He is also the initiator and the manager of the Igud Yotzei Sin Internet site, dedicated to the past of the Chinese Jewry.

During the last few years Yossi devoted his time to the Israel – China Friendship Society as a Deputy President and Treasurer. He is well known in China, especially in Harbin. He has been to China 5 times, once heading the delegation invited by All China Friendship Society with Foreign Countries, and another time heading the delegation to the third Seminar on the History of the Harbin Jews held in 2007.

Yossi follows the footsteps of his late father, Sioma Klein, who served as a member of the board of the Harbin Jewish Community, the leader of the Harbin Betar movement and the editor the Harbin publication of "Hadegel" journal. After his arrival at Israel Sioma also served as a

president of two IYS conferences and as the president of the committee publishing Dr. A. Kaufman's book "Camp Doctor – 16 years in the Soviet Union", both in Hebrew and in Russian.

It was destined that Sioma's son, Yossi, initiated and published the book of Dr. A. Kaufman's son "The Jews of Harbin in My Heart" both in English and Hebrew.

Yossi – a loving father and grandfather, tenderly takes care of his children and grandchildren. A modest person, he avoids publicity. However it is our pleasant duty to celebrate Yossi's jubilee and wish him and his wife, Pnina, his children with families and eight beloved grandchildren, all the health, happiness, and well being. May we all enjoy his fruitful work devoted to his compatriots for many years to come.

Till 120 Yossi!

T. Kaufman

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**

From The Album of The Past

Tientsin Jewish School - 1945



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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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NEW YORK

The Board of Directors of Igud Yotzei Sin
sends its sincere Holiday greetings to the

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HONORARY MEMBER OF I.Y.S.
and wishes much happiness and prosperity to its President Frances Greenberg, to all its members and to all
Far-Easterners in the United States of America

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OF THE

NEW YORK

AMERICAN FAR-EASTERN SOCIETY, INC.

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FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY AND BEST WISHES
TO IGUD YOTZEI SIN
AND TO ALL FAR-EASTERNERS IN ISRAEL
AND ABROAD

FRANCES GREENBERG AND FAMILY

HAPPY HOLIDAY AND BEST WISHES TO OUR RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS

BELLA RECTOR

WISHES A HAPPY HOLIDAY
TO HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS

ברכות לראש השנה

NEW YORK

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WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY
TO ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

ANGELICA AND MICHAEL KLEBANOFF

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AND FRIENDS

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NEW YORK

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WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO OUR RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS

HAPPY HOLIDAY AND BEST WISHES

TO OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

MRS. EDA SHVETZ AND FAMILY

TANIA & ROBERT MATERMAN

AND SON AVRAHAM YAACOV

EXTEND BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

DORA (NEE VIDUMSKY) AND GABRIEL LEE

WISH ALL OUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES A VERY HAPPY ROSH HASHANA
MAY THIS YEAR AND ALWAYS BRING YOU HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

ברכות לראש השנה

MONROE TOWNSHIP, NJ

CHAG SAMEACH FROM GUITA, EUGENE BASOVITCH AND FAMILY

WISHING ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS ALL OVER THE WORLD

A HAPPY HOLIDAY

SWITZERLAND

BEST WISHES TO ALL OUR FRIENDS FOR A HAPPY ROSH - HASHANA

FROM

VOVA AND ELIZABETH DICHNE
CHILDREN MOTI, Yael AND SABRINA
AND GRANDCHILDREN
ITAMAR, DANA, OHAD, ADI AND AYELET

IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL TO HEAR FROM OUR FRIENDS,
WE CAN BE CONTACTED BY E-MAIL, OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS IS: disabrina@yahoo.com

GERMANY

לתדי ומשפחתו, לעובדי, פעילי וחברי האגוד

מאחלים בריאות, הצלחה ואושר

יחיאל גולדשמידט ואשתו אביבה

תושב חרבין מ- 1938 עד 1949

BEST WISHES TO ALL FRIENDS FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

JURGEN JECHIEL AND AVIVA GOLDSCHMIDT

ברכות לראש השנה

LOS ANGELES

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN

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AND BEST WISHES TO THE HONORARY REPRESENTATIVE OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN,

MRS. MIRA MRANTZ

AND TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE AMERICAN
FAR-EASTERN SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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IGUD YOTZEI SIN, TO ALL AMFESOSCA MEMBERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES AND TO ALL FAR-EASTERNERS IN THE USA, ISRAEL AND ABROAD

MIRA MRANTZ

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CO-WORKERS AND ALL FRIENDS A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

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MONACO

DAVID & FREDERIQUE FAMILIANT

WISH ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS A HAPPY NEW YEAR

MONTE-CARLO

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SEND THEIR HEARTFELT BEST WISHES TO FRED HEYMAN
AND REISS FAMILIES, IZYA BRUNNER, DODIK GOOTMAN, RASHA
AND TEDDY KAUFMAN AND ALL OTHER FRIENDS IN ISRAEL

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JOE MRANTZ

WISHES ALL HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY A HAPPY HOLIDAY

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LOS ANGELES

TO HONOR OUR PARENTS

MAX AND MOLLY SAMSON

&

BEN AND VERA BERG

DOLORES & ROGER BERG

ברכות לראש השנה

LOS ANGELES

**ALL GOOD WISHES FOR ROSH HASHANA
TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS
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AND FAMILY**

WISH ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS A HAPPY HOLIDAY

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TO ALL MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY

MARY WOLFF AND FAMILY

HAPPY ROSH HASHANA TO ALL OUR FRIENDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

בדכות לראש השנה

LOS ANGELES

HAPPY HOLIDAY AND BEST WISHES TO ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS.

GOLDA LAZAROVICH

DAUGHTER ESTHER AND JACK

GRANDCHILDREN ROBERT, LEON & REBECCA

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HAPPY HOLIDAY TO ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

LEO HANIN AND FAMILY

HAPPY HOLIDAY TO ALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY

DORA, VERONICA, MIKE AND ALL THE MEDAVOYS

WE WISH OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

A HEALTHY AND HAPPY HOLIDAY

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IN SAN-FRANCISCO, THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE AND ALL THE
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AND WISHES THEM MUCH HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY

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TO ALL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

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SAN FRANCISCO

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EXTENDS HER BEST WISHES TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
FOR A HAPPY AND HEALTHY HOLIDAY AND PEACE

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ARON SLOUSCHTER

HARUKO AND NORMAN SOSKIN

HOLIDAY GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES TO ALL RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS

A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO MY CHILDREN,
GRANDCHILDREN, RELATIVES & FRIENDS

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ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

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VERA LOEWER & FAMILY**

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TO MY FRIENDS

STASSIA FELDMAN

ברכות לראש השנה

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TO OUR DEAR FRIEND

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THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ASYA KOGAN & FAMILY

WISH THE BEST OF HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND
PEACE

TO ALL THE RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

WITH LOVE

ברכות לראש השנה

ENGLAND

BEST WISHES AND WARM GREETINGS

DR. MARK A. EROOGA

17 FOXBURY CLOSE
LUTON LU2 7BQ ENGLAND

WARM GREETINGS TO MY DEAR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

ALEX FAIMAN

46, ST. JOHN'S COURT, FINCHLEY ROAD, HAMPSTEAD
LONDON NW3 6LE

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4586 ELME STR.

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V6H 1 V7

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AND ALL OUR FRIENDS IN CANADA
FROM IGUD YOTZEI SIN

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FROM

LILY FRANK

BEST WISHES FROM

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MAY PEACE, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS BE WITH ALL OF US

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SENDS TO OUR HONORARY REPRESENTATIVES

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AND TO ALL FAR-EASTERNERS IN AUSTRALIA
SINCERE GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES

STELLA AND DAVID UDOVITCH

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TO IGUD YOTZEI SIN

AND TO ALL FAR-EASTERNERS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

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WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO ALL
RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

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WISH HEALTH AND HAPPINESS TO ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

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OVER THE YEARS AND ACROSS THE MILES, WITH NOSTALGIC MEMORIES OF HARBIN
SENDS GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES

בדכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

RASHA AND TEDDY KAUFMAN

WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO THEIR RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND
ALL FORMER RESIDENTS OF CHINA IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

YOSSI KLEIN AND FAMILY

WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

A HAPPY HOLIDAY AND BEST WISHES TO
RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

RAN (RONNY) VEINERMAN AND FAMILY

NATALIA AND SEVA PODOLSKY

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TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

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SENDS GREETINGS TO ALL RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS

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TO THEIR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

BEST WISHES TO ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

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ברכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

JENNY AND TEDDY PIASTUNOVITCH

WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS

BEST WISHES TO ALL OUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

MIRIAM AND DANIEL FRIEDMANN

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SEND THEIR HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

ABRAM OZRELOVITCH (MIGDAL HAEMEK)

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GRANDCHILDREN, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN AND ALL RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL

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WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

ברכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

BEST WISHES TO MY FRIENDS

IN ISRAEL & OVERSEAS

ABRAHAM FRADKIN

RACHEL AND YONAH KLIGMAN

SEND HEARTY WISHES OF GOOD HEALTH AND SUCCESS

TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

BETTY HAZAN

SENDS GREETINGS FOR THE HOLYDAYS

TO FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

WITH LOVE

ברכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

CELIA NIRIM

SENDS HER LOVE AND HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

SARAH ROSS

WISHES A HAPPY HOLIDAY
TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

JOE LEVOFF

WISHES ALL HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS A HAPPY HOLIDAY

BENNY TZUR AND FAMILY

SEND THEIR HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

ברכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

DANNY BERKOVITCH

SENDS HIS BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAY
TO HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

ELI ALGOR (GROHOVSKY) AND FAMILY

WISH THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

ZEEV VATNER AND FAMILY

WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

ברכות לראש השנה

ISRAEL

TEDDY KAUFMAN

WISHES A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE STAFF OF THE BULLETIN AND TO THE VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP IN THE WORK OF THE OFFICE OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN:
YEHIEL LADYJENSKY, CECILIA LYUBMAN, EMMANUEL PRAT, JOE LEVOFF, SARAH ROSS, ISAAC DASHINSKY, BENNY TZUR, REBECCA TOUEG, ORIT DUANI, SHULAMIT SHNEYER, JEANNE TIKOTSKY, TAMARA FAIBUSOVITCH AND DAVID GOOTMAN.

ISAI PIASTUNOVITCH

SENDS HIS BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAY
TO HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

RINA AND TIMA LITVIN AND CHILDREN

WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

ISAAC DASHINSKY

WISHES A HAPPY HOLIDAY
TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

DAVID GOOTMAN

WISHES A HAPPY HOLIDAY
TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN ISRAEL AND ABROAD

People and Events

60th Wedding Anniversary of Esther and Paul Agran

On the 11th of April our friends from Harbin, Esther (Fira Pugatch) and Paul (Pavlik Agranovsky) celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Esther, Paul and the whole Agran family, wishing them good health and success till 120!

A happy event in the Mindlin family

Liron - the granddaughter of our Harbin friend David (Dima) Mindlin and his wife Fanya (Ash) of Dairen, and daughter of Ilana Gay (Mindlin) - was married to Eyal Deskel on the 3rd of April, 2008 in Tel Aviv. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates David, Fanya and the whole Mindlin family wishing them the best of health, happiness and success till 120!

Ronnie and Bonnie Fain visit Beit Ponve

Ronnie and Bonnie Fain of Los Angeles visited Beit Ponve and met T. Kaufman. They generously donated a sum of \$5000 to Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund. Ronnie - is the son of our late friends, Dina (Ponivezhsky) of Harbin and David Fain of Shanghai.

A happy event in the Rabkin family

The wedding of Tsahi Tsuk-Ramon and Annie Kaplan took place on the 6th of April in Ceasaria. Tsahi is the son of Yehudit (Difa Rabkin) and Mati Tsuk-Ramon and grandson to Rachel and Yasha Rabkin. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Rachel and the whole Rabkin family wishing them good health, happiness and success till 120!

DAVID MINDLIN reached 80

Our friend David Mindlin of Harbin celebrated his 80th birthday in May. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates David, Fanya and the whole Mindlin family on this happy occasion, wishing them good health, happiness and success till 120.

A Happy Event in the Even Family

Shulamith Even is happy to announce the birth of a granddaughter, Naomi Sara, daughter to Dr. Even and Lori, and sister to Samuel Mark. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates the entire Even family with the happy event and wishes good health, much happiness and well-being.

A Happy Event in the Diamond Family

Raya Diamond (nee Machlina) became a great grandmother. Haley Russ was born to Raya's granddaughter Jennifer and her husband Dean Russ. The proud grandparents are Lily and Steve Niefeld (daughter and son-in-law of Raya Diamond). Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates the entire Diamond family with the happy event and wishes good health, much happiness and well-being.

A Happy Event in the Diamond Family

Aya (nee Machlina) and Ray Pivo are happy to announce the birth of their eighth grandchild (second grandson) born to their son and daughter-in-law Dr. Jonathan and Sitel-Leah Pivo. At the Brit Mila he was named Eli (Elchanan).

Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates the entire Pivo family with the happy event and wishes good health, much happiness and well-being.

Professor Peter Berton Scholarship Fund

On June 25, 2008 at the Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus a ceremony was held dedicated to the creation of a trustee fund for a post-doctoral scholarship in the field of international relations of the Far East countries particularly Japan.

The fund was created by Prof. Peter Berton (Zaika Bershtein) in memory of his parents Raissa and Klavne Bershtein.

The ceremony was conducted by the Vice President of the University Eliahu Honig, who bestowed Prof. P. Berton with a silver ensign commemorating 60 years of the State of Israel and 90 years of the Hebrew University, followed by words emphasizing Peter Berton's world known research, articles and books published in the field of international relations of Japan with her neighboring countries.

Prof. Berton's sons David, Jon and their families were present as well as his colleagues and close friends. The university invited everybody present for lunch.

After lunch a friendly discussion on the present situation in the Far East was held (partially in Japanese).

L.H.



To the **MISHA KOGAN**
Social Aid Fund
US\$ 32,000

In memory of my dear parents
and in memory of the dear
parents of Misha Kogan

ASYA KOGAN (TOKYO)
September 2008



Kalman Kogan



Abram Kachanovsky



Riva Kogan



Tatyana Kachanovsky

Jewish Life in Shanghai 65 years ago

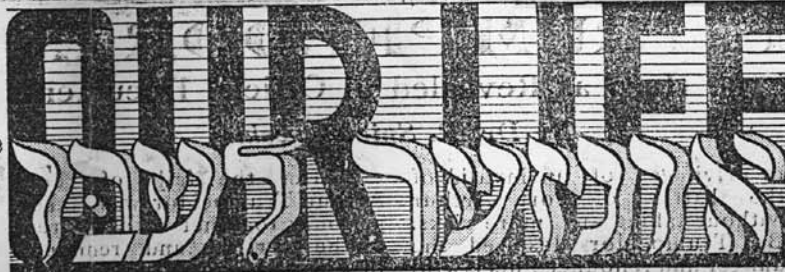
Friday, September 10, 1943

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Evening in Benefit of Writers and Journalists in Hongkew

The Evening in Benefit of Needy "Penworkers", which was several times postponed for various reasons, finally took place at the Roy Roofgarden on September 1st and was attended by a numerous and responsive audience. In the varied program the Robertson Duo in a "Rumba", a Tango and "Machine" in the style of 1900 earned a storm of applause, while Walter and Hilde Friedman appeared in their popular duos and Raya Zomina brought all her charm in a few Yiddish songs. The election of the "Summer Queen" proved quite a hit with the audience, and the jury, after a long controversy, decided upon conferring the high title of the

Fashion Shows in Hongkew

Several Fashion Shows took place in Hongkew in course of last week. Fred Lang organized a Grand Autumn Fashion Show at the Roy Roofgarden, in which participated the Salon "Senorita" (A. Warschawsky) - 171/16, Muirhead Road, exhibiting last models of dresses, costumes, sport suits and blouses and the Hat Salon "Pauly Hats (Paula Beck) - 54/4, Chusan Rd. The ABC Trunk Co. - Kungping Rd. corner Tongshan Rd. - sent in handbags, and Kurt Mosberg, export in ladies' haidresses, took care of the coiffures of the mannequins.

The Salon "Senorita", which always creates its own styles, exhibited a collection of dresses for everyday wear and costumes with a marked tendency of a long jacket, in wool and handwoven cotton, the latter being an excellent material for autumn wear. Among other dresses the most attractive was the elegant afternoon or dinner dress of white material around with long

"Queen" upon Miss Ursel Lievendag, a fair-haired and blue-eyed 18-year old girl.

A tombola and a flower-sale by Raya Zomina brought in a considerable amount, relieving all the needy "Penworkers" of the most pressing need for some weeks. However, considering future functions of this kind it should be desirable to diminish the organization expenses.

Such evenings, however pleasant, are only charity but not constructive help. What the "Penworkers" are in need of, is the opportunity to write and to be paid for it. "Our Life" is ready to offer them co-operation in this respect.

A. K.

sleeves widened below. The hats by "Pauly Hats" were high and open from one side. These hats were made of velvet, and cotton.

The Fashion Shows arranged by Walter Lewens, which took place in three afternoons in succession under the motto of "Elegant Fashion Teas" in the garden of "Weissen Roessl" Restaurant proved worthy of the name "elegant". Yvonne Salon of 118 Ward Rd. exhibited there about 50 models, one more attractive than another. The hats matching the dresses were exhibited by "Fifi" Ladies' Hat Salon - 15 Wayside, while "Famous Shoes" - 834, Tongshan Rd. displayed shoes. Steingraber 26, Chusan Rd. sent in gloves, ABC Trunk Leather Art - Handbags and "Elite" Novelties - 17 Wayside the ornaments.

The Hairdressing Salonumity which is to take place "Cig" - 98, Ward Rd., showed its excellent skill in the coiffures of the pretty, elegant mannequins.

From week to week

Shanghai Ashkenazi Communal Assn. Appoints Collaboration Body with S.S.R.A.

Under the guidance of Mr. Kubota the Shanghai Ashkenazi Communal Association have elected a representative group inaugurated on the 28th February 1943 an Association to be known as Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaboration Relief Assn. for the Stateless Refugees Affairs. This Association, in all collaboration with the Office of the S.S.R.A., will undertake to supervise as well as give full aid to the Relief work for the Stateless Refugees affected. The SACRA has been approved and received full sanction of the Authorities. Furthermore on the 2nd March 1943 a Joint Committee composed of members of the SACRA and representatives of the Jüdische Gemeinde, Kitchen- and Polish people concerned has been inaugurated which will be known as the

Joint Administrative Committee (SAC). This Committee will do the actual administrative work and has already established the following sections:

Housing, Application, Economic, Juridical and Press. Sections dealing with other problems such as Feeding, Employment, Sanitary and Hospital, Transportation etc., will be formed in the near future. The first five sections are busy preparing preliminary steps, details of which will be announced within the very next few days. The Committee on its part strongly appeals to all concerned to do their utmost to cooperate and follow instructions which will be given to them so that the Committee may be able to work with the best results for the benefit of those affected by this Proclamation.

Refugee Doctor Committed Suicide

Dr. Ernst Lichtenstein, 41-year-old German emigre, committed suicide by taking poison at his home, 808 East Seward Road, some time during the night of Saturday. When the body was taken to the General Hospital, medical examination revealed that the man was dead for 12 hours.

The emigre physician was

last seen by the chief tenant when he entered his room at about 1 p.m. Saturday, and as he did not leave the room for more than a day, the chief tenant investigated and found the body on the bed. The deceased did not leave any letters or documents explaining his suicide.

"Eastjewcom" and "Centrajewcom" Arrange Joint Function to Collect Funds

The most important social function in the Ashkenazi community which is to take place in the near future is the Day of Eastjewcom and Centrajewcom arranged jointly by the two organizations. The funds

ly exhausted at present, and our community is again facing the colossal task of providing them with means for relief of thousands of destitute refugees. The date of this event will be announced later.

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Shanghai - Tel Aviv - Tehran

By Michael Rinsky

Yaakov Veinerman was an affluent fish merchant in Nikolayevsk, a major port city on the Amur river. He owned spacious fisheries, where his trawlers threw their nets along the banks of the great river, and the high seas bordering with Japan. His factories processed the catch. The Veinerman empire came to an unexpected end with the eruption of the Great Russian Revolution and the subsequent civil war. When the Bolshevik forces threw the remnant of the Tzar's retreating armies into the sea, it became evident that a time has come to seek new fisheries and new pastures. Alike thousands and thousands of others, Yaakov Veinerman decided to do the seeking in the neighboring China.



Grandmother Anna and grandfather Yaakov

He had four sons. The first to leave for Shanghai in one of his father's trawlers was Albert, then 20. While he was busy preparing the grounds for the family's new enterprise, his parents and brothers reached Harbin, the seat of the Chinese Eastern Railway (KVJD). The city was seething to the brim with refugees from the belligerent Russia, and the Veinermans wisely thought it better (and safer) to continue their way to the international port city of Tientsin. There they settled in the British Concession, opening a pasta factory,

a vodka distillery "Stopka" (Russian for a small glass for vodka) and a leather processing factory.. Another pasta factory operated in Shanghai under Albert's management.

At the end of 1930's Albert Veinerman, by then a well-to-do import-export trader, met Benjamin and Helen Shmulevsky, owners of a well established pharmacy in the center of Shanghai. He fell in love with their young and beautiful daughter Esther, and married her in 1939. Their son Ronny was born in 1940. As was the custom among the Shanghai European residents, the family communicated predominantly in English. Ronny attended the local Jewish school, where the tutorial was also conduct in that language. In 1944, however, when the grand parents joined Albert, "foreign (English) language" was all but completely pushed out of the family usage by the good old Russian. The Veinermans lived in the prestigious Foreign Settlement quarter, in a house partly occupied by the Japanese. Ronny's playmates were mostly his

Japanese coevals.

Despite the family's affluence, Esther worked as a secretary in one of Shanghai's largest firms of the British-Jewish Sassoon family. She was offered a profitable transfer to the firm's Singapore branch for an extensive period, but declined the offer, arguing that the tropical climate is unfavorable for her health.

The Veinerman family was not religious. They attended synagogue services only on high holidays, when the Jewish kitchen substituted the Russian and, occasionally, Chinese cookery. Their "Jewish life" centered mainly around the activities at the luscious Shanghai Jewish club, which was so much loved by Ronny, that when he visited Shanghai half a century after his departure from the city, he had no trouble finding the club's premises (now a music conservatory) without outside assistance. Most of all, he was thrilled to note that the club billiard room was perfectly intact, and the billiard table, the cues and the balls were still to be found in their proper



Four generations: great grandson, Ronny; Essia, Ronny's mother; Lena, Ronny's grandmother; and Katya, Ronny's great grandmother

storage. It seems that the students played snooker no less than music. In the hot and humid Shanghai summers, the family used to retire to a cool mountain resort, with cool scented breeze.

