

Shapiro was accompanied by his Chinese wife, Feng Zi, a former leading actress, journalist, editor and member of the Authors Association in China. The couple were staying in Israel as official guests of the Jerusalem Book Fair, and were the first official representatives from China ever to attend the fair.

Shapiro, whose Chinese name is Sha Boli, is almost 80 years of age. In Israel, he politely skirted questions about the political significance of his visit.

"People here credit me with more influence than I really have," he said in a telephone interview from his Mishkenot Sha'ananim flat in Jerusalem. "After all, I prefer to think of myself as a matchmaker."

The Israel Foreign Ministry also studiously preserved a low profile. But a well-placed official conceded that assistance had been given to the elderly Chinese visitors in arranging meetings with appropriate Israeli cultural institutions.

The official declined to confirm whether Shapiro's visit heralded the start of cultural exchanges with China. Shapiro and his wife discussed several ideas, and practical measures are currently being taken to promote literary exchanges.

In a meeting of Tel Aviv with Rachel Edelman of Schocken Publishing House, Shapiro proposed that the Chinese People's Publishing House retranslate English translations of imported Israeli books into Chinese, and that Schocken retranslate English translations of Chinese imported books into Hebrew.

Shapiro also met with Leah Van Leer, director of Jerusalem's Cinematheque, which regularly screens a choice selection of foreign films for the Capital's moviegoing audiences.

Several years ago, the Cinematheque wrote to the Chinese Government Film Bureau for permission to screen selected Chinese films in Israel, but its letters were never answered. A similar request for eight Chinese films was again made this year, following an approach to Chinese film representatives at the recent Berlin Film Festival.

At their meeting in Jerusalem,

Shapiro agreed to take copies of the facsimiled letters and "to put in a good word" for the Israeli request. Chinese films are usually distributed with English subtitles. A spokesman for the Cinematheque said he hopes that this time the Chinese will be more cooperative.

Feng Zi met with Dr. Annabelle Melzer, head of Tel Aviv University's theater department, with whom she was personally acquainted 20 years ago, and discussed possibilities of arranging visits to China by Israeli playwrights and theater companies.

Similar exchanges between Chinese and Israel musicians were also welcomed, Shapiro said.

Shapiro said that on his return to Beijing, he would recommend to the Chinese Council for International Cultural Understanding that more Chinese students specializing in the humanities and liberal arts be permitted to attend academic conferences and seminars in Israel. Such exchanges are vital for deepening cultural understanding, he said.

Past exchange visits have been confined to Chinese scientists and technocrats. Beijing University recently introduced a course in modern Hebrew language and literature, taught by an American professor, Miriam Petrucak, Shapiro disclosed.



# POINTS EAST

An occasional publication of The Sino-Judaic Institute

VOL. 4, NO. 2

JULY, 1989

## AN AMERICAN IN SHANGHAI

By Steven Hochstadt

This April the International Assembly of Jews in China brought seven former Shanghai residents from the United States and Israel back to Shanghai to celebrate a Passover seder and renew their ties with this city of refuge. The three parts of the Shanghai Jewish community represented: Boris Katz of Champaign, Illinois, and George Leonof and Yosef Tekoah from Israel had come from Russian families fleeing the Soviet Union; Yehuda Halevy and Sasson Jacoby of Israel had roots in Iraq; and Lisbeth Loewenberg and Curt Pollack from California had fled with their families from the Nazis. My grandparents escaped to Shanghai from Vienna in 1939, so I went along, too, falling in with the Israeli TV and press reporters who were covering the event. This reunion was personally emotional but also politically significant: while former "Shanghailanders" visited their synagogues and embraced long forgotten neighbors, Chinese officials took notable steps toward normalizing diplomatic relations with Israel.

The focus of the reunion was the celebration of Passover seder at the Xi Jiao Guest House, where Mao once lived. Tekoah, former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations, presided over the meal. After his father and two brothers, with their families, left the Soviet Union to escape Stalinism, Tekoah grew up in Shanghai. Ambassador Tekoah opened the Seder by stressing the continuity of Jewish Settlement in China. Jews first settled in China over 1000 years ago in the ancient capital of Kaifeng. Thus the thousands of 20th-century refugees fleeing the anti-semitism of Stalin and Hitler added to a long history of Jews in China. Tekoah noted that "There are two people in the world who can

date their cultures for thousands of years," on opposite sides of the Asian continent. Taking the opportunity to express Israel's interest in closer ties with China, he added, "In a sense there has been a Chinese-Jewish alliance for thousands of years. There is no reason now for not restoring that alliance . . . we could together build a better world."