One day, when Ronny was five, he met a group of Chinese officers, strolling outside their house at the resort. One of the officers questioned Ronny at length about his origin, family and their way of life. Much later, Ronny learned that he talked to no other than Chang Kai-shek himself.

As the belligerent activities gained in volume, so did the repressions of the Japanese authorities. The Europeans were prohibited from freely traveling



Ronny and mother in the courtyard of their home in Shanghai

in China. Albert quite inappropriately fell prey to this edict when the publication of the edict found him on a business trip to Tientsin, cutting him off from his family in Shanghai. A group of Europeans, Albert included, had no choice but to set on foot for a month's journey along the railway lines southward towards Shanghai. He reached home on a rickshaw, amid a bombardment by the US super fortress planes B-29.

In 1948, after the establishment of the State of Israel, the Veinermans decided to go and settle in the

new Jewish State. The first to leave Shanghai were Albert and Esther with the grand parents and the little Ronny on board the gigantic US naval transport "General Gordon". But not without a misadventure: at the last moment Albert was taken off the ship thanks to a Russian informer's allegation to the authorities that Albert was a Communist agent. It was not difficult to invent such a story, as most of the passengers were Soviet citizens and often visited both the Jewish and the Soviet clubs for a snack or a theater performance. The ship was about to weigh anchor, and the family hastily decided to leave Albert behind to catch them up later In Israel. It was, however, that Albert reached Israel prior to the family – by plane.

The family settled in a cosy apartment on the Carmel, Haifa. Albert was already "in business": together with his friends from China, Kopelevich and Burlakov. A small fishing boat was purchased, a captain employed and fishing nets lowered in the territorial waters of their historical homeland.

Soon the three remaining brothers joined the family. Another pasta factory was established, but the competition with such concern as the Histadrut-owned "Osem" proved to be a bit too much even for the enterprising old timers such as Veinermans, and Albert requalified as a bookkeeper in a petroleum distillery, alongside with being a voluntary chairman of the Haifa branch of the Association of the Jews,



Ronny's mother and friends on a pleasure excursion (in China).

former residents of China (or IYS). Esther, too, found an employment as a secretary in the Haifa branch of the Socony Vacuum Petroleum Co. Ronny was sent to live, study and enjoy himself in the kibbutz Mishmar Haemek, "where they made a man of me... but not completely!" jests he, now vice-president of the IYS.

Leaving the kibbutz, Ran (Hebrew form of Ronny) graduated from school, and two courses of Technion (engineering faculty). Then the army and the reserves officers' came duty as a seren (captain) of an aerial delivery division. In 1964 he married Hadassa, a Hebrew school teacher.

In 1970 he worked as a deputy chief engineer on a site of a new Franco-Israeli construction company "Cedrick", in Iran – until the Iranian



Ronny with his grandfather Yaakov and grandmother Anna in Barri, Italy (1944)

Islamic revolution. H can account for having built an industrial zone in Tehran and a small town in the desert for the foreign oil projectors and local labor personnel. During his stay in Tehran, Ronny made a lot of friends, both Iranian (including the brother of the Iranian prime minister), Israeli, Swedish and Balouchi (local Bedouin). All this when Iran and Israel were friends -- prior to the sudden eruption of the Islamic revolution of Khomeini.

After his return to Israel in 1978, Ran Veinerman worked in a large engineering firm, building industrial and residential projects. From 1995 he works for the International Institute of Standards and as a volunteer vice chairman of the Igud Yotzei Sin in charge of the organizational and tourism issues.

Russian-Jewish Composer Avshalomov's Devotion to the Reform of Chinese National Music

By Xu Buxeng

Aaron Avshalomov (1894-1956) was born in Nikolayevsk on Amure (Chinese name Miao Jie, meaning Temple Street), a city ceded by the Chinese emperor to the Tzar in the 1860 Sino-Russian Peking Treaty. During his childhood there was still a large Chinese population with Chinese theaters and restaurants. The elderly Chinese servant who took care of his life was a Peking Opera fan and often brought him to watch the performance. He was fascinated by the way the Peking Opera ingeniously blended acting, posture and facial expressions with singing, and orchestral accompaniment into one organic whole. Although he felt that the music of the opera was rich and colorful, he also believed that at times the music was a rough, tedious and unceasing repetition of simple melodies. He thought that it was a pity that the vast musical treasury embedded in the Chinese folklore lay untouched. After studying music theory and composition in Zurich, Switzerland he was resolved to devote himself to the

reform of the national music drama of China.

In 1918 he came to China, living and working successively in the northern cities of Peking (now Beijing), Tientsin (now Tianjin) and Tsing tao (now Qingdao). He composed his first opera Guan Yin (Avalokitesvara) which was produced in Peking in 1925 and a year later in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. In 1932 he arrived at Shanghai, a metropolis still reeling from the full force of the New Culture Movement. He became acquainted with many outstanding Chinese musicians, such as Nie Er, the composer of the March of the Volunteers. He produced the first orchestration of this song, which later became the national anthem of the People's Republic. The symphonic sketch Peiping Hutungs, a tonal depiction of the carefree and leisurely life in the ancient city of Peking, was first performed in Shanghai in 1933 and in the United States by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Leopold Stokowski.

Avshalomov's masterpiece the music drama The Great Wall was based on the tragic story of Meng Jiangnu during the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.). Her husband was drafted to build the Great Wall in a remote mountain range. Meng Jiangnu trekked to the Great Wall, only to discover that her husband had died from starvation and overwork. The performance in November 1945 won general acclaim. General W.C. Wedemeyer, the commander-in-chief of the U.S. army stationed in China, encouraged the composer to stage the music-drama in the United States. Again it was performed in Nanking (now Nanjing) in November 1946 for Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, General George Marshall and U.S. ambassador to China Leighton Stuart with great success. He later traveled in the United States to plan and negotiate conditions for performing his works. Unfortunately Civil War (1946-1949) broke out in China. He was stranded in the United States and later became naturalized.



Ronny Veinerman, vice chairman, Igud Yotzei Sin, with Ms. Zhang Xiao'an, deputy ambassador of China in Israel

Like their father, Ran's children are industrious and active: his daughter, Tali (39), a lawyer by profession, deals with the education of problematic children; his son, Dan (33) is a lawyer, employed by a large law firm. Such is the thrilling passage of a Jewish fisherman family -- from Amur River to the Haifa port city, via the deserts of Iran.

The A.K. GLAZUNOV HIGH SCHOOL OF MUSIC IN HARBIN

In 1925, Professor U. M. Goldstein, his wife, V. I. Dillon of the Leipzig Conservatory, and S.M. Schpilman of the St. Petersburg Conservatory, recent immigrants to Manchuria, inaugurated a new (second) music conservatory in Harbin – The A.K. Glazunov High School of Music.

Until now, the biographical data of Uriel Moisyevich Goldstein remains rather scarce, and relates mostly to his musical career. According to him, he completed his musical education in 1910 in the Berlin Royal Academy (violin department led by the then famous Prof. Marteau, and the department of the composition theory, led by Prof. Bruch, having been granted for the two disciplines the degree of F.A. – Free Artist). From 1913 he played as solo concertmeister in the Petersburg Theatre of Musical Drama, and worked (1915 -1923) in Caucasus, where he organized the Baku conservatory, of which he became the director. He also founded the Baku musical technion. In 1917 he invited a talented pianist V.I Dillon (his future wife) to join the Baku Conservatory in the capacity of a teacher and performer of concerts.

V.I. Dillon was born in a Russian provincial city of Saratov and began her musical education (piano) in Poltava at the Lisovsky Musical School, which she graduated with honors at the age of 12 and was sent by her parents to Germany to continue her musical education with the then well know Professor Teichmuller at the Leipzig conservatory from which she graduated in 1911. Some time later, she migrated to Petrograd where she continued studying piano with Professor Blumenfeld.

In 1923 V.I. Dillon and U.M. Goldstein continued to perform in Moscow, where they were joined by the cellist S.M. Schpilman to form “The Moscow Trio”, which gained enormous popularity and toured many cities in Russia and abroad, arriving in 1925 (with the famous Russian composer Grechaninov) in Harbin for a series of concerts.

For a long time, Professor Goldstein planned to organize a conservatory in Shanghai, but it so happened that he and V.I. Dillon settled in Harbin instead, staying there for the next 12 years.

Here, on November 18, 1925, they opened, under the sponsorship of the Russian municipality, a musical school, to become in the future The Second Harbin Conservatory. At first it was named The Municipal Music School, and later (August 18, 1928) renamed to become The A.K. Glazunov High School of Music. U.M. Goldstein was elected to the post of the Headmaster and the Director of the Art Council. V.I. Dillon headed the piano department; S. M. Schpilman – the department of cello. A group of musicians were employed to form an ensemble of teachers and pedagogues of equally high standard. It included: B.M. Lazarev, F.A., of the St. Petersburg Conservatory (dept. of composition taught by Professor Zilotti and Prof. Sokolov); I.M. Horwitz, F.A.; B. Schifferblat of St. Petersburg Conservatory; famous singers A.Y. Solovieva-Mazulevich and M.V. Osipova-Zakrjevskaya.

During various periods of its existence the piano department of the school included V. I. Dillon, L.B. Aptekareva I/M/ Horwitz, I.M. Ikonnikova,

R.G.Karpova, Z.A. Pribytkova, T.A. Chinareva, N.V. Rudiukova (Dillon's pupil). The violin dept., Prof. U.M. Goldstein, N.A. Schifferblat; Cello Dept.: S.M. Schpilman, I.M. Ulstein, S.I. Stupin, K.I. Shapiro, N.D. Kotzarev; Wooden wind instruments dept., I.A. Albitzky (bassoon), P.F. Sobolev (flute), L.F. Ovchinnikov, D.I. Tairov (contrabass) S.P. Schneider (voltorne); Singing (solo) department: F.P. Kahn, A. S. Polikarpova, M.V. Osipova-Zakrzhevskaya, V.G. Shushlin, A.N. Solovieva-Mazulevskaya; Choir department: I.P. Raiskii; History of music dept.:

S.S. Aksakov; History of Art Dept.: M.A. Sukanov, V.M. Anastasiev, I.P. Varfolomeyev. A.Y. Zelinsky; Drums dept.: L.J. Chernomordin; Brass wind instruments department D.I. Tairov (trumpet), S.P. Schneider (voltorne); Italian language – S.P. Peterez. The theory of music and harmony was taught by the headmaster U.M. Goldstein.

An interview, “Music in Palestine”, was given by Professor K.I. Shapiro (cello) to the Harbin daily “Zarya” on June 20, 1928:

Prof. K.I. Shapiro recently arrived in Harbin to join the Municipal School of Music as a teacher of cello. Speaking to our reporter, prof. Shapiro gave some interesting details on the musical life in Palestine and on his own career:

"Having began my musical education, at first in Saratov and then in Moscow, I left Russia for Germany in 1918. From there I traveled to Japan where I gave a series of concerts in 1920-1921. Then I returned to Germany to complete my studies at the Leipzig conservatory. Upon my graduation from the conservatory I

gave a number of concerts in Frankfurt and was employed as a soloist in the Frankfurt symphonic orchestra. In 1926 I went to Palestine, where I taught in a music school in Tel-Aviv and played as a solo in the Palestine Opera, and later organized a string quartet.

However, since the public organizations were unable to earmark necessary budget for music, due to the heavy needs of building of a future state, I had to leave Palestine for a concert tour abroad."

Speaking of musical life in Palestine, Mr. Shapiro says that there is a great interest in music there, but the lack of resources does not allow serious development. And yet there are five musical schools: two in Jerusalem and Haifa and three in Tel-Aviv. There is an Opera, organized by Mr. Golinkin, and also a symphonic orchestra headed by Fordaus and Liampel. Mr. Shapiro was invited to conduct it, but he was already on his way to China.

A musical association was created in Tel-Aviv (which, in a way, is the musical center of the country) to develop a symphonic nucleus of musical education. Similar associations exist in Jerusalem and Haifa.

From Palestine, Mr. Shapiro headed for Shanghai, where he received the invitation to come to Harbin. ("Zarya", 20 June, 1928).

The basic task of the Glazunov Musical School, working along the line of the Russian conservatories, was to prepare the talented Russian and Chinese youth for advancement of musical activity and

study of the Chinese folklore music, and the mutual influence of European and Chinese musical cultures, as well as augmenting Chinese interest in the European art of music. Reminiscing about his similar efforts in Caucasus, professor Goldstein noted that Turk music is not as rich in content as Chinese, and that in 5 – 6 years the Glazunov School will be able to significantly influence the development of the Chinese national music.

More than 500 musicians have graduated from the A.K. Glazunov High School of Music, some of them acquiring world-wide fame. The School had prepared seven graduations of its own, organized pupils' concerts, chamber music evenings and marked the jubilees of the Russian and foreign composers.

At least five students of Prof. U.M. Goldstein, Georgii Kolychev, Alexei Bibikov, Anatolii Poppa, Sigizmund Moravsky, Alexander Dzygar, acquired world fame. So have pupils of V.I. Dillon: Tatiana Chinareva, Elena Fedorovskaya, Anatolii Vedernikov, Svetlana Bursuk, Vinci Tomashevskaya. The daughter of the headmaster of the founder of the school, Eleonora (Eli) Goldstein, too, has grown to be an internationally well known pianist.

Before leaving Harbin with her father and V.I. Dillon, Eli, then nine years of age, gave a capital concert, which was comprehensively covered by Harbin's leading newspapers, "Zarya" ("The Dawn") and all other Russian language dailies. The critics were

beside themselves with delight at the performance, predicting the prodigy child a great future.

In 1936 the Russian Harbin generously marked the quarter century of V.I. Dillon's career as an artist and musical pedagogue. The same year the A.K. Glazunov High School of Music organized its last (seventh) graduation ball, soon after which the school was closed.

The triumphal Harbin period of the work of the A.K. Glazunov High School of Music and the career of its graduated students was continually covered by the Harbin Press in detail from 1925 till 1936, and further on. However, I am still investigating the future destiny of V.I. Dillon and U. M. Goldstein.

On April 10, 1938, "Zarya" published a short article that the celebrated couple opened a High School of Music in Tel-Aviv and that the concert given by Elianor Goldstein at the Yasha Hefetz Hall was a great success, soon after which the young pianist left Palestine for the USA.

* * *

The author of this article, currently preparing a book on "The Art of Music in the Russian Harbin", would like to approach the readers of "Bulletin" with a request to help him in his endeavor to expose this glorious side of our mutual work in Harbin and Manchuria as a whole.

An old Harbin hand,
G.V. Melichov

Beijing-Tianjin new "Bullet Train" stages a dry run in 27 mins

The Beijing-Tianjin new intercity rail known as "The Bullet Train" has already run 6,000 km since a dry run program started on July 1. The first batch of passengers will board the train on August 1, one week ahead of the Olympics, to cover the 113 kms between the two cities in 27 minutes, announced the PRC Ministry of Communications at Beijing. .

The line is the first railway in China to be built for trains operating at 300 km/h, and the alignment is designed to permit trains running at 350 km/h. The rail uses CRH3 type of trains, which are outstanding in terms of noise protection, break operation, and slender contour. Aircraft-type seats in the 1st class compartments are equipped with ear phones to

facilitate radio and TV music listening. At the mid section of the train there is a dining car serving fast food, snacks, beer and soft drinks. "A mobile Internet bar" is set up at the front part of the train to provide broadband services. A one-way ticket costs less than 70 yuan (approximately 10 US Dollars).

The New Israel's Messenger



Vol. XI No. 1

IYS Sephardi Division

Editor: Rebecca Toueg

A warm and enjoyable gathering and luncheon hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Matook Nissim of San Francisco was held on July 3 at the Bablylonian Jewry Heritage Center in Or Yehuda of a group of former Shanghailanders of the Sephardi Jewish Community. Of central interest to all was the program for the projected permanent exhibition in the Museum of the former communities of Babylonian Jewry in the Far East to include India, China, Burma and Singapore. The program was initially under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Attar, and the Museum researchers, Prof. Yitzhak Avishur and Dr. Zvi Yehuda.

A meeting was first held between the Director of the Center, Mordechai Ben Porat, Matook Nissim, Jack Guri (Chairman of the Sephardi Division), Rebecca Toueg, Abba Toeg, and Idit Sharoni-Pinhas (Museum Curator). The discussion centered upon the problem of financing the infrastructure necessary for the projected exhibition which is estimated as about \$2 million and the need

for raising the required funds. Also discussed was the need for financing the transfer of the microfilm reels of all the volumes of Israel's Messenger (1904-1938) into computerized form. This has already begun with the transfer of 3 reels at a cost of about \$500 per reel.

After the meeting, the participants were shown a film about the Museum and its interesting displays, and then a brief tour of the exhibits was given by one of the Museum guides. This was followed by a luncheon held at a local Iraqi restaurant in Or Yehuda where everyone could get a taste of the Baghdadian foods they had once enjoyed in their Shanghai homes, and a vote of thanks was extended to Mr. and Mrs. Nissim by Jack Guri.

It is hoped that next year a larger event will be held at the Babylonian Center with a presentation of the material collected for the proposed exhibition and a display of the family photographs that have been received so far.

Dr Meyer has lectured widely on Baghdadi Jew in the eastern Diaspora and has presented papers on the subject worldwide. She has published numerous authoritative articles in prestigious journals. Her book *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai* (Lanham M.D.2003), based on her extensive research on the subject, has been a sell out and a has just been reprinted. Book reviews have considered it a definitive history of the Baghdadi Jewish merchants who settled in Shanghai in the mid 19th century.

Dr Meyer is a double graduate in English and Humanities, both with honours and obtained her MA degree in International History. She was awarded a PhD from the London School of Economics in 1994.



From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo

By Dr. Maisie Meyer

Reviewed by Rabbi Isaac S. Abraham

At the outset I have to confess a personal interest on several counts. Firstly, the period covered by the book under review almost exactly encompasses the departure of my paternal grandparents from Baghdad to my own exit from Shanghai – with parents and siblings – a century later. Secondly, much of the factual and anecdotal material included by the Author was provided either by myself or, at my instigation, by family, relatives and friends.

That said, how could I not be enthralled by the resultant opus? Nonetheless, having entered these caveats I shall attempt the assignment as impartially as possible.

Undoubtedly, Dr. Meyer presents us with an absorbing and highly readable account of life as lived by a colourful section of Oriental Jewry, in a remote part of the globe, during an extraordinarily turbulent and traumatic period of world history. Starting from Baghdad in mid-1850, the Author traces the peregrinations of polyglot Jewish families through India, Malaysia, Indonesia, right up to the throbbing, teeming, palpitating Chinese metropolis of Shanghai. She then faithfully chronicles their century of life there, in all its multi-faceted, kaleidoscopic fascination, till the Community's total eclipse under Communist rule in the mid-1950s.

The narrative skill of the Author, and the lucid prose flowing from her pen, belie the years of painstaking, dogged pursuance of source material, literally worldwide, all meticulously researched and scrupulously authenticated, including repeated visits to sites and locations mentioned in the text. What she harvested is artfully and comprehensively woven into a rich, colourful, panoramic

tapestry, depicting Jewish life in this little known corner of the Far East.

That hers was a labour of love is obvious throughout, but at the same time, no mean amount of toil and sweat, perhaps some tears too, if no actual blood, must have been expended during the manuscript's gestation. Combining an exquisite blend of literary talent and scholarly detachment, the innate honesty of the Author is clearly discernible. With ruthless objectivity the story is told as it was – warts and all. Flimsy or uncorroborated information – however attractive – is strictly rejected. On the other hand, authentic, relevant facts, unembellished and unvarnished, are all faithfully recorded, however unpalatable some may find them.

Wisely, Dr. Meyer sticks to her clearly demarcated brief, eschewing tempting digressions like the Jews of Kaifeng Fu – fully dealt with by Michael Pollak in *Mandarins, Jews and Missionaries*, Bishop White and others – but refers to them only tangentially when their existence impinges on the conscience and concern of the Shanghai Jewish Community. True to her undertaking, the Author concentrates her mind and attention on the Sephardi Jews of Shanghai, individually and collectively. Within that scope, she describes their lifestyle, their traditions, their ritual, their activities, their cuisine, their cultural development, their social aspirations and how they interact with members of the younger Ashkenaz communities, principally Russian, but also much later German and Polish Jewish Refugees with the advent of World War II. All of this integration was taking place in a milieu which included a substantial enclave of foreign nationals and swamped by the overwhelming body of the native Chinese.

This is indeed a fascinating tale and the Author tells it with a gripping, almost mesmeric style. Once taken up it is difficult to put down, and

anyone who was there will wallow in nostalgia. As the subject matter is so unusual, it earns the distinction of being a unique contribution to the genre of books on Jewish Social History, and will be of immense interest to historian and layman alike, especially one with a personal connection to China and the Far East.

Since no human endeavour is perfect, some nitpicking is in order. A few typographical errors could have been avoided by more thorough proof reading. The fastidious reader wishing to check sources frequently, would note with annoyance the absence of a correlating link between the section of notes and the relevant chapters to which they refer. A simple superscription on each page of notes, giving title and number of the relevant chapter would have solved the problem. More and wider choice of photographs and illustrations would have been welcome. I am sure there is a rich store waiting to be tapped. However I understand a *Pictorial Companion* is in the offing, and I eagerly anticipate its appearance. Finally, the title strikes me as somewhat pedestrian and inelegant, as well as a bit of a misnomer. 'From Baghdad to the Bund' or 'From Baghdad to Bubbling Well' would not only be attractively alliterative, but 'catchy' and far more evocative. In concluding, the Author lets the reader determine whether patriarch David Sassoon's belief that the 'spiritual and religious survival' of the Sephardi Jewish Community of Shanghai would depend on the 'teaching and tradition of Baghdad' has been realised. I would rejoin that whereas the lost Kaifeng Jewish colony was aptly epitaphed by their Chronicler Michael Pollack with the words 'For the wind passed over it, and it is gone, and its place is no longer known!' (Psalms 103:10), in gratifying contrast the Sephardi Jewish Community in Shanghai, infused and reinvigorated by the later Ashkenazi

influx – especially the refugees from European Yeshivot during World War II – survived and re-emerged, energised, and vibrant, all over the globe. Moreover, they impacted on World Jewry in five continents even unto the third and fourth generations. A true vindication of King Solomon's dictum: 'Cast your bread upon the waters, and in the fullness of days, it shall be found (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

The Reviewer was born in Shanghai and has lived in the U.K. since 1949. After 30 years of teaching in Jewish Day Schools, he served for 20 years as Director of the Sephardi Kashrut Authority. Currently he is the Registrar of our Beth Din.