The 5-day stay in Shanghai recreated many connections which had been broken by the tumultuous events of recent history, but also demonstrated the great changes in China since the Shanghai Jews departed in the late 1940s. This reforging of old links began almost immediately upon arrival. A sumptuous welcoming banquet was served in the famous Jinjiang Hotel, where Richard Nixon and Zhou Enlai officially opened diplomatic relations between the United States and China in 1972. That building was Tekoah's first residence in Shanghai, when it was called the Cathay Hotel. Lisbeth Loewenberg, who escaped at the last minute from Nazi-controlled Vienna in 1939, once worked there as a journalist's secretary. The Jinjiang is now operated by a semi-private hotel holding company, one of the most successful of China's recent experiments with market enterprise.

Some connections brought back painful memories. Curt Pollack, who arrived in Shanghai from Berlin in 1939, led the group through an apartment complex, which had served as an internment camp for thousands of German and Austrian refugees after the Japanese occupied the city. Thousands of penniless German and Austrian refugees crowded into these barracks until American troops arrived in 1945. Yet these resourceful Jews created a vibrant cultural life. Weekly newspapers, a hospital, operas and concerts, and a soup kitchen for those

(continued on page 5)

## JUDAICA PRESERVED IN JAPAN

WOODBIDGE, CT — The largest assortment of Judaica in the Far East has been established amid the Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples in the old Japanese capital of Kyoto by a world-famous calligrapher, Kampo Harada.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald G. Shaw of Woodbridge, CT, visited Mr. Harada in Kyoto while on a recent business trip for the Pilot Pen, which is the U.S. subsidiary of The Pilot Pen Company, Ltd., Japan's oldest and largest manufacturer of writing instruments.

The 75-year old Harada has assembled the Judaica collection at the Kampo Kaikan Museum to encourage cultural exchange and to express his personal interest in Judaism and Israel. Born in Japan in 1911, Mr. Harada began the study of calligraphy and ancient Chinese literature in his youth.

Mr. Harada gave the Shaws a warm welcome and a personal tour of the museum. He also created stunning works of calligraphy while his visitors watched and then presented one to the Shaws as a memento of their visit.

"Mr. Harada, who is believed of Jewish ancestry, is the driving force behind this expression of intercultural interest in Japan," Mr. Shaw com-



World-famous Japanese calligrapher, Kampo Harada (center), recently gave Mr. and Mrs. Ronald G. Shaw of Woodbridge, CT, a personal tour of the largest assortment of Judaica in the Far East, which he has assembled in a museum in Kyoto, Japan. Mr. Harada, who is believed of Jewish ancestry, is the driving force behind the expression of intercultural interest in Japan. (continued on page 6)

## Join The Sino-Judaic Institute

The Sino-Judaic Institute is a non-denominational, non-profit, and non-political organization founded in 1985 by an international group of scholars and laypersons.

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## From the editor:

*This space is dedicated to the martyrs of Beijing as well as to all those now under arrest or those currently being sought by the regime for daring to propose democratic reform in China.*