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.



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

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.

Dina lives in Fulham.

Lark Rise to Candleford is on BBC1 on Sundays at 7.40 pm.

ISRAEL'S MESSENGER.

Official Organ of the Shanghai Zionist Association.

A Fortnightly Jewish Paper Devoted to the Interests of Jews and
Judaism in the East.

OFFICE: 16 PEKING ROAD, SHANGHAI.

Shanghai, Friday, March, 6th, 1908—Adar II 3rd. 5668.

CALENDAR FOR THE FORTNIGHT.

Friday, Adar II 10th (March 13th) Sabbath commences (time of lighting) at 5.45 p.m.
 Saturday, Adar II 11th (March 14th) portion of the Law, Wayikra, Leviticus, chapters 1 to 5 inclusive; Maftir Zakhor, Deuteronomy, chapter 25; Haphtara Samuel I, chapter 15; Prophets, Jeremiah, chapters 49 to 52 inclusive Proverbs, chapters 17 to 21 inclusive. Sabbath terminates at 6.30 p.m.
 Monday, Adar II 13th (March 16th) Som Esther (Fast of Esther) time of breaking fast at 6.30 p.m.
 Tuesday, Adar II 14th (March 17th) Purim.
 Wednesday, Adar II 15th (March 18th) Purim Shushan.
 Friday, Adar II 17th (March 20th) Sabbath commences (time of lighting) at 5.50 p.m.
 Saturday, Adar II 18th (March 31st) portion of the Law, Tsao, Leviticus, chapters 6, 7 and 8; Maftir, Parrah, Numbers, chapter 19; Haphtarah, Ezekiel, chapter 36; Prophets, Ezekiel, chapters 1 to 8 inclusive; Esther all. Sabbath terminates at 6.35 p.m.

TIME OF SERVICES AT THE SYNAGOGUES DURING THE FORT-NIGHT.

(Subject to alterations)

SYNAGOGUE "BETH EL," 16, Peking Road.

S. R. Shooker, Hazan.
 Saturday mornings at 7.15 a.m.
 Purim at 5.45 p.m. and 7.15 a.m.
 18-5-07 12m.

SYNAGOGUE "SHEARITH ISRAEL" 9, Seward Road.

S. E. Abraham, Hazan.
 Saturdays at 6.30 a.m. 3.30 p.m. @ 6.35 p.m.
 Week days at 6.15 a.m. and 5.45 p.m.
 1.1-07 12m.

SYNAGOGUE "OHEIL MOISHE" 9 Seward Road.

A Leitus, Hazan,
 Saturdays, at 8.00 a.m., 3.00 p.m. and 6.35 p.m.
 Week days, at 7.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.
 11-8-07 12m.

BIRTH.

GOLDMAN:—On Monday, the 24th February, at No. 20 Boone Road, the wife of M. Goldman of a son.

FAMINE IN PALESTINE.

The following circular has been issued by Mr. S. J. SOLOMON, which speaks for itself:—

Attached are letters, one addressed to the Jewish Community of Shanghai and others to some of the leading Firms and private individuals here, lately received in Shanghai from the heads of the Community of Hebron, Palestine, in which they state that a very large number of the inhabitants of that Holy City is greatly suffering from famine and consequent disease and mortality. The accounts given in these letters are heart-rending and no Jew with any feeling towards his suffering co-religionists should make any delay in contributing his mite towards alleviating the great misery and privation from which those living in our Fatherland are suffering.

It is to be hoped that this appeal to such a deserving cause will be responded to liberally by every member of our Community.

Mr. SOLOMON requests us to acknowledge the following donations received by him:—

S. J. SOLOMON, Esq	\$3.00
N. E. B. EZRA, Esq	2.00
S. S. GATTON, Esq.....	2.00
A. BENJAMIN, Esq.....	2.00
J. AARON, Esq	2.00
Charity	1.00

Total. \$12.00

Further contributions will be thankfully received by Mr. S. J. SOLOMON and duly acknowledged in ISRAEL'S MESSENGER.

THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND.

Amount already acknowledged.....	\$175.00
Box No. 387	1.30

Total \$176.30

Further contributions will be thankfully received by the Hon. Secretary of the local Zionist Association and duly acknowledged in ISRAEL'S MESSENGER.

AN ALL ROUND CURSE.

It is wrong for a teacher to whip—first, because it cannot be done without developing anger both in the teacher and the pupil, and anger is a curse physically, mentally and spiritually.—*Rev. G. F. Hall, Independent, Chicago.*

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I g u d y o t z e i S i n

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

Chapter 11 Section E

Our camp was “upgraded”. It’s not under the authority of the regional camp management anymore, but has become an autonomous unit. On this occasion all of the management level has been exchanged, including the director of the medical department. The new director has decided to raise the professional skill of the doctors and hold in-training courses. The disease rate in the camp is high and so is mortality. There are many T.B. patients suffering from malnutrition and also quite a few cases of lung cancer. According to the regulations in every case of death, a post mortem should be held. There are 4-5 post mortems performed daily and all the doctors are obliged to be present. Frequently, differences of opinion would arise concerning diagnoses, medication and causes of death. I had to lecture to the doctors about these differences of opinion. I went through more than a thousand forms of patients’ medical histories and over 300 post mortem protocols. The lectures were held on a bi-weekly basis in the presence of all doctors, both the prisoners and the civilians. One of my lectures dealt with the infectious hepatitis and I used plenty of references and diagrams. This particular lecture aroused a lot of interest because of the many cases of hepatitis we had in the camp. Surprisingly the commanders of the camp, who had no connection to the medical matters, also expressed interest in the lecture. A few months later 4 high ranking officers asked me to hand over the notes of my lecture. I presumed that there was something behind it... They probably didn’t like



the statistics I presented. I searched and found some of the notes I have kept, and then they also asked for the diagrams of incidence of disease and mortality I used in the lecture but I no longer had them. Later on I discovered that the authorities feared that the statistics would fall into wrong hands. People may get sick, people may die, but no one should know about that. It was told that one of the officers who visited me had once seen the sign “Ward for Dystrophy Patients” on one of the doors in the hospital and after causing a row demanded to remove it. “We don’t have cases of dystrophy!” he shouted, and that was it.

There are many interesting people in the camp, intellectuals and scholars but also quite a few eccentrics and people with strange inexplicable behavior. One of these eccentrics was a Jew, a former active member of the Communist party where he held important positions, and an intellectual possessing vast knowledge. He also had a Jewish education. One day he became a Christian believer. An

Orthodox priest, a prisoner himself, following his request converted him to the Russian Orthodox Christianity. The new convert would pray a lot, cross himself and wholeheartedly believe in the principles of his new religion. After only approximately six months he switched to Catholicism and became an ardent Catholic. One day he was hospitalized and when the time for prayer would come he prayed in the corner. If the other patients disturbed his prayers, he would scold them, “Don’t distract me from communing with my God, Jesus Christ...”. In 1955 he was released from the camp, settled near Moscow and began working on getting back his rights. He was probably reinstated and became a member of the Communist party again. Just like in the past he is now carrying on his fight against the ... religion! Many of the inmates had twisted and wounded souls.

A young Jewish 35 year old rabbi is hospitalized in the nervous disorders ward. At the outbreak of war he escaped from Germany, was caught by the Soviets, accused of spying and sentenced to ten years in the camp. The young rabbi has poor Russian and addresses everyone in Yiddish. Every conversation he had, or a note he wrote, he would end with the word “One”. He always seemed elated and would speak loudly and enthusiastically. Three times daily he would pray with devotion and soul searching. The other patients in the ward are annoyed by his loud prayers but he ignores their pleas to lower his voice and so during the times of his prayers I allow him to use my room

for he seems not to believe that a silent prayer also reaches heaven. I have had this rabbi with me in the camp for 3-4 years and on more than one occasion the authorities blamed his odd behavior on me.

The criminal inmates, calling themselves “the true Soviets”, riot and go berserk. One day I had to visit the prison. There are always many patients there for no one can stand the harsh conditions in prison. “I have hepatitis,” claims one of inmates pointing at his eyes. There is a yellowish cast to his eye but I can’t find any other symptoms of hepatitis either in the roof of his mouth or on the skin. It’s obvious that this is not the infectious hepatitis but I agree to hospitalize him. He stayed in the hospital for two weeks and asked me not to hurry with his release. Not only he, but his criminal associates demanded that I keep him there. So where did the yellowish tinge of his eyes come from? On leaving the hospital he disclosed the secret – how one “creates” hepatitis. One should trap a mouse – and there are many in prisons – and put its gall bile into the eye, so that when a doctor comes on his visit to the prison under the escort of camp superior the inmate announces that he got hepatitis.

Among camp inmates there are many Germans, war prisoners who were sentenced for crimes committed, as it were, already in the Soviet camps. Most Germans are officers and according to the severity of the offence their imprisonment ranges from 10 to 25 years. One of them, a lieutenant colonel, is hospitalized in the camp hospital. A Polish male nurse discloses to me in secret that he was in charge of the gas chambers in one of the concentration camps. I assumed that among the German prisoners there would be many Nazis and avoided meeting or talking to them. However, now that I knew the secret of this man who murdered thousands of my people how could I fulfill my duty as a doctor, treat him

and take care of his health? God help me!.. The rumor about the man’s past spread quickly in the hospital, but I noticed that no one was too disturbed about it. There were curious looks, and quite probably a few even secretly admired him for his “heroic” deeds. Several days later in the evening, as I was sitting in my small room lighted by the oil lamp and reading a medical journal, I heard a hesitant knock on my door. One of the patients entered and in a trembling voice said: “ Doctor, I speak to you as a Jew to a Jew.... Take pity on me...” and his voice choked. After he calmed a bit he continued: “ I can’t bear it anymore... I don’t sleep nights ... I am going crazy... Please transfer me to another room... I can’t be in his presence... Breathe the same air he breathes... See him or hear him... I can’t, for he tortured and exterminated thousands of my people in gas chambers... Doctor, for Heaven’s sake, take pity on me...”

We talked late into the night in the meager light of the oil lamp. He told me all he went through under the Nazis in his small town in Belarus, the bloody nightmare, the hundreds of Jews buried alive by Hitler troops. Miraculously he escaped and was saved. He would alternate between speaking and weeping and I couldn’t help but weep with him. When he ended we sat silently with tears in our eyes. I transferred him to another room. This Jew stayed in the camp for about a year, always alone, distancing himself from people, sad and depressed. People like him can’t take the harsh conditions of the camp and as a rule don’t survive long. People in despair or those that lose hope don’t have the needed strength and often die before their release. Contrary to those I have seen many, who in spite of what they have been through, didn’t lose their vitality or ability to work and I frequently wondered at their perseverance. The physical and the mental tortures only strengthened their body and spirit. Jews especially

excelled at that. The will to live, faith and hope for a better future, aided them in times of their trials. The Jewish spirit steeled through suffering was stronger and more steadfast than that of others...

Among the camp inmates there are many who cooperated with the Nazis not by coercion but willingly. One of them – a young 30 year old Soviet doctor- a Russian who was sentenced to 25 years. Among the many accusations in his file he was blamed for helping the Nazis demolish Lenin’s statue and of informing on the hiding places of the Jews who were eventually found by the Nazis and shot. This doctor asked my roommate – an old Armenian, to help him write a request to the General Prosecutor for a reevaluation of his case. When the old Armenian looked through his file he raised his voice at him: “You should be hung... How many Jews have you turned in?...Get out ... I don’t want to see you...”

Hunger strikes are widespread in the camp. The authorities disapprove of them. “In our camp, everything is O.K.” and hunger strikes are unacceptable. Apart from that, a hunger strike is a kind of a protest and is there such a thing in the Soviet Union? After 3-4 days of a hunger strike the striker is sent to the hospital in order to be intravenously fed and then he is put in solitary confinement. As a rule the strikers don’t give a real reason for their decision and just claim that they are “fed up”. That could be a truthful answer. At first the strikers resist being intravenously fed by protesting, sometimes even violently, and often several wardens are needed to feed them. Finally though the strikers exhaust their strength and end the strike. However, one day, shortly after Stalin’s death, a 60 year old dignified man with a long beard was brought to the hospital. He declared a hunger strike and hadn’t eaten for a week. “ I won’t stop the strike, and I won’t be fed”, he announced. “What happened?” I asked, “What brought

you to this decision?"

"With all due respect, I can't reveal it to you..." answered the man. Later on he changed his mind and said that he would be willing to end the strike if he were given the opportunity to state his reasons to all the camp commanders and on condition that I too be present there. I passed on his words to the head of the hospital and the following day all the superiors appeared at the hospital. The man was brought before them but refused to talk unless I was present, and then after I was called he stood up and solemnly said: "The genius of the humanity, the leader of the world workers, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin is dead and the whole world is mourning the passing of the genius. How can I – a simple inmate – express my grief at his death? I decided to fast. For 8 days I haven't eaten in honor of Stalin's death and that's the reason for my hunger strike. One of the commanders replied: "All of Soviet Union is in heavy mourning, and each one of us sees his death as a personal catastrophe, but no one has declared a hunger strike as a result...". "However, I decided to fast as a sign of mourning for the death of Stalin the great..." added the man. Everyone was smiling but avoided looking into each other eyes so as not to burst into laughter. "And now comrade commanders," continued the striker, "Since I have told you the reason for my strike and it has become known to you, I will end my strike..."

"You can go now," said the "Oper", and all the rest left the room hurriedly. One of the commanders entered my room and burst into loud laughter: "He is a lunatic!..."

"No," I mused in my heart, "Not a lunatic but a failed con artist..."

The whole charade hadn't improved the prisoner's conditions, for it's doubtful whether the death of Stalin "The Great" has caused any real sorrow.

An additional duty was imposed on

me – to serve as the hospital doctor in the women's area. I asked to be relieved of this duty because I was already overburdened, but now one would listen to my request. The female doctor, an inmate, has ended her term of imprisonment and because there was no other doctor to fill her place it was up to me to do so. As a result, I am working in two hospitals, in the male area and in the female area. My day begins at six in the morning. Until eight I check patients on my ward and then, accompanied by a guard walk the two kilometers to the female area. I stay at the women's hospital until five in the afternoon, return to the male area and do the evening round in my ward. After dinner I fill out the forms of the medical history. Altogether my working day is about 15-16 hours long.

In the female area about 2000 women are imprisoned and... a hermaphrodite. He wears men's clothes and for a long time the prison authorities didn't know whether to place him in the women's area or men's area. Finally they decided to opt for the least problematic solution and put him in with the women. But even there he was a nuisance, and every so often they would move him from one barrack to another, or hospitalize him needlessly. He was sentenced to 15 years and had only served three. An unbearable situation! The hermaphrodite wanders among the women, makes friends with the younger ones and they look at him with lust – half male, an illusion of masculinity...

I have already mentioned Dr. M, the expert on nervous disorders, who dared to express his opinion concerning the high mortality rate and was consequently dismissed from the hospital and sent to hard labor in the quarry. Because he was an excellent doctor and an expert in nervous disorders, the authorities wanted to reinstate him in his profession, on condition he turn to

them and ask as a favor to return him to his old job. However Dr. M, "the proud Jew" as he was called by the authorities, even though he was ill, refused to do so and continued working in the quarry. After quite a long period of refusal and there being no other doctor in his field the authorities gave in and appointed him as the head of the nervous disorders department. One day, during his work on the ward he became paralyzed. I got word of the tragedy that befell my friend in the evening when I returned from the female area. I moved him to my ward so he could get proper treatment and notified the director of the medical department. He then remembered "the proud Jew" and started interrogating me on how and by whose permission I had transferred Dr. M to my ward... On no account did the authorities accept my action and I had to use various ruses and invent different excuses to prevent his expulsion from the hospital. He lay in my ward for five weeks until his condition improved. He could move his foot again, his mind was clear and his memory intact. I wished to keep him on until he could move unaided, however I didn't succeed. One day, a civilian doctor came, as it were, to visit Dr. M. He stayed for a long time discussing different issues – the revolution, the communism and the Soviet way of life. As usual, Dr. M wasn't prudent and said what he thought. The civilian doctor informed the camp authorities and Dr. M was taken out of the hospital and transferred to the invalids' barrack.

Section F

In January 1953 the radio announced the arrests of the Jewish doctors in Moscow. "They were intentionally poisoning the leaders of the country while treating them." The announcer read out the names of the professors: Vapsi, Greenstein, Cohen, Ettinger, and others. According to the radio, they all confessed committing the crimes attributed to them and to being "foreign agents" and Zionist

“Joint agents”. At the time of the radio announcement I was alone in my room. Terror and fear took hold of me. Next morning while I was preparing to visit my patients, one of the civilian doctors entered and immediately addressed me: “Have you heard about the imprisonment of the professors in Moscow, the murderers of Jdanov and others?... Have you?”

“No, I haven’t,” I replied.

“It was announced yesterday and this morning they repeated it. These scoundrels, the famous doctors, and look what they have done... all foreign agents...”

“ I don’t believe it...” I answered, “ It must be a libel... It’s totally unreasonable...”

“But they have confessed... and confessed to being the agents of the Jewish organization “Joint”, replied the civilian doctor with confidence.

“Do you know what kind of an organization “Joint” is and what it deals with?”

“Doctor, but they all –Professor Vapsi and others pleaded guilty...”

“We had better not discuss “confessions... I can show you here in the camp hundreds of innocent inmates “admitting” their guilt, “confessing” everything attributed to them...I have withstood three years of interrogations and I know what they are and how the interrogated “confess”... I answered angrily. However, the civilian doctor insisted and spoke to the paramedics: “Just think... A professor, the chief surgeon of the Red Army, and he is revealed as a murderer and a traitor”, he stated angrily and left the room.

Everyone in the camp speaks of the Jewish doctors and the murderous professors. The authorities especially, discuss the subject extensively. They speak with the prisoners too, interpret and add their own insights. They have no doubts whatsoever that the Jewish doctors murdered a certain communist leader or a certain activist. When the newspapers – “Socialistic

Karaganda” and “Pravda”- arrive, even people who never used to read papers grab them, read, and repeat the names of the murderer doctors – Vapsi, Greenstein, Cohen, Ettinger – all Jews. They loudly read articles about the “murderers in white”. The papers daily publish items on “Rabinoviches”, “Abramoviches”, and “Ziprooviches” that infiltrated the higher institutions and are “feeding” off the “public plate”. They demand a “purge” and raise an outcry against the actions of the bourgeois Jewish international organization – the “Joint”, which serves the American Secret Service. The headlines – “foreign agents”, “spies”, “Zionist espionage”, “The Imperialist state of Israel” appear in the papers daily. Rumors arrive of the dismissals of Jewish doctors from clinics and hospitals in the country. Some world renowned professors and scholars, among them the famed professor Shapira, the kidney disease expert, have been dismissed, too. It has been said that Chairman Voroshilov, who has been treated by the professor, has defended him and his rights were returned to him, but that the professor didn’t accept the preferential treatment and didn’t want to be an exception. The anti-Semitism is raising its head and we expected that here in the camp the Jewish doctors would be persecuted, dismissed and sent to hard labor. At that time there were 4 Jewish doctors in the camp and one was sent away and transferred to the general barrack.

With the background of the Jewish doctors’ accusations of murdering patients, an occurrence with one of the doctors – a pure Ukrainian – took place. One of the inmates fell sick at night, and first the paramedic who was called gave him an injection of caffeine. Because the patient’s condition didn’t improve the Ukrainian doctor was called in, but on his arrival he found the patient dead. In the morning the doctor was

ordered to come to the headquarters and one of the officers asked him gravely:

“What did the prisoner have?... What did he die of?”

“On my arrival he wasn’t alive, but I know the patient and he was suffering from a heart disease and visited the clinic...”

“You have murdered the patient!...” shouted the officer. The doctor was shocked.

“What do mean by murdered?”

“ You murdered him and that’s it... You are a Jew!”

“No, I am a Ukrainian...”

“ It’s a lie, you are Jewish, take off your pants!...” ordered the officer and forced the doctor to undress in order to check whether he was a Jew.

The wretched doctor got such a shock that he fainted and it took a long time to revive him. He was brought on a stretcher to my ward and during his stay at the hospital was deeply depressed, had bouts of weeping and shouting, and couldn’t sleep at nights. He could barely move his feet and reached total exhaustion. Very slowly he began recovering. He was hospitalized for a whole month. Occasionally he would come to my room and wouldn’t stop talking about the charge of murder attributed to him because of him being, as it were, a Jew.

“But I am not a Jew at all...” he would incessantly claim. I listened to him and deep in my heart reflected:

“ What has actually shocked him more – The false charge of murdering a patient, or the fact that someone has mistakenly taken him for a Jew..?”

Among my patients I had a German from Austria. When he was on his way to recovery, he one day entered my room, addressed me in German and told me that he received a parcel from home (the Germans would get parcels from Germany and sell part of the items to other inmates) which included a pair of glasses. Because he had no need for them he wished to give them to me, for mine were

broken. Later on in our conversation the German suddenly said:

"Do you know doctor that I am also Jewish..."

"How? Since when...?"

He then told me his story. He was an Austrian Jew, a Viennese, and throughout the whole Nazi period lived in Vienna and in Germany as a Christian. He arranged for the appropriate documents, but because in suspicious cases the Nazis wouldn't rely solely on the documents but would tend to identify the suspect by checking if he were circumcised, one of his doctor friends operated on him to hide the sign of him being one of Abraham's descendents... I felt pity for this German Jew... A small detail in the tortuous saga of the German Jewry.

There is a "Self Activity" circle in the camp. There are quite a few actors, singers, and musicians in the camp, among them two excellent violinists, one from Hungary and the other from Latvia (rumor says that they are both Jews but they hide the fact and react furiously if anyone alludes to their national origin). Among the singers there is a Jewish singer with a pleasant melodious voice. Once monthly a concert takes place in the large corridor of the surgery ward where violinists, singers, readers and even jugglers perform. The Jewish singer too gives concerts of Russian folk songs with great success. The singer often visits me in my room, speaking about his life, his work at the theatre and occasionally sings Jewish songs. One day he sang the well known folk song about the Jewish waggoner (balaguleh) . I asked him:

"Why don't you sing this song at one of the concerts?"