## Points East:

*A Publication of the Sino-Judaic Institute*

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## IN THE FIELD

- **ART ROSEN'S TRIP TO THE PRC**  
Art Rosen, our Chairman of the Board, has returned from a trip to China. He led a small delegation of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, which met with various Chinese government officials in several cities, as well as with the Minister-counselor for Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Embassy. In Beijing he also met with SJI members Zhao Xiangru (see below) and Chiara Betta, as well as with Sidney Rittenberg, a long-time resident of China who is about to return to the U.S. In Shanghai Art also met with those active in the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, including Pan Guang, Jim Yingzhong and Gu Xiaoming. These latter expressed an interest in translating works important for the study of Judaica and look forward to an exhibit on Judaica in Shanghai.
- **SHANGHAI EXHIBIT**  
We have received a letter from Sarah Harel, Head of the Exhibition Department, Beth Hatefutsoth, dated April 9, in which she says it would be an honor for the museum to become a "partner" in the Sino-Judaic exhibit in Shanghai. It is generally felt that Beth Hatefutsoth should be listed as the source of the material rather than as sponsor. Leo Gabow has written to both Jin Yingzhong and Pan Guang to explore what public recognition of the role of the Beth Hatefutsoth is possible at this time. A letter from Dennis Leventhal, April 30, says that Pan Guang had assured him that the approval for the exhibit is a "given," and the only problem is to arrange for shipping the materials. The cost for transport Tel Aviv to Hong Kong, for the showing in Hong Kong, is US \$9500, a low figure because of the cooperation of the Zim Line. The cost to Shanghai is not yet known.
- **ZHAO XIANGRU**  
Zhao Xiangru is a new member of SJI. He is a scholar in the Minorities Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing,

with a speciality in the Uighurs of Xinjiang Province. He, himself, is a descendant of the Zhao family of Kaifeng, and according to Andy Plaks, who has become well-acquainted with him, he is knowledgeable, has personal recollections, and even some minimal documentation to back up his claim. Much of the family memorabilia, including seals of office of his ancestors who served in the Qing dynasty, and even back to Zhao Yingcheng of the Ming, were destroyed in the Cultural Revolution. He is interested in reconstructing his family tree; he will soon visit Kaifeng to gather what information he can there. Prof. Zhao, who has recently come out of the closet, as it were, is very excited about all of this and his letters to Leo concerning the SJI are the study of the Chinese Jews and self-consciousness among the remaining members of the Jewish community in Kaifeng, efforts which would receive official sanction when China establishes relations with Israel. He hopes to establish a national association on the model of similar organizations already existing for other minorities under the aegis of the Minorities Institute, with the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association and other such groups becoming local branches. He also proposes for the future a world-wide association which would link the Chinese one with SJI, and eventually some sort of China-Israel Friendship Association.

- An associate of Prof. Zhao's in Uighur studies is Reinhard F. Hahn, of the University of Washington, who is interested in Chinese Jews because of his studies of minorities in China. Prof. Hahn, through whom SJI became aware of Prof. Zhao, and vice-versa, has contributed some material to Points East and promises more in the future. He, too, is now a member of SJI.
- **BOOKS TO CHINA**  
Leo Gabow and Anson Laytner have been in contact with Jeffrey Smith, of the Bridge to China, concerning the shipment of a set of the Encyclopedia Judaica to

authoritative and readable, and presents its scholarship with a light touch.

Leslie, Donald Daniel. The Survival of the Chinese Jew: The Jewish Community of Kaifeng. Monographies du T'oung Pao, vol. 10. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972.

This is the most complete scholarly work to date on the subject. For anyone wishing to delve more deeply in the subject, it is a must as a guide and resource.

Kublin, Hyman, ed. Jews in Old China: Some Western Views. New York: Paragon Book Reprint, 1971.

Kublin, Hyman, ed. Studies of the Chinese Jews: Selections from Journals East and West. New York: Paragon Book Reprint, 1971.

The two volumes by H. Kublin bring together a selection of the enormous literature on the subject. It is a judicious choice and makes available material otherwise often difficult to locate.

The following items, published earlier or of a more specialized nature, are listed for those who might wish to pursue this fascinating subject in more depth.

Dicker, Herman. Wanderers and Settlers in the Far East. New York, 1962.

Leventhal, Dennis. Sino-Judaic Studies. Whence and Whither: An Essay and Bibliography and the Kadoorie Memoir. Monographs of the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong, vol. 1, 1986.

Pollak, Michael. The Torah Scrolls of the Chinese Jews: The history, significance and present whereabouts of the Sifrei Torah of the defunct Jewish community of Kaifeng. Dallas: Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, 1975.

White, William Charles. Chinese Jews. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1942. Reprinted (3 vols. in 1), Cecil Roth, ed., New York, Paragon Book Reprint, 1966.

## SJI TRIP TO CHINA

The SJI trip to China is postponed until further notice, but may be rescheduled for the Spring of 1990.

Those who have made deposits will receive full refunds in the near future.