"They won't let me..." he replied.

"How come? Don' they sing songs in Ukrainian, Estonian and Italian..."

"Believe me... This is my ninth year in the camp and I know what I am saying..."

In spite of this he tried to introduce in the programme of the coming concert

the song of the Jewish waggoner and handed it in for the approval of the authorities. The officer in charge looked at him with wonder and asked:

"In Yiddish?..."

"And Finnish is O.K.?" asked the singer. "In the last concert we had a Finnish song."

"However no one understands Yiddish..." replied the officer.

"And who understands Finnish?"

Needless to say, nothing helped. The song was deleted from the programme. It was inconvenient to sing a song in Yiddish. As a result he decided to include the same song in Russian translation and in the draft for the programme he handed in for approval he wrote: "The song of the Jewish waggoner". However, even this displeased the people in charge and in the printed programme it simply said: The song of a wagonner..." and so it was announced at the concert. The word "Jewish" grates on the ear in the Soviet Union of the Socialist Republics.

Section G

The beginning of March 1953. A paramedic bursts into my room. He is an inmate from Lithuania. His face is radiant with joy but you can see signs of excitement as well.

"Stalin is dead!..." he shouts.

"What?!..."

"Stalin is dead!... It has just been announced on the radio..."

I was discomfited by the news, quite in shock, but I didn't respond and remained silent. The paramedic broke the silence and whispered:

"A pity he didn't drop dead earlier..."

Everyone is glad, both the workers and the patients, but fearful of expressing their true feelings. The faces look satisfied, but all keep silent and fell elated deep in their hearts, while the Moscow radio ceaselessly broadcasts about the "national disaster" borne by humanity, and "the heavy mourning of all the peoples of the Soviet Union". The announcer reads the news in a

shaky voice and every so often there is a sound of weeping. The next day a mourning gathering takes place in the open in the yard of the camp. All the prisoners are ordered to be present. All those in authority are present too, none absent.

All the prisoners came – victims of Stalin and his regime. One of the officers speaks of "the great leader of the world proletariat..." "the father of nations", "the teacher", "the genius commander", and so forth. This is the first time that the inmates are allowed to participate in a meeting and this, according to the "experienced" inmates already hints at changes.

And changes there were. In few months they stopped locking up the barracks for the night. The bars were removed from the windows. From then on, the inmates were permitted to write letters twice a month, instead of one per every half year. The numbers on the prisoners' clothes were taken off and they were allowed to wear their personal clothes. Information from outside suggested there were changes in the country. The Jewish doctors' trial was reexamined and it was discovered that the charges against "the murderers in white" were false. It was determined that during their interrogation "forceful" measures, not allowed by law, had been used. All the imprisoned doctors were released, except for two who died in prison. The camp authorities, and especially the guards are confused. At the time they were pleased that the Jewish doctors were revealed as "murderers", "spies", "foreign agents of the imperialism", and now they feel uncomfortable. The young doctor who brought me the news of the doctors' arrest avoids meeting me and doesn't come to the hospital. One day I run into him in the yard and ask:

"Have you read about the murderous doctors? Remember I told you that it was a libel?"

"Yes, it was a mistake... It happens..." he spoke in embarrassment and

hurried away. I managed to say to him:

"Millions of people, the victims of such "mistakes" are suffering in jails..."

Wasn't the case in the factory, named after Stalin, which was hushed up by the newspapers also a "mistake"? Approximately 70 Jews – engineers, technicians doctors and office staff – were dismissed, arrested for "sabotage at the instigation of a foreign power" and sentenced to 25 years in a camp. Who knows how many similar cases, not reported in the newspapers, occurred in Stalin's days?

Wages began to be paid in the camps starting from 1954. The wages were very small but still paid (there were wages in the past, but in 1948 with setting up of "special" camps according to Section 2, the payments were cancelled following Stalin's instructions). It was also decided to reduce sentences to working prisoners. Every working day for a prisoner was counted as two or three days according to the type of work. All those arrested when they were under 18 (and there were many of those) had their sentence reduced by two-thirds. All these reforms were introduced after Stalin's death.

After a certain period, patients that had no chance of recovery under camp conditions began to be released. A committee of 4-5 civilian doctors, who usually served as hospital heads, was set up. Those doctors, even though they were free, were also forced to spend some time working in the camps according to the conditions of the stipends received during their training at the medical institutions. They had to work for at least three years wherever they were sent by the authorities. Most of them were sent to work in the prison camps scattered all over Russia and usually served as hospital heads. Very few of them managed to leave their jobs in the camps as the authorities were in no hurry to

let them go. Only married women were allowed to leave and join the husband. One of my acquaintances, a female ophthalmologist, has been working in the camp for six years instead of the prescribed three, and in spite of her requests, her efforts have been in vain. They made promises, but didn't keep them. The work in the camps is repugnant to the civilian doctors, they have no interest in it and there are times they can't reconcile themselves to what is happening before them. Among the doctors who came to serve on the committee was a Jewish female doctor. She too wasn't allowed to leave her job at one of the camps. All her requests have been turned down. As a last resort she decided to wed in a fictitious marriage. It's not a simple matter in the Soviet Union, and may even be dangerous, but she had no other choice.

Because of a shortage of a specialist in nervous disorders ward, I was obliged to serve as the head of the department. I had no choice but take it upon myself. Many of the inmates suffer from nervous disorders and the ward is always full. Two of the rooms are set aside for the violent patients. The barrack is surrounded by a wall. The gate is locked and there is a guard posted twenty four hours a day. The patients' rooms are also locked. The staff includes a paramedic and five male nurses. The administrator is a Lithuanian, imprisoned in the camp for the collaboration with the Germans during the war. He is mean, evil, corrupt and a true anti-Semite. He imposes his authority over everything. It's claimed that he abuses the patients and locks them up in solitary confinement. The other workers fear him and keep silent. After I took charge of the ward, I had a talk with each of the patients and heard from them of his wrongdoings. One day, when the paramedic told me that the administrator ordered one of the patients to be strapped and put in isolation, I demanded the

key of the solitary confinement cell and found the patient with his arms and feet tied up. I ordered to release him, summoned the administrator, the paramedics and the male nurses and announced that from that time on these measures won't be used because in the modern practice they are used only in cases when the patient's behavior endangers either himself or the public. Only the doctor, and not the administrator, or anyone else can decide on these measures. I also totally forbade to abuse and beat up the patients. I added that I knew of the administrator's wrongdoings and I wouldn't allow him to abuse the patients, insult them and hurt them, because I was responsible for their well-being. He didn't react, but left the room but with a grudge and resentment.

There were three Jews among the patients on the ward – a young rabbi from Poland, a teacher of Hebrew and a university graduate economist. One day, "Death to the administrator" inscription was found on the barrack wall. No one knew who had a hand in this. The administrator put the blame on the rabbi. When I asked him on what he had based his accusation, he claimed that he heard it from witnesses but he refused to name them. I summoned the rabbi to my room, spoke to him and became convinced he had nothing to do with the case. I expressed my opinion that it had been done by an outsider because the administrator was universally hated. The "Oper" asked me:

"Don't you think that the rabbi did it?..."

"I have no doubt that he had nothing to do with it,,, He denied the charge against him...Apart from that he doesn't know how to write Russian... I spoke to him and believe his words.

"Why did you speak Yiddish with him?..." asked the "Oper".

"I don't understand your question, Comrade Commander... What's the

connection to the inscription?..” I questioned him.

“But you spoke to him in Yiddish...” repeated the “Oper”.

“True, I always speak to him in Yiddish...”

“Why?..” wondered the “Oper”.

“What do you mean by why? He is a Jew and so am I...Why are the Estonians speaking Estonian among themselves?... Aren't the Jews in the Soviet Union allowed to speak their own language?” I asked angrily.

“Why are you so upset? There is equality in the Soviet Union among all the nationalities and each person may speak his language, but you must know that no one understands Yiddish and who knows what the rabbi has told you...The administrator claims that the rabbi admitted to you that he did it...”

“It's a lie...” I raised my voice, “He denies any connection to this matter and I am certain he spoke the truth. Why do believe the administrator, the Nazi, the anti-Semite, who abuses Jews even here in the hospital?..” I turned to the head of the hospital who was also present and added: “I won't work in the hospital another day unless the administrator is dismissed...”

The head of the hospital, a doctor holding the rank of major, tried to calm me and claimed I have misunderstood the “Oper”'s words. The next day, during the regular daily meeting, I repeated my demand that the administrator be dismissed immediately, and the same day he was relieved of his duties. However, the conversation in Yiddish was unforgivable.

According to the new regulations the authorities in the camp had to calculate my workday as equaling three, but that month they were calculated as only equaling two. Even if this doesn't matter much to a man sentenced to 25 years, I asked the head of the hospital to explain the matter to me. He looked uncomfortable and said he was not

to blame.

“Who is..?” I asked.

“You can turn to the head of the medical department...” And when I did, he told me: “We aren't the only ones who do calculations... The “Oper” has the authority and he has decided on two days only,” and added embarrassedly: “It's all because of the matter with the administrator.

“It's obvious... The “Oper” wants to remind me that I am a Jew. But I am not forgetting it even without him...”

Section H

In August 1954 prisoners became aware that the authorities were making a list of all the foreign subjects and of people with no citizenship in the camp. Although no one knew why the list was made up, all of us, the stateless subjects, tried to find out whether our names appeared on it. Rumor said that all the non – citizens would be sent away from the camp. But where? No one really knew, but everyone was certain it would be “home”, to their homeland. The foreign subjects and the stateless inmates run about, asking the administrative staff whether they were included on the list. If perhaps their name has been omitted by chance. Everything is O.K. – they are being calmed down – everyone would be sent away with no exception. The orders came from Moscow. Everyone is certain that he is sent “home”. Where else? In a week the “etap” would leave... Perhaps in three days... Or a day...

The day of the transport has arrived. Everyone should reach the office at an early hour, and then go to the warehouse – return his belongings, the blanket, pillow and the sheets... I was also preparing myself, but then a male nurse came in and said that my name had been taken off the list. And so it was. All are called to the office but not I. I hurry to the headquarters building and ask one of the officers why my name was excluded from the list. The officer gave a straightforward answer that it has been done at the

request of the medical authorities.

“How does this concern them?..” I ask, “The orders from Moscow apply to everyone and me too, being a stateless subject, and they couldn't disobey the orders... Especially when at first my name appeared on the list ...”

“The decision was probably coordinated with the commander of the camp,” was his answer.

I rushed to the medical authorities. On the way I met a civilian doctor. I told her the trouble I was facing and she said:

“Don't get so upset... They aren't releasing the foreigners but concentrating them in another camp...”

She told me this in great secrecy , but didn't reveal the location of the new camp. To tell the truth, I didn't believe her. Everybody said that the foreigners would be sent home and I wanted to believe the rumor.

I went to the medical authorities. In the room of the head of the hospital I found another superior, the head of the medical department. I was very upset and loudly demanded:

“On what count have you erased my name from the list of the foreigners leaving on the “etap”?” The head of the department answered:

“Please don't be so excited. We asked that you remain at the hospital for a while...”

“What right did you have?” I interrupted. “I was sentenced to 25 years for no crime, and now, when according to the orders from Moscow there is a chance to be released, you leave me here because you need me as a doctor, disregarding me and my suffering!”

The head of the hospital tried to calm me:

“I honestly promise you that in a month you will go to the same place and join the others...”

With great agitation and anger I answered:

“I don't believe you!..”

To be continued.

ANNE FRANK'S STORY MAKES A STRONG IMPRESSION ON HONG KONG

The Anne Frank exhibition has made its mark in Hong Kong and on Asia in general. From 8 November through 9 December 2007, nearly 4,500 local and international students, as well as 1,500 other local visitors, made their way through the exhibit. For many it was the first time that they had heard of Anne Frank and the Holocaust.

They walked away forever changed by the experience. "Anne Frank is my hero", "There should be no more hate", "I wish I could have known her", "We can not kill people anymore because they are different" are some of the messages they wrote on their Leaves of Hope after walking through the Photographic Diary.

The Hong Kong show proved once again the power of Anne Frank's diary to challenge prejudice and reduce hatred by encouraging people to embrace positive attitudes, responsibility and respect for others. After a one month show, the last of the exhibits has been carted up but it is not bound for home. The exhibition has just begun its Asian tour. This is the start of something the organisers only dreamed of. The Anne Frank exhibition is now already en-route to



Hong Kong students visiting the Anne Frank exhibit

China's capital city, Beijing, where it will be displayed for two months at the National Library.

In Beijing, the exhibition will reach out to thousands of Chinese and continue the educational process that the Hong Kong Community started. From there, arrangements are underway for the exhibition to continue on to Shanghai and Singapore as well. The hope is that this exhibit will ultimately find a permanent home in Asia.

From the opening night reception alone, it was already clear that this really was going to be the start of an extraordinary journey for Anne Frank's story. The crowd of community leaders, dignitaries, including Consul General Dan Ben-Eliezer, listened as Sophie Saunders, a local student from Carmel School, read selected

passages of the diary accompanied by Meidad Yehudayan on the violin. Her look, build and demeanor, perfectly reflected that of the Anne Frank that we have come to know through the collection of photographs

and words she left to the world.

Mr. Jan Revis, the Dutch Consul General of Hong Kong, delivered a beautiful and moving speech, in which he expressed the pride that he has as a Dutchman in Anne Frank and the sadness in his heart he feels that ultimately it was a fellow Dutchman that turned her and her family over to the Nazi's.

Shani Brownstein, whose vision and leadership, started Anne Frank China tour, modestly insists that it was not her that drew the nearly 6000 local and international visitors to the exhibit but it was Anne Frank herself. "Anne Frank can reach out to the world today and deliver her message in a way that continues to touch all of us. She was not a number. She was once a living, breathing girl with beautiful words that resonate in our souls."



CHUSAN ROAD CHATTER

Issue 397

IYS Hongkew Division

Editor: Kurt Maimann

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.



Memorial Tomb in the Hongkew Park

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!

The Soviet Odyssey of an Odessan Jew

Michael Rinsky

An extract from the All-Russian Genealogical Site: MICHELS, Vladimir Andreevich (Volf Israilevich), 1892 (Odessa) – 1940 (Moscow)... Soviet Intelligence officer; member of the editorial board of the newspaper "Izvestia" and an official of the USSR Foreign Office; participated in the first flight from Moscow to China. Author of the book "From the Kremlin Wall to the Great Chinese Wall" with a preface written by Maxim Gorky. In 1936 – 1938, Consul-general of the USSR in Danzig, simultaneously a resident agent of the Red Army Intelligence, later falsely accused of spying for a foreign power and executed on February 3, 1940. Posthumously rehabilitated (in the context of Soviet or Russian topics is often a linguistic false friend used to translate the Russian term reabilitatsiya. The term was designed to be used in place of "exoneration" or "exculpation", to avoid implications of State's culpability in unjust persecution.) His whole life was a mirror reflection of the stormy events of the first four decades of the 20th century.

The Michels family was affluent and prominent in Jewish Odessa. Israel, son of Abraham Michels, began his career as a salesman in a shoe store, but soon opened a store of his own on Rishelievskaya Street, one of the central streets of Odessa. He married Keila Glazman, a daughter of the wealthy family of Aaron Glazman. Israel and Keila Michels had five children: two sons, Theodore (Fedor) and Volf (Vladimir), and three daughters, Olga, Maria and Minna (Nina). After Israel's untimely demise Keila struggled to manage the growing business and educate the children all by herself. With

the help of the Glazman family, she moved the shoe store to Politseiskaya Street, also one of the central streets where a number of houses belonged to the Glazman family.

Volf graduated from a technical flour milling school, Maria studied medicine,



Volf Michels as a student

Minna attended a Russian Grammar School. Theodore, being the eldest of the two brothers, became his mother's assistant in managing the family business. Olga was now married to the professor of economics, Simon Avaliani, from the family of descendants of Georgia well known in Odessa.

Throughout the World War One Volf fought in the ranks of the Russian Imperial Army.

In 1918 he joined the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Communist party, worked in various army newspapers, and eventually became a correspondent of the leading Communist newspaper "Izvestia".



Vladimir Michels and his friend Vladimir Denisevich as soldiers of the Russian Imperial Army

In 1919 -1920 he was active as a Red Army "politruk" (political instructor) in Ekaterinoslav (Dnepropetrovsk) and Kiev. He nearly perished in a skirmish with the "Whites" during one of his missions and he would have been killed but for a Red Army unit coming to his rescue at the last minute.

Vladimir was a convinced communist, which did not contradict to his loyalty to his ancestors' faith and traditions: when his sister Minna decided to marry a non-Jewish Russian soldier, Anatoly Zverev, Vladimir stood by his mother's vehement opposition to the marriage. In the meantime, his elder brother Theodore fled to Romania where he disappeared without being heard of again. Volf became the sole protector of the remaining family members.

The romance between Minna and Anatoly Zverev was stormy and painful. In order to avenge his sister's "violated honor", Vladimir was instrumental in putting Anatoly in prison when the latter refused to answer the Bolshevik call to the citizens of Russia and join the Red Army. Simultaneously he sent his sister Minna and her little daughter to Tiflis (Tbilisi) to their married sister Olga Avaliani to live in safety from the hardships of the Russian Revolution.

The marriage ended with Zverev marrying another woman, this time a Polish Catholic of a noble family, and leaving Odessa for Petrograd (Leningrad). In all fairness to him, it must be said that he never lost sight of his old love and he was ready to help Minna and Olga whenever help was needed.

In 1919, one year before Volf's marriage with Frieda (Maria) Leikin, he was recalled to Moscow for service with the "Emergency Committee" (the Cheka, later NKVD). The character of this service remained unknown. According to his daughter's reminiscences, Volf personally knew Lenin, and his name was beneficially mentioned in Lenin's writings. Throughout his career in the Party ranks he remained a fully trusted correspondent of the major Soviet mouthpiece "Izvestia". He was also granted many privileges inaccessible to the less favored citizens.



Volf (Vladimir) Michels and his wife Maria



The route from Moscow to China

Vladimir and Maria Michels were given three rooms in the center of Moscow in the former luxurious apartment of the Armenian count Sarkisov who had escaped from the Bolsheviks to Paris. And even then, not without a risk for his career, Volf managed, in addition to the three rooms, to obtain another room in the same apartment, formerly used by the count for smoking, and move to it his mother Keila, sisters Maria and Minna and Minna's six-year-old daughter in 1924.



Minna

When little Olga went to school, a desk was placed in the larder next to the communal kitchen. Besides the family of Michels and his relatives, the relatives of the Armenian count still lived in the apartment as well as the family of a Red-Army man who was killed when

he served in the Soviet Consulate in Canton, China. But for those times the living conditions in their apartment were far from being bad, especially because all tenants strictly observed cleanliness in "the places in common use". In 1922, baby Fedor was born to Maria and Vladimir. And another joy: in the same year Vladimir Michels was appointed head of the information division of the newspaper "Izvestia". Attempting "to match" so important a position, he entered Moscow State University and studied German, but after three years he was forced to quit his studies as he was too busy at work. Proof of Michels' success as a journalist was his article "By Lenin's Coffin" published in "Izvestia" at the end of January 1924: not everyone could be entrusted with writing similar articles. In August, 1925, a historic 10,000-kilometer-flight from Moscow to Peking was made by six all-Soviet-made airplanes, which, at the time, was a major breakthrough in the international race for aeronautical construction supremacy. Vladimir Michels was entrusted to report the event for the Izvestia as "another proof of the solidarity of the two great nations in their struggle against the Western imperialism".

This was for that time a great achievement: Soviet pilots flew, beginning from Moscow, along the completely unknown route.

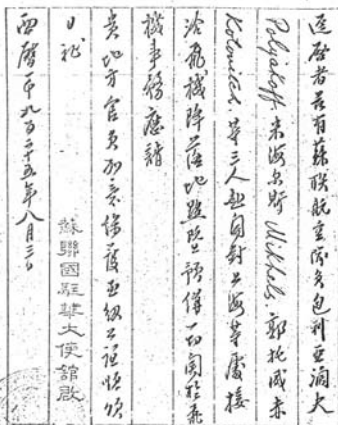
The main achievement was the fact that half of the aircraft were of Soviet production, and it was with Soviet-made motors, still not checked in long-distance flights. Vladimir Michels was

one of a few journalists entrusted to participate in the flight, precisely to participate, since it was necessary to always render assistance to the pilots and flight mechanics.

For 250 pages, the journalist described completely interesting, complex, and now and then dangerous situations during the flight, examples of craftsmanship and heroism of all the participants, the skillful management of the pilots, and the courage and resourcefulness of the leader of the expedition, Isaac Pavlovich Schmidt. Among the heroic flyers were both the experienced enthusiasts of the first steps of Russian aviation and young people. The youngest of the pilots was Mikhail Gromov, in the near future he was to become one of the most famous in the world."

I will give with reductions a fragment from V. Michels' book "From the Kremlin Wall to the Great Chinese Wall", which characterizes the state of technology and the attitude of the people and the author of the book, and one of the episodes of the flight. "Latvian Rifleman" AK-1 designed by engineer Aleksandrov was not suitable for this flight theoretically: with its "ceiling" (height of lift) - up to 1800 meters. AK-1 was enrolled into the expedition to accompany to Irkutsk. But the flight over the ridges in the regions of Baikal

蘇聯駐華大使館用箋



The certificate given by the Soviet Embassy to the pilots Polyakov and Kotovich and the journalist V. Michels for the preparation of airfields in Kaifengfu, Nanjing and Shanghai.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

PEKING
No 10049.

Peking, August 3, 1929

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

The bearer of the presents, Mr. Michels, of the Moscow-China Aerial Expedition Staff, is being detailed to Kaifeng, Shanghai and other points on the line of the flight of Soviet airplanes, to organize the land service and arrange for the preparation of aerodromes and landing places to be used by the flyers.

All the proper authorities are kindly requested to render every possible assistance to Mr. Michels in the fulfilment of his duties.



V. Karakhan

Ambassador.

To the South of China

and Mongolia, when the aircraft gained altitude more than 2500 meters, showed excellent aircraft quality achieved at a Soviet plant. And now that AK-1 lies in the Gobi desert in China, we are sure that in several days the "dragon-fly" will again buzz and will arrive in Peking". AK-1 was only one of six, and it did not reach Peking not because of technical troubles, but because of an unsuccessful landing in the desert. The success of the expedition was acknowledged as complete." V. Michels' book was highly evaluated by M. Gorky who wrote from Sorrento: "... A good, a very touching book you have written, Comrade Michels; after reading it, I too feel as if I have flown with you to China. You reveal a sharp eye... the figures of comrades are so perceptible as if you see them... Schmidt, Polyakov, Tomashevsky, yes, all of them living people..."

The flight from Peking to Kaifeng,

Nanjing and Shanghai was accomplished after V. Michels left Peking for the south of China for the preparation of landing fields in Kaifeng, Nanjing and Shanghai. The state of Chinese airfields at that time is described in Michels' book in the following words:

"In China aviation is still in the infantile state. Neither aircraft nor airmen nor airfields... It is natural that we could not be ready for the flight without preliminarily equipping areas for our aircraft. For this purpose the chief of the expedition Schmidt, long before the departure from Peking, sent a group of three persons - the pilots Polyakov and Kotovich and the writer of these lines - for the preparation of airfields in Kayfengfu (500 km from Peking), in Nanjing (640 km to the southeast from Kayfengfu) and Shanghai (360 km to the southeast of Nanjing). In the last days of July, after being supplied with



V. Michels in the Kremlin

the mandates of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we left for Kaifengfu. We were very well received by the Chinese Governor of Kaifeng who rendered full assistance in the preparation of the area. I applied to the Governor with a request to uproot about 20 - 25 trees which would interfere, in view of the small dimensions of the area, with the approaches of our aircraft to the landing place. The Governor gave to our disposal a company of soldiers."

In Shanghai V. Michels found a suitable area in Hongqiao, 12 km away from Shanghai. He hired about 200 peasants from nearby villages, men and women. And they worked for five days from early in the morning till late at night until the field was ready.

It is only possible to be surprised at the thoughts of Soviet leaders who irresponsibly transferred talented party members to completely different posts. In 1926-27 years V. Michels was already head of the confiscation division of the Moscow customs-house, and in 1928-30 he was appointed the chairman of the administration of the "Physical Culture and Sports" publishing house. He uses his official position to publish a part of the book about the flight to Peking in the "Ogonyok" journal.

In 1930-31 Michels was again in the "organs", this time in OGPU, the State Political Directorate as the secret police of the Soviet Union was called until 1934. And during this period again, it was Volf who was instrumental in solving new family problems.

He helped with the solution of the problem of Minna's daughter Olga who was 12 years old. The girl was mischievous and would not obey her grandmother, mother and aunt. Moreover, Minna brought home a new "dad", to whom her daughter was introduced as a niece. After learning about this, A. Zverev sued his daughter's mother claiming that she did not work and lived on his alimony.

According to a court decision, the



Olga Avaliani in Tiflis in May, 1918

girl went to Leningrad to live with his family and he stopped paying alimony to Minna. But in the Zverev family in Leningrad there were two more children and instead of a mom a stepmother, so Olga wrote her mother a tearful letter begging her to take her from her father's family. V. Michels went to his superior Henrich Yagoda, the then deputy chairman under Vyacheslav Menzhinsky. Due to Menzhinsky's serious illness, Yagoda was in effective control of the secret police in the late 1920s. At V. Michels' request Henrich Yagoda allowed Minna Michels who

was then working in an NKVD buffet to "steal" the girl from the school premises in Leningrad. The family conflict was then settled by placing the girl to live with her aunt Olga Avaliani who had moved to Leningrad from Tbilisi and was a childless widow.

In 1931 Vladimir was transferred, this time as the head of the Committee of the Union of the Soviet Air Communications, and, in the very same year, another transfer to the faraway Siberian city of Yakutsk to a construction site, where Vladimir, entirely unfamiliar with engineering, is believed to have worked as an undercover inspector of the output of gold and diamonds at the local mines. Then he was inexplicably transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to become a referent of the Second West-European department for Bulgaria, Austria and Hungary and was sent to Warsaw and Paris as a diplomat.

Amidst all this mad activity, Vladimir was also involved in his family affairs, mostly tragic and hazardous: his son Theodore got drowned in a pond while swimming; a young Swedish diplomat met Volf's pretty niece Olga, and their casual acquaintance evolved into a short-lived romance. Vladimir, afraid of the repercussions which would surely follow her unwanted intimate contact with a foreigner, all the more a potential agent of Western intelligence, saw to the diplomat being recalled back to Stockholm and to Olga's hurried marriage to a Leningrad actor Alexander Zheleztsov. In 1941, during the siege of the Russian Northern Capital, the wide spread hunger, Olga's son Yuri died and later her husband Alexander, a marine paratrooper, fell in battle, while Aunt



Olga and Isaac Ladyzhensky with little Valery in 1947 in Moscow



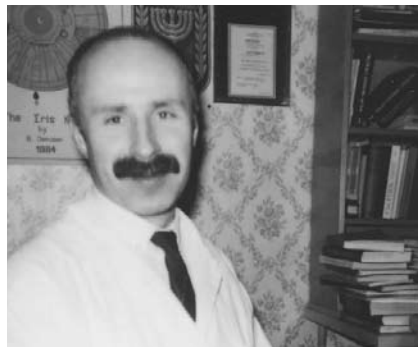
Anatoly Zverev in 1958 with daughter Olga and granddaughter Nina (The picture was taken by Olga's son Valery, now a permanent photo correspondent of the Bulletin)



Granddaughter Dina, her husband Maximilian (right), their son Stasik and Dmitry Ladyzhensky (RTVi correspondent), Valery's son



A prison photo of Vladimir (Volf) Michels



Vladimir Rozman, grandson of Vladimir Michels



Natalia Rozman-Michels in Petrozavodsk

by his relatives much later. He was shot dead on February 3, 1940, in the notorious Lefortovo prison in Moscow. As in most such cases, the family was never informed of the sentence or of the execution.

Maria Michels, Vladimir's widow, died in 1972, and his daughter, Natalia Rozman-Michels died in 2005 in Petrozavodsk. Natalia's daughter Dina and her family live in Petrozavodsk. They both work at the local television station, and have a son and a daughter, great grandchildren of Vladimir Michels.

Vladimir Rozman, grandson of Vladimir Michels, graduated from the Medical faculty of Petrozavodsk University, practiced medicine in Novgorod and headed the Novgorod Jewish community. In 1999 he, his wife Yelena and their two children made Aliya and lived in Kiryat Shmona. Recently they left for Kfar Hanania in the vicinity of Carmiel in Galilee where Vladimir and his wife, both physicians, work in local hospitals. Ariel in Samaria became home to Minna's grandson Valery Ladyzhensky and his family.

Such was the stormy life and tragic death of a Jewish Odessan, Vladimir Michels, a living example of the destiny of the sons of the Russian "bloodless" revolution, who served their ideals so faithfully and were "fully repaid" in such cruel injustice.

Translated from Russian by
M. Pirutinsky

Olga perished in the hunger inflicted by the Blockade. Her niece Olga, having been left alone, was lucky to break out to Moscow, where in 1944 she married a General Staff officer who introduced himself to her as Piotr Morkovkin, but, to the great joy of Olga's mother, unexpectedly turned out to be Isaac Ladyzhensky, a scion of an old Chassidic family of Uman. In 1945 Olga gave birth to a son, who was named Valery. In those days nobody would dream that Valery would in time work for the Association of the Former Jewish residents of China and the Israel-China Friendship Society in Tel Aviv.

It was yet in 1937 that Stalin's "cleansing campaign", the notorious "chistka", began to spread in Russia like wildfire. One of the first to be arrested and shot was a high intelligence officer Artur Artuzov, a one time senior of V. Michels. As a result of an internal feud Michels was suddenly recalled from Danzig, where he headed the Soviet consulate in 1937-1938. He understood that his own collapse was only a matter of time as his friend V. Denisevich was

arrested and shot dead and Denisevich's wife Rose (Rachel), who was Maria Michel's sister, committed a suicide. The inevitable ring around him grew more and more tight, until he was arrested on June 5, 1939, being accused as a Trotskyist and a German spy. His numerous "confessions" were extorted from him by his investigators as a result of savage beatings, as was learned

Trumpeldor has coffee at Café Kassit

I arrived in Israel with a group of China beitarim, late in December, 1948, firmly convinced that no victory in the Israel-Arab conflict is possible without our intervention. The battle for the Negev was fading into a misty armistice, leaving me just enough time to shoot a few rounds of ammunition from a Czech rifle and a British "Bren" at the Ein Hussub frontline positions on the way to Eilat. Then came the armistice and a long way back northward. For the time being the army could do without the China Beitarim.

It was early spring. Israel's and my own. The orange groves cast sweet scent of the citrus all over the land – my first and ever strongest impression of the country I came to live in.

Where does a lonely soldier go to on his first furlough from the army? To Tel-Aviv, naturally. Or, to be more precise, to Dizengoff Street. Or, even more precisely -- to the sidewalk Café Kassit, a meeting place of the then Tel-Aviv "bohema": writers, poets, painters, actors, journalists, politicians. (There, for the first time, I saw the legendary pilot, Ezer Weizman, and the Palmach commander, Yigael Alon, and the poets Shlonsky, Alterman and Pen).

On that particular morning the place was as crowded as ever, predominantly by youngsters – soldiers and officers, sporting their woolen "stocking hats" and Arabic shawls around their necks, a token of the Palmach

swaggering vogue. Men in mufti cut a noticeable minority.

At an adjacent table two men sipped a cup of "Turki" and conversed (in

Russian) about something that at the time occupied the minds of many new arrivals (including myself) – the living quarters. The face of one of the men was vaguely familiar to me, although I could not say – where from?

I heard the man say: "I shall rent out a room only to an acquaintance. The surge of the mass immigration is a blessing, but it also brought some unwanted element – just read the newspapers".

Here, enter I: "Excuse me, sir, but unwittingly I overheard your conversation. It so happens that I am just released from the army, and urgently need a room. It is true that you don't know me, but I'm sure that my relatives will be ready to recommend me."

I named myself (not forgetting to mention that I came from China: I knew that the Chinese khalutzim of the 1930's won a good reputation amongst the Israeli old timers), and also mentioned the name of my relative, a well known Second Alyia writer and a close friend of Jabotinsky and Bialik. My potential landlord attentively scrutinized me for a minute, and curtly said: "The room is yours."

We continued talking. The man spoke excellent Russian, but his slightly noticeable accent urged me to ask him: "What part of Russia do you come from?"

"Caucasus. Piatigorsk. Ever heard the name?"

"Oh, surely! This name means a lot to me."

His eyebrows lifted: "How come?"

"For two reasons: First – my favorite poet, Mikhail Lermontov, was

killed there in a duel. Second, our national hero was born there. Joseph Trumpeldor. Ever heard the name?" "Oh, surely," he chuckled, "he was my brother." I looked at him in amazement. Now I knew where I saw this face: Alfred Trumpeldor was a spit image of the one-armed hero of Tel Hai."

Emmanuel Pirutinsky (Pratt)

Camp Doctor from page 51

After a while I said: "If you don't cancel your illegal decision, then from this day onwards I refuse to work at the hospital. It's in your power to hold me here, but I am not going to work for even a moment... You can do whatever you want with me..."

When the head of the medical department heard me he said:


"So be it. Go!"

I hurried to the office. The staff already knew of the decision and included me in the "etap". One of them disclosed that my name was erased with the comment "for the sake of order" since I haven't been included with the others, as it were, because of my "illness". That's how people are treated by authorities, as if they are slaves...

After four and a half years I leave the infamous Spask camp.

Where to..? To this I have no answer...

To be continued.



Books

Almost Englishment: Baghdadi Jews in British Burma

by Ruth Fredman Cernea

Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2007
173 pp. \$24.95

Reviewed by Shlomo Deshen, Tel Aviv University

Excerpted from Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies, Vol. 23/ 1 (Fall 2004)

The widely scattered Baghdadi Jews of the Far East in the 19th century constitute an interesting case of a vigorous Jewish society. The Baghdadi Far Easterners were instrumental in creating and funding Jewish institutions in Baghdad. Their role was very different from that of their Ashkenazi peers who migrated to the West from Eastern Europe at about the same time. The Baghdadi migrants included members of the social elite of the community. They commanded the respect of those who remained, and soon the migrants who did well economically became munificent benefactors of the home community. They played an important role in the revitalization of religious and cultural life in the mother community of Baghdad, causing it to fill a prominent role in 19th century Sephardi Jewry ...

This is the context of the particular community described in this book. Rangoon was one of the less prominent, and more recently established, of the Far Eastern Baghdadi communities. Calcutta,

the capital of British India in the 19th century, was home to a larger, wealthier, and culturally richer community. A Judaeo-Arabic weekly newspaper was even published there for several years. The Rangoon community, established in the 1850s, was part of the Calcutta orbit, a distance of three days by sea. But Rangoon itself was the focus for a dozen small communities of Jewish Baghdadi traders who lived in inland Burmese localities. These people gathered in Rangoon for the major festivals and family events. Marital matches and business affairs connected the various circles of communities, so that the Far Eastern Baghdadi system as a whole was a tapestry of family, religious, and business ties, with the elite business people of the major centers, Calcutta, Bombay and Shanghai, connecting the system by marital matches and business dealings.

Anthropologist Ruth Fredman Cernea has reconstructed some of the history of the Rangoon community by interviewing descendants of local people currently dispersed in the Western world and in Israel, by studying archives and gravestones, and by consulting with the few Baghdadi individuals still living in Rangoon. Three main topics run through the book. One is the subject of social and cultural identity, well-captured by the title "Almost Englishmen". Another is the nature of community life and the interplay of elements of identity (Jewish-

Baghdadi, English, Burmese) in the lives of people. The third main topic is the virtual destruction of the community in the course of World War II, not as an outcome of anti-Semitism, but as a corollary of the Japanese invasion and of Burmese post-colonialism.

The Baghdadi-Jewish presence throughout the Far East was linked to the British colonial presence, and expressed in trading. The Baghdadis brought with them their hybrid Judaeo-Arabic identity, exemplified in particular by their languages, liturgical Hebrew and Judaeo-Arabic speech. The political loyalty and cultural preference of the Baghdadis were directed toward the British overlords of the localities in which they based themselves. They were part of the stratum of Europeans and Asiatics of numerous origins who were auxiliaries to the British. The status of this stratum was not clearly defined. Vis-à-vis the Burmese, the Baghdadis were considered to be British subjects, but vis-à-vis the British, they were not of the right color. The genteel British clubs therefore refused them membership. And Baghdadi soldiers in the British Indian army were discriminated against when seeking promotion. In their anxiety to distance themselves from people of darker color than themselves, the Baghdadis were vehement in their rejection of the swarthy indigenous Indian Jews, the Bene Israel and the Cochinis. The Baghdadis claimed that certain

laxities in the religious practice of the indigenous Jews disqualified their claim to be Jewish. The matter came to court before an English judge, and the latter, not surprisingly, ruled that all Jews be categorized as one, the proud Baghdadis with the locals.

The Baghdadis strove hard for acceptance as Englishmen among the colonial elite. The most affluent even sent their children to be educated in England. Others chose to educate their children in local English Christian schools and pay high tuition. The less affluent sent their children to "the Jewish English School" that was less expensive. In both types of local schools education was strongly modeled on patriotic and bourgeois English lines, with daily prayers for the welfare of the King, saluting the flag, and learning to play violin and piano, not to mention garnering a perfect command of the English language.

The tension that attended their identity led the Baghdadis to invest little effort in the maintenance of Jewish educational programs. The latter were directed mainly to imparting elementary synagogue skills, but not toward broadening Jewish historical and cultural knowledge. Jewish Baghdadi identity was maintained through the medium of family loyalty, practiced in home and synagogue festivities. Though Judaeo-Arabic speech was soon lost, much of Jewish traditional practice was retained until the dispersion of the community in 1942. Most Jewish shops remained closed on Sabbaths and festivals. People endowed the synagogue with an incredible number of Torah scrolls in memory of deceased relatives (no less than 126, according to the author!). The book has vivid accounts of the warmth of Jewish Baghdadi life in Rangoon, followed, not inconsistently, by a chapter on the harsh segregation practiced vis-à-vis the Bene Israel. But the community never recuperated from the ordeal of the 1942 flight to India, though

the Calcutta Baghdadis received the refugees warmly. After the war, the majority of the Rangoon people dispersed, and in the process lost much of their remaining tradition.

The author has done a service to Jewish studies by this engagingly written book, documenting a community that has largely disappeared. She has also done a service to the descendants of the people described, who are enabled through this book to recognize their ancestral roots. If there is one point of criticism to be made of the book, it is that the colonial context of Rangoon community life could have been spelled out more fully. The term "colonialism" does not even figure in the index.

(From Points East, March 2008)

This book has also been reviewed by Prof. Shlomo Deshen in *Nehardea: Journal of the Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center*, No. 16 (Spring 2008), pp. 52-53.

Learning Chinese

By Alex Auswaks

Learning Chinese is now available on-line at ChineseVoice.com Chinese Central Television (CCTV) broadcasts in English on Yes 111 and probably also on Hot. History buffs are probably watching the History Channel (Yes 32, Hot 107) and the Biography Channel (Yes 31) for lots and lots on Israeli and Jewish history, Biblical archaeology, ancient and modern wars in our neck of the woods.

TV Club, a weekly TV programme in Russian, goes on sale once a week (Fridays or Sundays, depending where you live, but sells out quickly) with virtually a full complement of cable programmes. Israeli news on Russian cable stations (other than Channel Nine) and appearances by arrivals from over there. Osoboye Mnenie on Yes 183 twice daily tends on the whole to be sympathetic to us.

Top quality books on Judaism

published in Russia and written and published in Israel are available in Russian bookshops, and books on Russians in China! Gesharim publish books of Jewish interest for export to Russia. Mercury sell books of Jewish interest and lovely, lovely toys for your grandchildren for Hanukkah. They also sell feng shui objects .

Follow the American elections on Fox Channel News which refers to us as America's ally.

Not all bad on Al Jazeera which had a programme on Mizrahi food in Jerusalem and ...found that the two best restaurants are Jewish!

MASHAV, Project Hope and hospitals unite

In June a signing ceremony was held extending the cooperation agreement between MASHAV, Shanghai Children's Hospital, Schneider Hospital, and Project Hope.

The agreement stated that the four parties will continue to finance the training of doctors in Israel at Schneider Hospital.

The 10th Anniversary of Shanghai Children's Medical Center (SCMC) and the 25th Anniversary of Project Hope's humanitarian aid and educational programming in China were also celebrated in a ceremony that honored the victims of the recent earthquake in Sichuan Province.

Several children, victims of the earthquake, are being treated at SCMC which delivers state-of-the-art pediatric care to the children of China.

Lynn Schneider, the daughter of the benefactor of the Schneider's Children's Hospital in Israel, spoke at the ceremony. Ms. Schneider spoke of the shared values and ideals between the Israeli and Shanghai centers and the aims of Project Hope. She described her father's vision of the hospital serving as a "bridge to peace."

Project Hope also marked the 50th anniversary of its international establish.

'Made in China' Label Teams up with the Kosher Symbol

by Ching-Ching Ni

It isn't easy being a kosher food inspector in the land of mu shu pork. No matter how hard you try.

"Once they got me into a restaurant and ordered a whole plate of food and put it in front of me," recalls Rabbi Martin Grunberg who has the unusual task of ensuring that Chinese factories that make food for export comply with ancient Jewish dietary laws. "They were putting me to the test because they really don't understand why I can't eat Chinese cuisine."

Keeping kosher is a breeze back home in Jerusalem, but it is a daily challenge in China, where food is practically a religion and people say they will eat anything with four legs – except for the table. It means Grunberg cannot travel light on his monthly trips through the country: He carries two or three suitcases packed with dry goods, canned meats and vacuum-sealed packets so he can feed himself breakfast, lunch and dinner. That way, he never has to step into a Chinese restaurant where about the only thing he can order is a fruit plate and a can of Coke.

Although many Chinese have never heard the word "kosher", China is now the world's fastest-growing producer of kosher-certified food, with more than 500 Chinese factories producing the approved goods. That number is expected to soar, not because a country that is still officially atheist has embraced Judaism, but because it is good for business.

"I used to get this puzzled look: What is kosher?" said Grunberg, 54, a field inspector for the New York-based Orthodox Union, which is responsible for certifying more than 300 plants in China. "Now a lot of people know it as a marketing tool to increase their market share, especially in the US."

The largest kosher market in the world is the US, where a growing number of the consumers are non-Jews who see kosher-certified food and generally safer and healthier.

That is important in China, which is trying to recover from the recent spate of tainted-food scandals. Eager to regain consumer trust, the "Made in China" label has found an unexpected ally in the once-obscure kosher symbol. "People have been looking for some other measure of security for products coming out of China," said Rabbi Shimon Freundlich, one of a handful of Beijing-based independent kosher field inspectors. "They want to see quality control, and kosher is a standard people know." As China in recent years has become a factory for the world, practically anything can be made here at a bargain. The unlikely kosher business flourished simply because of supply and demand. The global appetite for kosher products exploded and China is happy to feed the frenzy.

But even after the Chinese learned basic kosher rules – no pork, no shellfish, no fish without fins or scales – misunderstanding remain. "Since food goes on the table, one manufacturer thought we needed a kosher table", Freundlich said. "Of course, every table is kosher." It is even hard for many Chinese to grasp the meaning of "rabbi". "Sometimes they call me 'rabbit' ", Grunberg says.

In the frigid Chinese winter, Grunberg, a grandfather of five, keeps his white beard relatively short and covers his head with a wool hat. He keeps his yarmulke in his pocket and puts in on only when the room is warm enough. The Israeli resident has long given up on wearing his wide-brimmed black hat

when traveling across China. "They get squashed," he said, during the extended transits by plane, bus and train.

It is harder for Freundlich, 34, to blend in. His black beard is much longer and bushier, and some Chinese he meets can't resist tugging at it with their fingers. "They used to call me Santa Claus," says Freundlich, who moved to Beijing with his family in 2001 to start a Jewish community center. Then came the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. "They started calling me bin Laden, which is unfortunate." But they don't mean any harm by it, he said. For the most part, rabbis are treated with respect even if the Chinese know very little about the Jewish people and their religion.

"In China, we have very little contact with the Jewish people," said Lucy Qian, the general manager at Ningbo Gooddays Food, a factory that makes mostly novelty candies here in one of China's manufacturing hubs. "We are doing this purely because of market demand." Since the factory went kosher a few years ago, sales have soared 40 percent, she said. Her primary customers are Israelis and Americans who want such things as kosher lipstick-shaped Barbie candy, some of which ends up on the shelves of places like Wal-Mart. The tainted-food scandals, she said, had no impact on her business last year. In fact, sales grew. "I'm sure the kosher certification helped," Qian said.