## WISENTHAL CENTER OFFICIAL MEETS WITH CHINESE ACADEMIANS



Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Associate Dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, was invited by the Shanghai International Relations Studies Society to present a series of lectures on contemporary Jewish issues to members of the People's Republic of China's academic community. During his May 8th to 11th visit, Rabbi Cooper discussed the future of Chinese-Israeli Relations, the current Middle East situation, worldwide antisemitism and Holocaust Education. Rabbi Cooper presented Chinese language copies of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Academy Award-winning film, Genocide, to the Shanghai International Relations Studies Society and discussed ways for expanded education and cultural ties between the People's Republic of China and World Jewry. Pictured (left to right) are Professor Pan Guang, Director, World History Department, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; Professor Zhu Weillie, Director of Teaching and Research Committee, Shanghai International Studies University; Rabbi Abraham Cooper; Jin Yin-zhong, Deputy Secretary General, Shanghai International Relations Studies Society; Xu Buzeng, Shanghai Judaic Studies Association.

## MUSEUM EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS 25 CENTURIES OF ASIAN JEWS

NEW YORK (JTA) April 28 - - A new exhibit recounting the history of Asian Jews over the last 25 centuries will open next week at the American Museum of Natural History's Hall of Asian Peoples.

The exhibit will attempt to capture the diversity of Asian Jewish Culture in all 13 of the countries where it has flourished. There will also be a grid which will portray significant events in the history of the Asian Jews, from the sixth century BCE through the 19th century.

Interspersed throughout the grid will be various religious objects from the different countries, including a shofar from Yemen, a kipah believed to originate from either Bukhara or the Caucasus, a Passover plate from Kurdistan, a mezuzah from India and Chanukah lamps from Yemen and Syria.

There will also be video programs which will present key aspects of Asian Jewish life in greater depth. They will include brief vignettes analyzing each land that has housed Jews and examining the many pressures and influences on the Jews in those countries.

The video images were drawn from the archives of the national Israel museum in Jerusalem, the Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv and the Musee de l'Homme in Paris.

The exhibit opens on Friday, May 5.

## CHINESE VISITORS TO ISRAEL EXPRESS NEW INTEREST IN CREATING CULTURAL TIES

By Yehonathan Tommer

Reprinted from the Jewish Exposition, April 7, 1989

JERUSALEM - - The Chinese are interested in establishing cultural ties with Israel in the fields of literature, drama and film. The first feelers in this direction may have been put out during the recent international book fair here, which was attended by Sidney Shapiro, the American Jewish lawyer who became a Chinese citizen in 1963.

Taipei, The China or Philippine rooms are made available by the hotel management, and prayer books, prayer shawls, kosher wine, Havdalah candles and spice boxes are kept there permanently.

Services are also held during the week on many occasions, and a supply of tephilin are also kept in those rooms at the hotel.

An American Rabbi, now a businessman, speaks on Shabbat, between Minchah, Maariv, the afternoon and evening services, at the hotel, on the sidrah of the week. The rabbi also conducts a Bible Class at the Center twice a month.

Attending the services are businessmen from Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Israel, Panama, South Africa, Switzerland, the United States, etc. Also followers of the Lubavitcher Rebbe will be found at these services.

The present population of Taiwan is 18,457,923. Taipei's population is over 2 million. The resident Jewish population is 148. About 50% are Ashkenazim and 50% Sephardim. Six of the Chinese wives of the members of the community, all converts, are the only citizens of the Republic of China.

The community has a Sunday School with Israeli teachers. Classes are held from 10 to 12 every Sunday. The Community provides "brunches" every alternate Sunday which are well attended. Cultural meetings are held every Tuesday.

A monthly bulletin is published, with material on all holidays and other religious topics provided by the honorary rabbi, and articles on the community and Israel by the president.

The Jewish students here, studying the Chinese language, are not expected to pay any membership dues, and they are welcome guests at all community functions.

## A POIGNANT DRAMA

by Leo Gabow

Many of our members are keenly alert to anything smacking of a Sino-Judaic nature. One such alert member, Theodor Katz, lives in Stockholm, Sweden. On one of his trips to Germany, Mr. Katz visited the JEWISH HEERSTRABE CEMETERY in West

Berlin, and noted a gravestone bearing the name Ting Yu Chen. The Stone gave Mr. Tin's life span as from August 1, 1894 to October 21, 1962. Over his name was the Star of David, and on the sides of his name was Chinese script. It took no great leap of the imagination to suspect that the Gravestone might possibly refer to Chinese Jew.