Jewish dietary rules originated in the Hebrew Bible, particularly the Book of Leviticus. But rabbis working in China try to sidestep serious discussion on religion to avoid political minefields in a country where anything other than state-sanctioned church activities is strictly forbidden.

Once, Grunberg said, an official asked

him during a public function to explain what religious law kosher is based on. Caught off guard, the rabbi quickly emphasized the common ground between the Chinese and Jewish people who share long histories of pride and persecution.

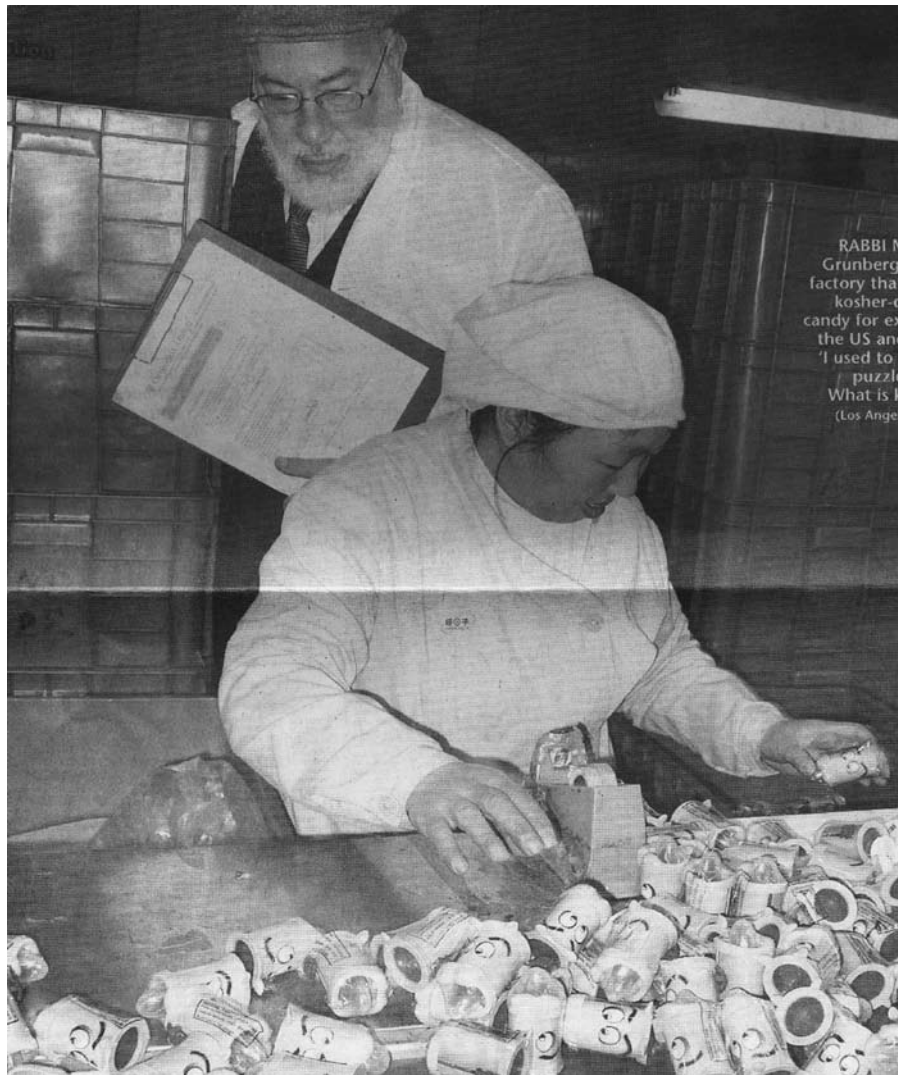
"I didn't bring religion or God into the equation", Grunberg said.

That is just fine to pragmatic Communist Party officials, who see little contradiction in describing their brand of unbridled capitalism as "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Tolerating unfamiliar foreign ideas seems a small price to keep the export-driven economy humming.

"The biggest benefit of going kosher is that it introduces more accountability," said Ray Cheung, a Chinese broker who acts as a bridge between Chinese companies seeking kosher approval and Jewish agencies that certify them. "The rabbi inspectors need to know where each ingredient is made and be able to trace it back to the factory that made it. If you don't provide that information, we don't give you the certification."

Los Angeles Times

(From The Jerusalem Post,
February 17, 2008)



Israeli spirit dances across Beijing's stage

In June, to mark the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel, the Israeli Embassy in Beijing sponsored a celebration featuring performances by some of the top dancers from both Israel and China. Over 1200 people filled the Beijing Forbidden City Concert Hall to experience not only the celebration of music and dance from Israel and China but to also share in a message of friendship between the nations as well as a call for social responsibility.

Highlights of the event included the Kamea Modern Dance Company of Beersheva. This troupe, formed in 2002, is one of Israel's finest. They

also have a reputation for giving back to the community and defining social responsibility by introducing the art of dance to under privileged people throughout Israel.

The artists of China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe also performed. This troupe, also demonstrating artistic perfection, is comprised of handicapped dancers.

Their performance of the Thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy amazed the audience. The Israeli Ambassador remarked that the performance exemplified important shared values and friendship.

As one of Israel's leading dance companies, Kamea appears in 70

performances a year nationally and while also enjoying a reputation as a premier contemporary dance company worldwide.

Kamea first performed in China with great success in Meet in Beijing 2006. The government of India invited them to be the main attraction on its national Navatri Festival in September 2006, where an estimated one million people watched their Platform 1 performance.

The company's diverse repertoire offers many opportunities for the stage in many other festivals and celebrations throughout the Far East.

China's View of the Jews

By Ronen Medzini

China is good for the Jews. A book entitled 'The Jews - Why are they Rich?' would be considered anti-Semitic in every other country in the world. In China, however, it's a sort of compliment. Ronen Medzini elaborates on the Chinese people's idolization of the Jewish mind: When I present myself to a Chinese person, it always boosts my ego. "A Jew? Very smart!" is the immediate response. It is mostly followed by "you are very good at business." There is no doubt, however, that my favorite response is "you're like Einstein!" There is indeed a certain similarity between Einstein and myself. And the proof is that only this week I managed to repair a leakage in my washer's pipe system all by myself. From time immemorial, and in many parts of the world to this day, the Jews have suffered from anti-Semitism and discrimination. In China, there are also prejudices about the Jews and Israel, but surprisingly enough, most of them are positive. Although the large majority of the Chinese have never met a Jew, the prevailing opinion in China praises and glorifies the Jews and the State of Israel. Other pearls of wisdom by the Chinese include: "Israel is small and surrounded by enemies, but manages to survive and succeed," and "China and Judaism are the only things that have maintained their character throughout history." "Israel and China are close friends," the Chinese like to boast, showing impressive proficiency in the history of China's Jews. And indeed, the Jews owe a lot to China, which served as a haven of rest for Diaspora Jews throughout the previous century. Historic documentations estimate that

the first Jews arrived in China in the eighth century from Persia, through the Silk Road. The first Jewish community in China was founded in the year 1163 in the city of Kai-Fang in the Nan district, where the first Chinese synagogue was built. At the end of the 19th century, Russian Jews settled in the cities of Tianjin and Dalian in northern China. But the biggest community at the time, which was comprised of some 25,000 Jews at its peak, was established in the city of Harbin, where Jews arrived following the extension of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Teddy Kaufman, chairman of the Israel-China Society, was born in Harbin in 1924 and immigrated to Israel in 1950. His childhood in the city was quiet and normative. He had several Chinese friends who studied with him at school, and he took part in the active and routine community life.

"We knew nothing of what was taking place in Europe. We were completely disconnected from the Jewish world," he told me. When I asked if he had ever encountered acts of anti-Semitism, he said, "Of course, on the part of the Russians in the city." And on the part of the Chinese? "Never." When I asked if he was grateful to the Chinese for their fair treatment of the Jews, he answered immediately, "Without a doubt." In 1931, and following the Japanese takeover of the Manchuria district in northern China, the Jews' situation worsened. They were forced to live under supervision and restrictions on their businesses and comply with Japanese laws. In the coming years, some 4,500 Jews emigrated from northern China to Shanghai, before the Japanese took control of the city. "The world seems to be divided

into two: Places where Jews can't live, and places which Jews can't enter," Chaim Weizmann wrote in 1936, after the Nazis rose to power in Europe and other countries banned Jews from entering them. An exception was the city of Shanghai, which in the 1930s was the only place in the world which did not require an entry visa. In the 1930s and during World War II, some 18,000 Jews who fled Nazi Europe found refuge in the city. They joined two waves of Jewish immigration which had already reached Shanghai. The first in 1848 of wealthy Jews from Baghdad, who had accumulated a lot of power and property in the city, and the second of Russian Jews in the 1930s. Most of the Jewish immigrants arrived with no assets whatsoever, and were financially supported by the rich Baghdad Jews and donations raised by the Joint organization in the United States. The Jewish community developed an independent life in Shanghai, which included schools, hospitals, cemeteries, theatres and even sports teams. In 1937, Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese, and in 1942, following Nazi Germany's pressure on the Japanese authorities, the Japanese instructed all "the residents of Shanghai without a citizenship" (a political wording directed at the Jews) to move to a crowded area of more than 1 square-kilometer, in the poor quarter of Hongkou. The quarter, which was known as "the Shanghai ghetto" was the land of the city's poor, and the Jews lived there together with the Chinese. The living conditions in the Ghetto was extremely difficult, there was a great food shortage, and outbreaks of diseases due to the harsh sanitation conditions. In Shanghai, however, as opposed to the rest of

the world, nearly all the Jews survived the war. The Chinese were also persecuted and massacred by the Japanese at the time. "The Chinese and Jews had a special brotherhood, a brotherhood of persecuted people," I was told by Shalom Greenberg, Shanghai's rabbi. "Today too, the Jews are thankful to the Chinese for treating them as equals, as human beings." Upon the State of Israel's foundation, and following the rise of Communism in China, which did not benefit minorities and different religions, almost all Jews left the city. Most of them immigrated to Israel, the rest moved to other countries. Today, Dvir Ben-Gal guides tours in the trail of the Jewish community in Shanghai. The Jewish community in Shanghai is comprised of some 2,000 Jews today, all newcomers. Next week, at least 500 people are expected to take part in the Passover night service which will be held by the Chabad House in the city and will be conducted by Rabbi Greenberg. A common basic assumption in China and the world is that Jews have money and power. The difference

is in the approach towards this assumption. While in many parts of the world the Jews' businesses and dominance are viewed with a feeling of disgust, the Chinese have developed great admiration, even idolization, for the Jewish mind. What is the main reason for this? China doesn't feel, and never felt, threatened by the Jews. On the contrary, China views Judaism as an ancient and wise culture like its own, and respects the high moral and family values emphasized in the Bible. Thus, the global suspicion/hatred/jealousy towards Jews' money and dominance has been replaced in China by another phenomenon: Curiosity. The question "why are the Jews so dominant in the world?" is asked by many Chinese. I found proof in the local bookstore. In the business section, I caught sight of one book with an interesting title: "The Jewish road to wealth." When I asked the saleswoman if there were similar books, she referred me to an entire section of business books using the Jewish motif to attract readers. Another book, which I immediately

caught sight of, includes an illustration of Moses grasping the Tables of the Covenant and carries the title, "The ancient and great Jewish writings for getting rich." When I asked the saleswoman which of these books was a best seller, she handed me the book "The Jews' business wisdom and the art of proper behavior according to the Talmud." I do not recall learning how to become rich in school, but this is definitely an original way to make the lessons more interesting. Other books I found on the shelves included: "The most effective methods for Jewish businesses," "Interpreting the Jewish merchants - how they sell and succeed" and "The Jews - why are they rich?" It is very likely that books with similar titles published in any other country would be considered anti-Semitic and racist. In China, however, they can be viewed as a sort of distorted compliment to our heritage. After all, when I told the saleswoman I was a Jew, she immediately uttered, "Wow, you're smart!"

Chinese Tourists are on their Way to Israel

By Shelly Paz

The Tourism Ministry is seeking tour guides in the Chinese language in preparation for the arrival of 15,000 tourists to Israel in 2008. Chinese tourists will visit Israel following the signature on an agreement with the Chinese government that allows tour groups of visitors from China to travel to Israel.

Last week the Tourism Ministry published an advertisement in search for tour guides in the Chinese language who will take part in a course that will include contents that attract the Chinese tourists, such as their preferred sights, the specific service they are used to and more. In addition, the Tourism Ministry has prepared a comprehensive plan that will suit Chinese tourists and their unique culture and

habits.

Simultaneously, it was decided to recruit employees to the tourism industry including hotel chefs and translators that speak the Chinese language and can assist Chinese tourists during their visit to Israel.

"The Tourism Ministry works to adapt the Israeli product to the needs and the preferences of the Asian tourist in general and the Chinese tourist in particular, in order to boost the tourism potential to Israel from South-East Asia," said Shaul Tzemach, director-general of the Tourism Ministry.

Departing tourism from China has increased rapidly in the past decade and is considered as the market with the

biggest growing potential. According to figures by the Tourism Ministry, Chinese tourists spend up to \$375 billion a year on travelling abroad and estimates predict that 100 million Chinese tourists will leave their country for travelling purposes by the year 2020.

Other than the local efforts, the Tourism Ministry strives to market Israel in China by preparing and handing out guide books to Chinese travel agents, assisting Israeli travel agents in marketing Israel to the Chinese, arranging professional seminars, participating in tourist fairs in China, about inviting Chinese journalists to learn the area in advance and more.

From The Jerusalem Post

We are Duty Bound to Tell the Younger Generation Of Our Friendship Forged in Adversity

Wang Shu

Mr. Xu Buzeng has written many articles about the Jewish history in China, in particular about the history of the Jews from Germany and Austria who sought refuge during the Second World War. On the occasion of the oncoming publication of the collection of these articles, Mr. Xu asked me to write a foreword for his book. It makes me ashamed as I have a smattering of this period of history. It was only when I got acquainted with Mr. Xu versed in this field and read his books and articles that I had a general idea.

In the entire period of the anti-Japanese war I studied in Shanghai, from Junior middle school to university. At that time I knew that since Hitler's rise in power anti-semitic persecution, and in particular the annexation of Austria, multitudes of German and Austrian arned that in perilous position fled to Shanghai via sea route or traveled a long way via Siberia to Shanghai. When I grew up I gradually knew among these Jews there were distinguished musicians, artists, filmmakers, educators, doctors, architects who made contributions in enriching Shanghai's cultural life and trained lots of professionals. I and friends of mine attended the concerts of Jewish musicians at the Lyceum Theater and watched their caricatures of Shanghai civic life in the Shanghai English-language newspapers and magazines. I appreciated their oil paintings on sale in shops. I savored their Viennese coffee and cakes in the Jewish café and enjoyed the waltz played by the mini Jewish ensemble. I bought

the new and second hand foreign language books and magazines and the used phonographic music records and works of art in their shops. A few years later, with the outbreak of the Pacific War the Japanese invasion army occupied the International Settlement of Shanghai, put the American and British nationals in concentration camps and tightened their control of the Jews and later put them in the Jewish ghetto in HongKou. After the capitulation of Japan many of the Jews emigrated to the United States and Canada whereas quite a number of them returned to Austria and the federal Germany in western Europe. In the meantime I went from Shanghai to work in the Liberated Area of northern Jiangsu Province. There I met an Austrian-Jewish doctor by the name of Jacob Rosenfeld coming from Shanghai in 1941 to the Liberated Area to do medical work for the sick and the wounded of the New Fourth Army and the local masses. Rosenfeld joined the Chinese Communist Party as a special member, with the sponsorship of the Army Commander Chen Yi and another leading cadre Qian Junrui. The issue of the Shanghai Jews during the Second World War attracted my attention in the nineteen seventies and eighties when I worked in the Federal Germany and Austria. At the end of 1969 I went to work in West Germany as a reporter, and then worked in the embassy for seven years since the establishment of the diplomatic relations and gradually came to understand the seriousness of Hitler's bloody massacre of the Jewish

people. I got a deeper impression of the Holocaust when I later visited the concentration camps (which have been turned into museums now) where these heinous crimes were committed. In 1980 I went to work at the Chinese Embassy to Austria and acquainted myself with a number of former Jewish refugees who had resided in Shanghai for many years, with the Chinese wives they had married in Shanghai, and I got to know how they had lived while in Shanghai. As I was the third Chinese ambassador in Vienna the veteran colleagues of the Embassy told me that at the reception party of the first ambassador's inaugural ceremony quite a number of former Shanghai Jews and their Chinese wives were present. In later years the number of Shanghai Jews gradually diminished. Some of them died, whereas the others either because of their senility or economic difficulties went to the United States for support of their children, relatives or friends.

In spite of the fact that the number of the former Shanghai Jews greatly diminished in Vienna, there were still quite a few who came to see me, sometime with their Chinese wives dressed in cheongsam made in the nineteen forties when they left Shanghai. The Jews cherished a deep affection for Shanghai and always said it was Shanghai which had saved their lives. They talked with me in the Shanghai vernacular they could still remember, "I am a Shanghailander". When I entertained them with dishes, they wanted only pancakes, deep-fried dough sticks, soy bean milk,

red fermented bean curd and pickles, and said that would do. They were quite advanced in years, lived on pension and government subsidy and the majority of them were hard up. Nevertheless, many of them drove cars to take my wife and me to picnics or to dinner. Some of them invited us to their homes. Others did not, excusing themselves because their houses were too small and too dirty so that they felt ashamed. Later I learned the story of the Chinese Consul-General Ho Fengshan in the past when Hitler's army invaded Vienna and turned Austria a state of Germany. The local Jews were in an impasse and could not get the visas to other countries to seek refuge. Ho deeply sympathized with the Jews and, without asking instructions from the Chinese government and rejecting the Nazi pressure, granted two thousand odd Shanghai visas to the Jews, enabling them to escape from the Fascist tyranny. Later I wrote short articles about these and published them in Shanghai's newspaper and got acquainted with Mr. Xu Buzeng. For many years Mr. Xu Buzeng has made nothing of hardships and visited Israel, Austria, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, establishing wide contacts with the German Jews. He visited and interviewed the former China Jews and Shanghai Jews, their descendents and relatives, made extensive investigations of their working and living conditions in Shanghai in the past and collected the various written and printed materials as well as photos and pictures. He interviewed the relevant specialists and scholars in China and abroad and exchanged information and opinions in depth with them. Based on profuse materials and profound study he has published a number of articles on Jews in China, in particular in Shanghai which I have read and which enabled me to comprehend the matter in its entirety.

I am very glad to know that Mr. Xu

Buzeng will publish a collection of his articles written in recent years, and I am in confident that the readers in China and abroad, including the Jewish readers will get more understanding of the life and work of the multitude of Jewish people in China, and in particular in Shanghai, of the sympathy and assistance to the Jewish people in refuge offered by the Chinese people who themselves suffered great calamities of the Japanese aggression and of the contacts and the friendship of the Chinese and the Jewish peoples. The days are bygone but we are still duty bound to tell the younger generation of Chinese, Israelis and Jews around the world of the friendship forged between the Chinese and the Jewish peoples in adversity. We must never forget the aggression and oppression the older generation suffered and we will never be the aggressors and oppressors when we develop and become richer.

China emerges as a scientific giant

The number of China's and technological talents totals about 42.46 million, ranking first in the world and making China the sixth largest destination country for international students, according to China's first "Science and Technology Human Resources Development Report".

The report shows that by the end of 2005, the number of China's science and technology talents reached 42.46 million, slightly higher than the United States (42 million), second only to the European Union's 54 million.

If only countries are taken into account, then China's total scientific and technological talents rank first in the world, becoming veritable power in science and technology human resources.

Horst P. Eisfelder

Dear Friends,

Instead of writing to you individually I am creating a circular that will keep you informed about our recent activities and matters that may be of interest to you.

Recently I had the opportunity to read Prof. Steve Hochstadt's book: 'Shanghai Geschichten'. Hochstadt is a history professor in the USA, and is interested in this topic because his own grandparents survived in Shanghai. The book is a collection of interviews conducted in Germany around 1996 and 1997 with Jewish refugees who had been to Shanghai and who had returned to live in Germany (or Austria), because of their great love for the country and its people. Because Hochstadt has published verbatim, exactly what the various people had to say without any editing, it is unavoidable that some obvious mistakes and errors have been included.

For instance I read that some parents went to the Chinese Consulate in Shanghai to register their child's birth. I am absolutely certain that no such institution existed. Others stated that they went to the German Consulate in Berlin to organise their departure. Here I assume that this was a slip of the tongue, and that they meant to say: 'to the Chinese Consulate in Berlin'.

Then there were those people, who after some restrictions were imposed to limit entry into Shanghai, who obtained a Chinese visa from the Chinese government in Chungking, as if the Japanese who ruled most of China's ports would take any notice of a visa issued by the Chinese government. Few seem to realise that those restrictions were never enforced upon arrival in Shanghai. However shipping companies were reluctant to take on passengers lacking some sort of 'permit'.

Someone else claimed that 'hot water to wash oneself was not obtainable in Shanghai'. Yet there were hot water shops within walking distance of almost every home.

Of course many of the people interviewed were too young when they left Shanghai

to have an accurate recollection of how the place was organised. They had to rely on the vague recollections of their parents, who may well have passed away many years ago. Not having any written notes can play havoc with anyone's memory.

Some speak of travelling from Hongkew to the International Settlement. They obviously did not know that Hongkew was very much part of the International Settlement. In fact many of the refugees in Hongkew were entitled to vote in the municipal elections for the International Settlement in mid 1940.

Many of the people featured in this book considered themselves Germans, first and foremost, and had a somewhat negative attitude to the Jewish faith. Of course this did not prevent them to rely on Jewish organisations, for food, shelter, medical, and financial assistance. A few were dedicated Communists and returned to the Soviet Sector of Germany, because they felt that thanks to the benevolent rule of Josef Stalin, a free and truly democratic Germany was assured.

Just the same, Hochstadt's book is interesting and to my surprise I found it featured two of my own historic photos. In the meantime we have been to Canberra and back again a distance of 650 km or about 400 miles each way. While driving such distances can be fun, it was a bit of a strain, because on the N.S.W. side of the state border some 135 km of highway are being reconstructed to provide the kind of highway that we have enjoyed south of the border (in Victoria) for several decades. The roadworks meant that one has to slow down to 80, then 60 and finally 40 km wherever it says: 'Roadworks ahead' only to see no workers or machinery near the road. Sure much work is being carried out parallel to the road now in use, but it is annoying to have to slow down, or even stop for a few minutes without seeing the reason why?

Our first day in Canberra (Friday) was spent trying to see the current exhibition of Landscape painters, from 'Turner to Monet' at the National Gallery. But it

was impossible to find a parking spot within walking distance. Then went to the National Library, where we were lucky to find a one-hour parking spot. Here I wanted to look at and possibly printout Shanghai newspapers from our early days in that city.

Sure enough they have the 'North China Daily News' on microfilm, but the formalities to access this film took up most of my very limited (parking) time. By the time I got to see the film, I had only 5 minutes left. So I only looked at the edition of Thursday, 24th November 1938, the day we arrived in Shanghai. The information to be seen there was certainly amazing, but to obtain a printout, I was told, would require a lot more time than our 'parking'; would have allowed.

On Saturday morning I attended the orthodox synagogue service where our friend and former Hongkew resident Peter Witting had a 'call-up' to honour him for his 80th birthday. I too was 'called-up', and that means having to make a donation to the synagogue. Sadly no member of Peter's family was present, as none of them are Jewish.

After the service there was a terrific lunch for about 50 invited guests at the 'National Press Club', the venue were our P. M. and other V.I.P.s speak to the nation. Here I engaged some of the other guests with some interesting conversation. There was a gentleman, whom I had also met at Peter's 70th birthday bash, who some 50 odd years ago squired the same Jewish girl at the same time, as I did, without either of us being aware of the other. That young lady was boarding at the time with some old friends of my parents, from way back in Germany. As it transpired now, this other gentleman's parent had also been friends with the same couple, leading him to meet that particular young lady. In fact I still see her from time to time at communal functions, but she has aged a lot since.

On Sunday morning we drove to the National Gallery well before opening time and where able to get a good parking spot we still found many more

people who were queuing outside the still locked entrance.

Personally I am not greatly impressed by landscape painters. I feel almost anyone can paint a mountain, a cloud, or even a tree. I gained the impression that these famous artists were unable to draw a human figure, or a building.

Other permanent exhibitions in the same building featured lots of Surrealistic Art, which is not my cup of tea either. Many of the works in that section are no different from Kindergarten daubings.

On Sunday noon, Peter Witting had invited us for another splendid lunch, at a Hotel, close to the synagogue. This event was for a more select few or about 15 persons. Here I had the opportunity to converse at length with Peter's 'young' sister Marion. Now widowed for the second time, she leads a wonderful life and will shortly embark on a 74-day cruise that will also stop briefly in Shanghai.

We had stopped overnight in Gundagai on our way to Canberra because I don't

like to arrive in Canberra after dark as the place is confusing enough even in bright daylight. But we drove home in one go. Before leaving our hotel on Monday morning we had to remove a thin layer of ice from our car. Yes, that was frost that morning.

I don't know whether you know of or have met with Anais Martane. She was in Melbourne for 24 hours last weekend, and I enjoyed 6 hours in her company, trying to show her as much of Melbourne as was possible in the limited time available. Anyway she is a Jewish girl from France, who can speak, read and write Chinese and who has lived in Beijing for about 6 years as a photojournalist. About 4 years ago she published a search notice in the Israeli 'Igud Yotsei Sin Bulletin' looking for me. We subsequently met in Shanghai in October 2004. She is now engaged to a Chinese movie actor.

Young Miss Anais Martane seems to make a very good living from her photography in China. It seems that she

frequently flies between Beijing and Paris where she also maintains a small flat. Her parents however live in Nice, and are also regular visitors to Beijing. In her luggage she carried some elaborate photo floodlights that she set up in my home to take about 20 snaps of myself, followed by an equal number taken outside. For her 'serious' (professional) photos, she uses a twin lens reflex camera and expensive colour film that she will now take personally to Paris for processing. However during our drive through the Central Business District and through various Melbourne suburbs she took very many photos with her 'cell phone'.

Anais showed us a draft version of a book on the Jewish community in Shanghai that she is about to publish that also included several of my historical photos. She and Prof. Hochstadt obtained my pictures from the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D. C.

Have to keep this brief, hope you and all your family are well. More next time.

Jesse and Naomi Tracton

To Teddy Kaufman and Yossi Klein

Dear Teddy Kaufman and Yossi Klein,

We have just returned from China.

The highlight of our tour was a Jewish heritage tour of Tianjian, Harbin, and Kaifeng.

This tour was arranged for us by Shi Lei

We told Shi Lei where we wanted to go and see and he arranged everything for us.

He organized flights between cities, food, accommodation, and local tour guides with historical knowledge of Jews in these cities.

Shi Lei is a fully licensed national tour guide and he uses a licensed tour company in Kaifeng so we had no problem with the transfer of the money for the cost of the tour.

Probably the most memorable part of this tour was our visit to Kaifeng.

Shi Lei treated us like family. (His father said we are family) We were quite touched by this. We also met his aunty.

They are proud and insistent they are Jewish. I couldn't help but feel compassion for these people.

Shi Lei's father has set up a mini museum telling the story of the Jews of Kaifeng. He built the showcases himself and it is very professionally done yet still having a personal touch.

From our experience we found Shi Lei to be a capable and competent contact to have for any one wishing to do a Jewish tour in China.

His English is perfect and he is a personable young man.

We would recommend Shi Lei as a contact tour guide and it may be helpful to other people who are looking for this type of tour (private or group) to contact Shi Lei at email

Tzur[fhshilei@yahoo.com]

Maybe you could put his email address in your magazine for the convenience of your readers.

Thank you,

Legends of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng

19. The Tenacity of Tradition

The Chinese spring festival is interwoven with Passover, when the world is abloom with the sunlight of spring, the renewal of life, and the celebration of freedom.

Most people today believe that the Kaifeng Jews no longer observe any Jewish traditions and are now totally assimilated and lost. Is this assumption true or false?

What is the difference between assimilated and acculturated? The latter would mean that they have adapted to the host Chinese culture. Though they appeared not to practice any Jewish traditions, the very essence of their traditions might still be there, observable at a closer look.

One possible example was the way the Jews celebrated their spring festival, Passover. While Passover, strictly speaking, did not occur on the same date as the important Chinese spring festival, the Jews of Kaifeng still made the connection. Both holidays celebrate the time when all nature awakened to new life – when the grass turned green, the trees and flowers began to blossom, the birds returned after a winter's absence. All the world seemed to be newborn in the sunlight of spring, and with this renewal of life came the holiday that reminds Jews of the freedom that came to their ancestors after years of slavery.

For the descendants of Chinese Jewry, the holiday was observed in a unique manner that illustrated the tenacity of Jewish traditions even in this far-off land. Like all Jewish holidays, Passover began on the evening preceding the first day. For the Kaifeng Jews in the twentieth century, home was where

they observe the most elaborate part of the ceremony because they had no synagogue since the mid-nineteenth century.

The Jews prepared for the holiday by killing a paschal lamb and using a new writing brush to spread the lamb's blood over the doorpost. This symbolized the biblical account of how the doorposts were smeared with the blood of a lamb, to indicate that this was an Israelite household to be "passed over" by the Angel of Death.

This tradition reminded them of the historic experience of the Jewish people when they became slaves in Egypt and how the mighty hand delivered them from slavery by sending the Angel of Death to kill the firstborn sons of the Egyptian homes to compel Pharaoh to free the captive Jews. The houses of the Israelites were spared.

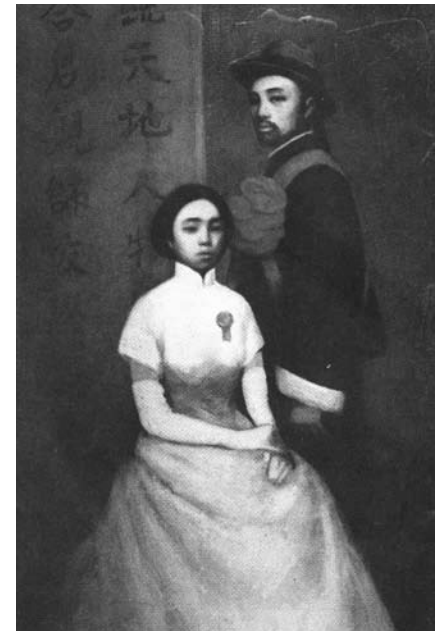
"Normally, we use lamb's blood," said Shi Zhongyu, a seventy-year-old Kaifeng Jew. "If we happened not to have lambs, we would use rooster's blood or cinnabar mixed with water instead. Sometimes we used red paint to represent the blood needed to cover our doorpost. We believed that the symbolic meaning was the same no matter what we used to create it." The first Passover symbol on the seder table was luobin, unleavened bread: Chinese matzot. It is flat, hard baked, and consists of nothing but flour and water.

"It is the bread of affliction," said Zhao Pingyu, a descendant of the Zhao clan in Kaifeng. "It reminds us of the hasty way our ancestors left Egypt. They baked unleavened cakes from the dough which they brought from Egypt. There was not sufficient

time to leaven it, for they were driven out of Egypt and could not tarry."

Another Passover symbol on the table was sweet mutton soup, equivalent to horseradish, with an unpleasant taste. Every member of the family had to drink the soup though it tastes awful. It served as a reminder of the bitter lives their ancestors led in Egypt.

In one major respect, Passover differed from the Chinese spring festival. The Jews of Kaifeng had an inflexible rule against the worship of graven images. When celebrating the spring festival, their Chinese neighbors customarily erected Buddhist icons in their houses; these often included door protectors, the Lord of the Heaven, and the Earth King. And then they worshipped these statues. The Jews of Kaifeng never paid homage to such spirits, which was another sign that they kept their traditions alive.



Painting of the wedding couple by Yin Xin, from the Story of the Kaifeng Jews in Shanghai, China, September 4, 2007

Searching and Researching

Senia Babushkin

I am searching for my brother, Moses Babushkin, who entered the USA in 1948/1949. He changed his name to Miller and served in the U.S. Army in 1951. Today he must be about 79 years old. I would be grateful if anybody can supply me with some information of his whereabouts.

Email: kamai.s@012.net.il

Address: P.O. B. 246 Megadim 30875, Israel

Barbara Golburt Sokolik

My Father lived in Harbin from 1917-1923. His name was Israel Golburt. He came there by himself from Melitopol, Ukraine. He lived with his Aunt, Pauline Bassin, who went to Israel sometime after WW II. His two young brothers were buried in Harbin, probably within a year or two before 1917. They both drowned in the river in Harbin. Their names were Ilushia Golburt and Mosia Golburt. My father also had an uncle who died in Harbin, His name was Jania Bassin. He died when he was eighty years old. My grandson may be studying in China this summer for 6 weeks. He wants to go to Harbin. Is there any way of finding the graves of my two uncles and great uncle? Thank you for any information you may have on these matters.

Michael Falter

I have just returned from Shanghai where I went to say Kaddish for my grandfather, Paul Nathan Lilienfeld, who left Frankfurt in 1939 for Shanghai where he died 4 years later. My grandfather was accompanied to Shanghai by my mother's (Inge Lilienfeld) friend Walter Keller, also from Frankfurt. Is there any way to find out what became of Walter Keller or even if he is still alive? I would be most grateful for your help and look forward to your reply.

Email: mf@facsimile-editions.com

Address: 40 Hamilton Terrace, London

NW8 9UJ, England

Telephone +44 20 7286 0071

Fax +44 20 7266 3927

Thomas Lahusen

Dear Mr. Kaufman, Some time ago I received a box with materials (mainly photos) related to the Russian-Jewish Berladsky family who lived in Harbin in the early 1900s. Unfortunately I don't remember who gave this to me. My impression is that it was found in a San Francisco house, among the belongings of previous occupants. I gave the box to our library, the East-Asian section of Robarts Library (University of Toronto). The librarians have now catalogued it, but they would like to know more. Do you happen to know anything about this family? Your help will be very appreciated.

Thomas Lahusen

Professor, Department of History,
University of Toronto

Sheila Weinbach

The city historian of Tianjing (Tientsin) China has published her second book on the History of the Jews in Tianjing China. These books are remarkable in the fact that they document a part of Jewish history not known to most of the world. The historian and editor, Anna Song of Tianjing is looking for a way to distribute these books to Jewish and other organizations.

Any suggestions? Reply to Anna Song
songanna_2000@sina.com,
sheilaweinbach@hotmail.com

70 Stanford Dr. Rochester,
NY 14610-2356

272 Saxony F, Kings Point
Delray Beach, Fl. 22336-1836
tel: 585-288-9471

mobile: 585-732-0865

Anna Song

Stanley Elin

Is the Shanghai Synagogue and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue the same, and is it in use now? Thank you for a reply.

s.elin@verizon.net 718-449-8329

Cameron & Gabby

We are searching for any information about Clare Marie Wiseman born in Shanghai in May 1923, and also her family. Her fathers name may have been Albert and she moved to Australia in 1949

Email: theborderreiver@hotmail.com

Address: Leichhardt, Sydney
Australia

Tel.: 0422962304

Ronnie Harris

My great-grandfather's brother came to Shanghai in the late 1800's. He married a local woman. The family name is Lippa. Do you have any records of him??

Email: ronnie@nationwideair-usa.com

Tel.: 414 241 6373

Ryuta Mizuchi

I hope the following information will arouse your interest. Paul Glessinger is one of the six Vienna-born Jews who sought entry into Manchuria via Trans-Siberian railway in October 1938. These six Jews appear in the old Japanese Foreign Ministry Archive, recorded as the first German-Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis. The names of the six Jews are:

Fritz Salzberger

Ludwig Hauzig

Karl Friedmann

Berthold Weinbach

Paul Glessinger

Egon Lear(?)

The report suggests that Paul Glessinger had found a job in Harbin but continued travelling to Tianjtsin due to the limited validity of the Manchurian transit visa. He is quoted as saying that he would go to Tianjtsin temporarily but hoped to go back to Harbin soon.

Email: ryu_miz@hotmail.com

Address: c/o Japanische Botschaft,
Hessgasse 6 A-1010 Wien, Austria

DONATIONS

SOCIAL AID FUND

USA

NEW YORK

From	Mrs. Bella RECTOR for Joseph Rector Memorial Fund (The Scholarship Fund in memory of Joseph RECTOR)	US\$	1000
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SAN FRANCISCO

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

From	The FAR EASTERN SOCIETY of SAN FRANCISCO for the Rosh-ha-Shana Holiday	US\$	2000
"	Mr. and Mrs. David FAMILIANT for the Social Aid Fund of Igud Yotzei Sin	"	2500
"	Mr. Aaron BELOKAMEN for the Social Aid Fund of Igud Yotzei Sin	"	5000
"	Phil and Mira MATERMAN in loving memory of their parents Abram and Dina MATERMAN and Jacob and Betty LIBERMAN	"	100
"	Bella BERKOVITCH in memory of her husband Martin BERKOVITCH and parents Sima and Sonia FINELAND	"	200
"	Mr. and Mrs. Isai KAUFMAN in memory of their PARENTS	"	200
"	Mary WOLFF and family in memory of their beloved husband, father and grandfather Walter WOLFF	"	50

USA

From	Seema ZIMMERMAN in honour of her dear friend Joe WAINER's 85th Birthday	US\$	100
"	Seema ZIMMERMAN in honour of her dear cousin Bob BAXT's 70th Birthday	"	100

In honour

of the 80th Birthday of Kurt WEINBACH,

a former resident of Tientsin, China,

with love from his wife Sheila and children David, Julie and Sasha and

Susan, Len and Aaron

NIS 80

From	Leopold BORODOVSKY in memory of his mother Nina BORODOVSKY	US\$	10
"	Golda LAZAROVICH in memory of her sister Stella TERR	"	100
"	Celia and Sanford (Sania) WAINER in honour of the birth of their great-granddaughter Ellie MADISON	"	25
"	David GROSSMAN in memory of Lou and Mara GROSSMAN	"	50
"	Mira MRANTZ in memory of her dearest parents Rachel and Boris TREIMAN and her husband Mark FRANK	"	100
"	Gutia KATSEFF in memory of her husband Samuel KATSEFF	"	50
"	Paul and Esther AGRAN in memory of brother Jack AGRANOVSKY, who died in Sydney, Australia	"	250
"	Hanna BENSADOUN in memory of her brother Siegfried KIEWE	"	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

In lieu of flowers for the Rosh-ha-Shana

From	Joe MRANTZ	US\$	100	From	Raissa GOLDIN	US\$	36
"	Simon KARLINSKY	"	100	"	Gregory HODSON	"	50
"	ANONYMOUS	"	250	"	Aaron FOMIL	"	100
"	Mr. & Mrs. Roger BERG	"	500	"	Mr. & Mrs. Solly COHEN	"	36
"	Michael YANOWITCH	"	200	"	Mr. & Mrs. Martin BATES	"	36
"	Gary MATZDORFF	"	100	"	Luba TUCK	"	180

SWITZERLAND

From	Judith MEYER - KRUGLAK for the IYS Social Aid Fund	US\$	1100
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AUSTRALIA

From	Naomi and Jesse TRACTON towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	A\$	150
"	Nora KROUK in memory of her late husband Efim's sister Gita SAPEJINSKY	"	100
"	Sopha SAKKER in memory of her dear husband Mark SAKKER	"	50
"	Mrs. L.RAYHILL in memory of her husband Nathan (Norman) RAYHILL	"	400
"	Nora VINSON in memory of her mother Rose HABINSKY	"	40
"	Rene TSUKASOV towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	300
"	Ira LEVINSKAIA in memory of her late father Yakov KOGAN who was murdered in Hailar, China, on the 9th of August, 1945	NIS	100
"	Solomon (Monia) BARD towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	60

ENGLAND

From	Dr. Mark EROOGA in memory of his parents Dr. A.M. and Mrs. M.A. YAROOGSKY-EROOGA	GBP	50
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ISRAEL

From	Meefa and Boris ZILBERG in honour of the Birth of their great grandson OMER	NIS	300
"	Esther (Fira) GERSHKOVITCH in memory of her PARENTS	"	300

From	Dina ZAIGRAEFF, Lily COOK and Esther LINOVER in memory of Dr. Victor ZAIGRAEFF	NIS	500
"	Tonia DORON in memory of her dear husband Nahman DORON	"	150
"	Tonia DORON in memory of Nathan ben Shlomo and Batia DORON on their Yahrzeits	"	150
"	Aya ROSENBLAT in memory of her parents Yosef and Raissa VAITMAN and her husband Moshe ROSENBLAT	"	100
"	David GUTMAN in memory of his father Hertz Abramovich GUTMAN	"	100
"	David GUTMAN for the album "The Jews of Harbin" towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	180
"	Bernard DAREL in memory of his brother Isai DAGILAYSKY	"	100
"	Pesia AHARONI in memory of her mother Bella MIRKIN and Dov (Boris) MIRKIN	"	150
"	Sarah ROSS in memory of her dear sister Hilia SARNO	"	200
"	Tema BLUM in memory of her parents Golda and Moshe ZANTLAUFER, brother Alex PELEG and husband Emil BLUM	"	180
"	Luba BRUNNER in memory of her husband Leova BRUNNER	"	300
"	Yosef BOMASH in memory of his father Hanoch BOMASH	"	180
"	Flora and Bob FREIMAN in memory of Mark SAKKER	"	400
"	Israel KARNY in memory of his parents Mark and Mina KRIMCHANSKY	"	500
"	Leah BECKER in memory of her sister Katia KOTKIN	"	100
"	Genia LEIMANSHEIN in memory of her PARENTS	"	180
"	Leonfrid HEYMAN in memory of his beloved wife HENRIETTA	"	180
"	Musia and Yakov ROSENBLUM in memory of a husband and father Leova ROSENBLUM	"	300
"	Fira KANER in memory of a dear husband, father and grandfather Sioma KANER	"	200
"	Sophie FUCHS in memory of her dear parents, brothers and sister-in-law PERSOFF and sister Musia (Mania) HENIGSBERG (Persoff)	"	500
"	Yona PONIMONSKY in memory of his wife Genia PONIMONSKY	"	180
"	Mark and Olga SHIFRIN in memory of their dear parents Sophia Abramovna and Naum Markovich SHIFRIN	"	180
"	Pnina TRAIBER in memory of her father Yana (Yakov) BRANDT	"	200
"	Esther GERSHKOVITCH in memory of her parents PATKIN and GERSHKOVITCH	"	300

In lieu of flowers for the Rosh-ha-Shana

From	Leah ALPER	NIS	200	From	Dina KEDAR	NIS	180
"	Marianna BARLY	"	250	"	Frieda KLIPPER	"	150
"	Pnina and Bobby BERSHADSKY	"	200	"	Davida KROL	"	100
"	Maurice BEYAR	"	200	"	Rina and Haim LITVIN	"	300
"	Gary BROVINSKY	"	500	"	Fania and David MINDLIN	"	200
"	Bernard DAREL and family	"	200	"	Gabriela NACHTOMI	"	150
"	Abraham FRADKIN	"	500	"	Tamar NISAVOV	"	150
"	Flora and Bob FREIMAN	"	600	"	Sarah and Shlomo NITZAN	"	200
"	Zelda FRIEDMAN	"	100	"	Inga and Kurt NUSSBAUM	"	1000
"	Itta GELLER and Batia ONN	"	500	"	Genia OLSHEVSKY	"	100
"	Mark GENDLIN	"	200	"	Celia PAYAS	"	180
"	Pesia GOLDSTEIN	"	80	"	Dr. Sima REICHER	"	180
"	Jacob GURI	"	100	"	Alter ROSENBLUM	"	100
"	David GUTMAN	"	200	"	Miriam SHAHAM	"	150
"	Betty HAZAN	"	300	"	Renata SHANY	"	400
"	Riva HOFFMANN	"	200	"	Dalit and Saimon SHIKMAN	"	300
"	Rika and Oded HON	"	100	"	Clara SCHWARTZBERG	"	360
"	Ora and Harold JANKLOWICZ	"	100	"	Miriam TADMOR	"	200
"	Eli KAMA	"	100	"	Sarah UMANSKY	"	80
"	Prof. D.KATZNELSON	"	360	"	Lutz WITKOWSKI	"	250
"	Rasha and Teddy KAUFMAN	"	500	"	Esther YARCHO	"	300
"	Genia KAUFMAN	"	50	"	Sarah YEHEZKEL	"	300

SYNAGOGUE FUND

USA

From Dora MEDAVOY in memory of her late husband Mike MEDAVOY US\$ 25

ISRAEL

From	Vera BEGUN in memory of her father Mordechay BEGUN	NIS	150
"	Sofa ASHKENAZI in memory of her parents Asia and Gennady YOSELEVICH	"	200
"	Luba TSINMAN in memory of her dear sister Hanah WEINBERGER	"	200
"	Luba TSINMAN in memory of her dear parents Rabby Yehuda Zelig and Dina SLUTSKER	"	300
"	Arie MADORSKY in memory of his sister Hilia ROGAN	"	100
"	Clara SCHWARTZBERG in memory of her husband Benjamin SCHWARTZBERG on his Yahrzeit	"	360
"	Zelda FRIEDMAN and family in memory of their relatives who were killed in Hailar, China, on the 9th of August, 1945	"	500
"	Esther YARCHO in memory of her parents Iza and Aharon YARCHO, grandparents Esther and Avraham YARCHO and grandparents Enya and Michael KONDAKOFF	"	300
"	Musia ROSENBLUM in memory of her husband Leova ROSENBLUM	"	200
"	Isabel SHARON in memory of her parents Gavriel (Gava) and Rosetta RABINOVICH	"	120



With great sadness in our hearts we mourn the passing
of our wonderful cousin

Harry (Garik) SAVELSON

Our heartfelt condolences to dearest THELMA
and to all the children and grandchildren
Harry's warmth and love will stay with us forever

Rose and Norman PEISER and families
Susan and Mark BRITANISKY and families

We deeply mourn the passing of our dear friend

Harry SAVELSON

We extend our deepest condolences to THELMA and the entire family

Lily FRANK

Mika HMELNITSKY

Lily and Dov LIFSHITZ

With the feeling of great sorrow and sadness

Nina 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-Genevieve-des-Bois

I deeply mourn the loss of my friend and classmate

Walter WOLFF

and extend my deepest condolences to his wife MARY
and their children and families

Allan RAYSON
Montreal, Canada

We are deeply saddened by the death of our dear friend

Walter WOLFF

and express our heartfelt condolences to MARY, VICKI, LARRY
and their families

Gregory HODSON
and family

We announce with deep sorrow the passing
of our dear brother, brother-in-law, uncle and great uncle

Jack AGRANOVSKY

who died in Sydney, Australia on July 5, 2008

The AGRAN family
The RADVIN family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
is saddened by the passing of

Jack AGRANOVSKY

and extend heartfelt sympathy to Paul and Esther AGRAN

My heartfelt sympathy to FIRUNKA and PAUL on the death of their brother

Jack AGRANOVSKY

Mira MRANTZ

With great sorrow we announce the passing of our dear

Musia (Mania) HENIGSBERG (PERSOFF)

on August 8, 2008

Sister Sophie FUCHS (Persoff)

Nephew Yenon PERRY (Persoff)

Yehudith MAROM (Persoff)

and family

In deep sorrow we announce the passing of our beloved

George LEONOFF

Rita LEONOFF

Jeanna POLOTSKY

Nora, David, Eyal, Dana BRODET

In memory of
dear old friend and haver
journalist

George LEONOFF

Heartfelt sympathy to dear RITA, NOROCHKA and family

Michael FLEISCHMANN

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN

is saddened by the passing of

George LEONOFF

and extend heartfelt sympathy to RITA, NORA and family

Just came very sad news: our compatriot from Harbin and Tianjin
Ben (Benjamin) LITVIN passed away. Obituaries and condolences will
appear in the next issue of the Bulletin. May his memory be blessed!

Eulogies of Walter A. Wolff

By Viki Leonard

My dad hated a lot of attention, and would be so embarrassed to have all of us here making a fuss over him. I think he would be thrilled that this is the last time I will embarrass him publicly, so daddy, this one's for you. My earliest memories have helped me to understand how selfless my dad was as a father. He worked a lot, and made sure he told me that repeatedly. He thought he wasn't a good father because he worked two jobs for a long time, and didn't think he spent enough time with me. But, ironically, those aren't the memories I have. I remember a dad who was always there at all the special times, from the nightly piggyback ride to my crib, to the Saturday morning cartoon marathons on his lap. I always looked forward to watching Shirley Temple movies, and I can't imagine how he could sit and listen to me serenade him with "An Ordinary Day". Shirley Temple did it much better. Even I know I can't carry a tune. But I do remember the words, and I did want to marry my dad way back then. Since that wasn't an option, I did the next best thing. I made sure that I never looked twice at a man unless he had the same qualities that my dad had. I've been blessed throughout my married life.

No matter how busy he was, he always had time to stand at his workbench in the garage, or at the table outside, making me Barbie furniture. I'm sure that as a kid I didn't appreciate all the effort that went into it, but I sure do as an adult. I still have my wooden furniture, and I know that every time I bought some junky, plastic stuff for Arielle's Barbie dolls, I thought about

how much better Daddy made it. His selflessness didn't end when I grew up. He helped me with everything I ever needed. When Neal died and Harrison and I came home to live with my parents, dad had two spare bedrooms emptied in one day flat – that was the fastest I ever saw him move (and for those of you who knew him, speed was not one of his virtues). When Arielle cracked her head open at their house, dad immediately began the "research" to find a video she wanted to cheer her up. He ran around doing things for my brother's dental practice, even at the point where he could barely walk. He was so selfless that he wouldn't get a disabled sticker for his car for years because he "didn't want to take a spot away from someone who might really need it".

Dad was not only humble and selfless, but he always demonstrated integrity and strength. We endured some difficult times when he was laid off from various jobs early on, and it is the memory of his strength, perseverance, and most importantly, positive outlook that kept me from worrying. I remember that as I got older, I always hoped that if difficulty ever touched my life, I would be able to approach things like he did. I really got to know and appreciate his diligence and thoroughness when he was hired at the Nissan dealer and I got to work for him for seven years when I was in college and graduated school. Through all the teasing about his being "slow" in doing things, or late, everyone there had complete respect for his expertise. I know that my own obsession with perfectionism

has a clear genetic base. Perfectionists have their faults, but I know that what I learned from my dad has given me skills that I needed to earn the respect of my colleagues, too.

It was because of my dad's encouragement that I became an educator. I know that my love for learning came from him. Without all those trips to the library as a kid, I don't think I would have become who I am today. I remember once, so many years ago, he told me that books were so much better than television because with books you can go anywhere your mind will let you. I am still as obsessed with books today as I was then, and I loved the years we would hit the library book sales.

Dad's quiet strength and outlook on life have pulled me through most of the major events of my life. Although I have been accused of being a worrier like Mom, I know that during the toughest times I have pulled it together and found a strength within myself that I didn't know I possessed. He never threw the towel in on anything, rather he would pray and look to a positive outcome. He certainly taught me that this is a much healthier way to live.

All of us teased him relentlessly through the years about being "superstitious". It's true, there were times turning the car around because a black cat crossed the road got frustrating, but to this day I carry in my car one of his little sealed "envelopes" filled with I know not what. These were his good luck envelopes. And in my heart, I've never doubted that his little envelope of goodies has kept

me safe.

Dad stated more than once that he never told me he loved me enough. There was never a moment when I doubted his love. It was always so obvious in everything he did. They don't say that actions speak louder than words for nothing.

Overall, when I try to look at the things about myself that I like, it comes directly back to my Dad. Intelligence and love for knowledge, creativity, perfectionism, and compassion are just a few of the traits I took from him. It may be true that biology plays a role, but I am smart enough to know that environment seals the deal. Without all of the love and support he gave me for my 50 years of life, I would be a very different person today. He went above and beyond the call of duty on a regular basis – I know I have taken that for granted, and yet I expected nothing less from him.

I will never understand what it is like to be a “dad”, especially the father of a girl (which must be traumatic all by itself), but I learned enough about what being a dad really means by marrying a man who is as good to our children as he was to us. I know that I was never the “model” daughter, but the love I have for my dad runs as deep as any love can, and in my heart he will always be the model father.

In my public speaking classes I lecture about speech organization every semester, and provide my students with a sample thesis and preview statement for a descriptive speech. If anyone wonders how much my dad affected my life, let me leave you with the sample speech thesis I provide my students:

“In spite of cultural barriers, my father came to this country, made a life for himself, and dedicated his life to his family. I would like to share a little information about where my father came from, what he has accomplished over the years, and why he has had such an impact on

my life”.

If either of my children ever get up and say anything even close to this in front of hundreds of people on a regular basis, I will know I did my job as a parent. Daddy, you sure did yours. I will love you forever; until I see you again in heaven.

By Scott Leonard

Walter had a love for helping others, listening to others, doing things for others, saving things for others, and caring for others. His generation taught him that money did not grow on trees, and he thereby learned he must save anything of monetary value. He wanted to save things in anticipation of a worthy future recipient. If you knew him, you knew of the pill-packing he did for himself and Mary for decades. I think the reason he took so many was that he enjoyed the collector's aspect of ordering them, receiving them, counting and sorting them, cutting them, and placing them on display in little compartments to be viewed and taken at each meal.

His wit and memory remained sharp as a tack, and he could remember exactly where everything in his “lifetime of collection” was. From a particular picture of 60 years ago, to the saved legs from an old footstool. If he could not locate something or it was missing, he was sure “it was because Larry and I threw it out when we cleaned up the garage back in the 90's”.

Walter was most notably a great example to those around him in how to age gracefully, without complaint, but with humility and perseverance. He might say he was “worthless” when he could not repair something like he used to, or drive the car, but his worth was far greater to us by modeling how we should remain focused on love and service for others, rather than focusing on our own problems, especially when life gets more difficult with age. He has provided to his kids and grandkids a role model for what growing older

the right way looks like.

The scriptures speak of three things that remain forever, Faith, Hope and Love, the greatest being love. The reason we will never forget Walter is because Faith, Hope and Love exemplified who he was and how he lived. Walter's faith was important to him. Every morning before leaving his recliner, Walter could be found with his Kippah on his head, and scriptures in his lap. If you came in the room that was fine, or if he was late for an appointment, okay, but priorities were priorities, and he just really didn't notice you till he was done with his readings and prayers. He would talk about his faith, but only if you were interested.

To Walter, it was just a matter of fact that God was in control, not us, and everything that was happening now, or was going to happen, was God's good timing. Walter always had a hope for the present and future. He would be optimistic and encouraging in situations that things would get better (or at least not get any worse). Just look at his favorite Serenity prayer in today's card:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
That was what he lived by, and Walter had the wisdom to know the difference.

His greatest gift to us was the love he showed to all who knew him. Though he was able to pinpoint issues with the state of our country, or with individuals, at the same time he had unconditional love for them. His love was not based on what he was feeling; rather, it was based on the fact that nothing or no one was perfect, and Loving in spite of things is just the right thing to do.

He loved God
He loved his wife and children
He loved his grandchildren
He loved his dog Cleo
He loved his friends
He loved his country.

And all of us here who knew him, will always love Walter.

By Harrison Leonard

Most everyone I know has a grandfather, or had a grandfather at some point in their lives. I was blessed with two grandfathers and a Deda (which is Russian for grandfather). This unique name that I knew Walter by is emblematic of the unique, one of a kind man that he was.

A few years ago, I enrolled in a speech class at my college. My first assigned speech was to pick someone whom I considered to be a hero and write a tribute speech about him. There was no debate in my mind that the man I would pick would be my Deda. In preparation for that speech, I was able to conduct a couple of lengthy interviews with Walter to learn in great detail the accounts of his life. It really occurred to me during those interviews that my grandfather was a model of the American dream. There may well be other equally compelling examples in the lives of other men, but I have never heard one that is better. An exhaustive retelling of Walter's life story would take hours and leave many wondering how one person could accomplish so much in one lifetime.

So for the sake of time, I'll keep his obituary very brief.

Walter Arnold Wolff was born and raised in Harbin, China. Of Russian-Jewish descent, his well-to-do family came to Harbin seeking refuge from the effects of the Russian-Japanese War. In 1936, my grandfather obtained his visa to the United States, and immigrated to America in September of that year. He began working full time for his uncle at an auto parts yard in Los Angeles. In January of 1942, Walter enlisted in the Air Force, maintaining and assisting with the operation of B-24 bombers. He was honorably discharged in 1946, and upon returning, found a job as the manager of an EG Hilton/Dodge dealership. In 1953 he married his longtime sweetheart, Mary. Walter

and Mary moved to a little town called Burbank, and raised two children. Over the course of the next thirty years, my grandfather moved his way up in the automotive parts and services industry. He retired in 1991. After retirement, Walter assisted with administrative work at my uncle Larry's dental practice, and kept himself busy with the things he loved most: his family, and especially his grandchildren as I recall it, his friends, and his books. He died peacefully on May 25, 2008, at the good old age of 89.

Walter enjoyed reading, and he shared his love of books with his grandchildren. His home was both his castle and his library, and I can recall walking out of Baba and Deda's home many times with new books in my hands. He liked television OK, but he liked recording our favorite television programs for us more. He was an accomplished VCR virtuoso and it was with his help that my home growing up was filled with clean, sharp humor like *I Love Lucy*, *Happy Days*, and *Hogan's Heroes* and not the garbage many of my peers grew up with. He also enjoyed eating; my father Neal joked at the time of my birth that it might be Walter who needed a caesarean section, and not my mom. But his love of food is what drove in part my grandmother Mary to prepare the meals and feasts that many of us have been fortunate to partake of.

In preparing remarks such as these, you often think about replacing a particular word for a synonym that might be more appropriate for the given setting. Most of my family members would probably fill in the blank by stating, "Walter loved to hoard all his worldly possessions, and then some". If he were alive now, he'd probably finish the sentence this way: "I loved to collect and store items for future generations that might mean something or be worth something to somebody later on". However empty or full you wish to

look at the glass, the fact remains that Walter kept a lot of things that meant something special to him or that he thought someone might be able to use later on. We sure teased him about it when we could, but with his passing, it means a lot to look at so many wonderful things full of historical and intrinsic value that our family can treasure.

Walter had a wonderful sense of humor. When he got back home from spending four weeks in the hospital after breaking his hip, my family bought him his favorite drink of choice: Hawaiian punch. And we bought a lot of it. Like, twelve gallons. We were all sitting around him as he sat immobile in his reclining chair, and in an effort to make conversation, my Baba, Mary, asked him, "Are you drinking your punch, Vova?" To which he replied, "Mary, they bought me twelve gallons, what do you think I would do: look at it?"

Anyone who has spent more than an hour in the home of Mary and Walter Wolff knows that they both enjoyed going at it, back and forth with each other. Of course, their bantering was always out of love. Most of the time, it was Mary who got out the best zingers. But Walter had his share now and again, and when he did, it usually left Baba speechless. Walter lost an adult tooth at some point in his life, and he had a false one that he could place in his mouth. And when Walter got off a great wife joke in Mary's presence, she would usually resort to her reserve quip: "Hey toothless, put your tooth in". And he's always smile, look to the person sitting closest to him, and say, "I could never remember to put that damn tooth in".

Walter always displayed a keen interest in political affairs, and so politics became a usual topic of conversation when I visited with him. I never saw Walter as a man who let media, stereotypes, or ideologies, be his guide. He was a deeply patriotic man, too. He loved his country dearly,

and always spoke fondly of it. Walter's time in the United States Air Force was something he always looked back on with great pride. I know he believed that his time spent there taught him many valuable lessons about life, commitment, integrity, maturity, priorities, and more. I think our whole family saw him as a hero, and I loved listening to his war stories; bombing campaigns in Romania and having to extinguish burning B-24 bomber engines. There were times when us four cousins played WWII as children, with Deda being the main hero in our game. One of the best days I ever spent with

Deda was when my dad, my Uncle Larry, Deda and I spent the day at Edwards Air Force base touring the facilities where my dad works. He wore his dog tags and WWII vet hat that day. All of the soldiers enjoyed seeing him and learning that he was a WWII vet; walking history. We all had lunch together, talked about the military, technology, and his days as an officer.

There is a clever saying that goes something like this: the famous are not often significant, and the significant are not often famous. This certainly rings true concerning my grandfather. An unquestionably

significant man in the lives of the people who knew him well, Walter exhibited many wonderful qualities. His commitment to his loved ones, amazing resilience, and his integrity made him a man worth revering. His pleasant disposition, cheerful optimism, and self-effacing sense of humor made him a man worth treasuring. To know him was to love him. It's been a blessing in my life to maintain a close personal relationship with this good man, and I have been fortunate to call him my pal.

I love you, Deda.

Caretaker of Ohel Moishe dies

Wang Fa Liang, caretaker of Ohel Moishe Synagogue, passed away on 30 April 2008 in Shanghai, China at the age of 88. Nearly every visitor of the Ohel Moishe Synagogue remembers the smiling old man with



horn rimmed glasses, the story teller of Hongkou who was able to bring the past into the present.

Mr. Wang was born on May 21 1919 in the poor area of Hongkou and lived since his early childhood as a neighbour to the Jewish refugee community.

All his life Mr. Wang lived in Hongkou where he married and had three children. Following retirement in 1991, his wish was to contribute to international cultural exchanges. He accepted the offer to work as a tourist guide in the Ohel Moishe Synagogue.

Wang Fa Liang was devoted to history. And he loved to meet people from all over the world and to tell the stories of the neighborhood of Hongkou.

For over 18 years he worked at the Ohel Moishe Synagogue. Heads of state, ministers, relatives of survivors and tourists from China learned the history of the Jewish Quarter from Mr. Wang. Through his language skills, his explanations, his humor and his kindness, he made friends all over the world. Wang Fa Liang was a living example of the openness and helpfulness of the citizens of Shanghai.

His son, Mr. Wang Jianguo, said in his speech at the funeral: "My father spent a simple life, but also an unusual one. He was like a cow who eats grass but provides milk", as the famous Chinese poet Lu Xun quoted. "His love reached everyone close-by."

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MARY WOLFF and family

want to express their sincere gratitude to all their good friends
who remembered their beloved husband, father and grandfather

Walter WOLFF

at the time of their sorrow

ENCOUNTER WITH FRIENDS



Ronnie and Bonnie Fine of Los Angeles visit Beit Ponve



Chang Tanyan of the Jewish Research Center for Harbin Jewry visited Sara Ross in Jerusalem

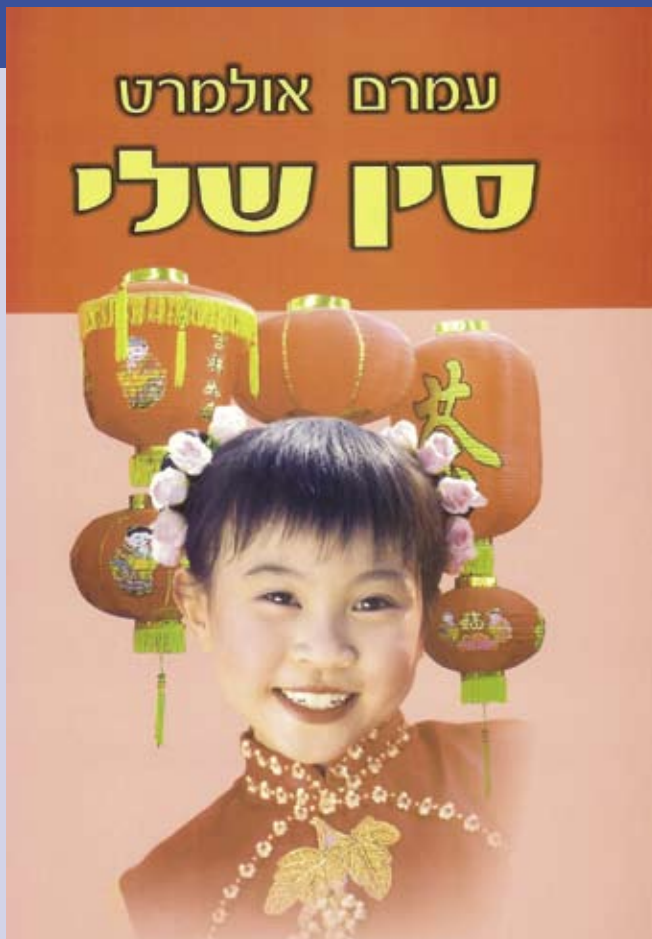


Galia Katz visited the Trade Exhibition of Shanghai in Tel Aviv



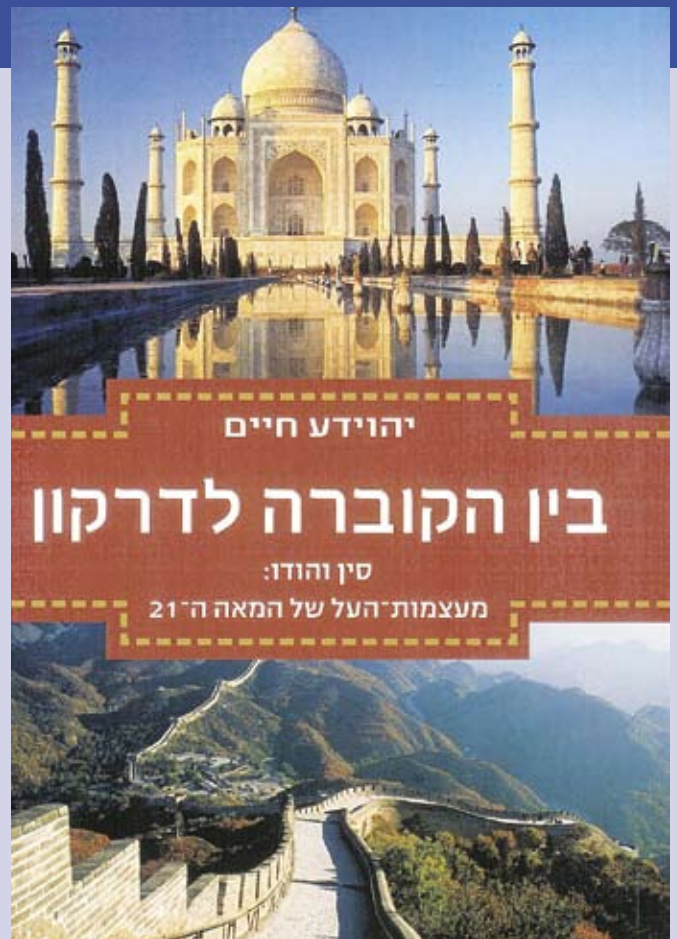
Lika Kaganev of Sydney Australia visited Beit Ponve and met friends at the Sunday lunch get-together

NEW BOOKS IN CHINA



"My China"

A book by Amram Olmert, formerly the Agricultural Amram in the son of our Harbin landmen, Bella and Mordechai Olmert and the elder brother of the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.



"From Cobra to Dragon"

A book by the former Israeli Ambassador to China and Attache at the Israeli Embassy India, Mr. Yehoyada Haim in Beijing.