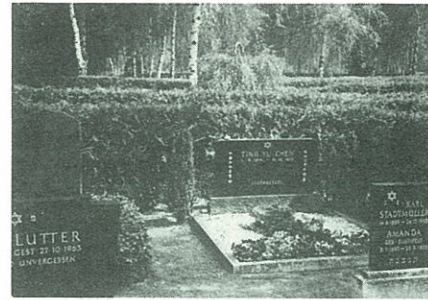
Mr. Katz sent me a photograph of the Gravestone and wondered if I had any knowledge of MR. TING YU CHEN. I did not. But after consulting with others, it was determined from the Chinese script that MR. TING was born in Sinjiang Province, and that is all we could discover.

A year went by, and I received a letter from another of our overseas members, Ms. Tess Johnston. Writing from Paris, Ms. Johnston described her recent visit to West Berlin where she met with one Doctor Otilie Katerina Wang. She wrote that Doctor Wang was "... a recent returnee to Germany who lived in China for nearly sixty years, serving as a Medical Officer with the Chinese Army against the Japanese." She later taught foreign languages at one of the Chinese Universities.

Ms. Johnston also advised that Doctor Wang was Jewish and was born in Germany where she met Mr. Wang, her future husband. They moved to China where, as noted, she remained for almost sixty years.

I entered into correspondence with Doctor Wang and asked if she had any knowledge of the Gravestone in the Jewish Cemetery. She did not, but she embarked on an investigation that brought forth the following information.

MR. TING YU CHEN was in the import-export business in Vienna where he met one CHARLOTTE LANDSBERG. They soon married. The marriage took place in the early '30s at the time Hitler had begun his persecution of the Jews. There are still people alive in West Berlin who were close friends of CHARLOTTE AND YU CHEN. They told Doctor Wang that the hasty marriage was consummated in order to make CHARLOTTE LANDSBERG a Chinese citizen, hoping that the Nazis would not molest her. They described MR. TING's act as "unforgettable," "honor-



able" and "brave" as it placed his own life in jeopardy. But he saved CHARLOTTE LANDSBERG, the friends stated, from the concentration camps.

The Tings eventually moved to China where Mr. Ting died in 1962. CHARLOTTE LANDSBERG TING returned to West Berlin with her husband's body and had him buried in the Jewish cemetery. Some six months ago, CHARLOTTE LANDSBERG TING died and was buried next to her beloved husband. The Tings had no children, but Charlotte has sisters in East Germany and New York City, addresses unknown.

So ends the saga of the Gravestone in the West Berlin Jewish Cemetery, and one has to ponder over the many untold, human dramas that are concealed behind a gravestone. One human and humane act, committed by MR. TING YU CHEN has now come to light.

A **Kaifeng Tourist Map**, English Edition, in color, marking the site of the synagogue as well as the other attractions in Kaifeng, is now available **free** to members of the Sino-Judaic Institute. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please write to the Sino-Judaic Institute, 3197 Louis Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303

## BOOK CORNER

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:  
THE KAIFENG JEWS

Pollak, Michael. Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries: The Jewish Experience in the Chinese Empire. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1900. Paperback edition, with new material, 1983.

This is by far the most useful work on the subject. It is both

Shanghai. The details of this shipment, as well as those of future efforts, are being worked out, and an up-date will be included in the next report.

- ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY  
Ren Krasno and Leo manned an impressive booth at the Jewish Community Center, Palo Alto, on May 21, at the celebration of Israel Independence Day. The official attendance at the celebration was 2500, and many copies of SJI publications and membership forms were handed out. It is too early to report on the results of this effort.

## RECENT CONTACTS

The American Jewish World Service has sent us a copy of their Annual Report, asking for materials on our activities, to explore whether there are areas in which we might collaborate. Member Harry Rutstein, Executive Director of the Marco Polo Foundation, who has offices in Beijing and Hong Kong, and travels frequently to China, has offered to help in any way possible. Prof. D. Noy, professor of Folklore Literature at Hebrew University, and recipient of the Jerusalem Prize and the Ben Zvi Institute Award (1989) for his contribution to the study of ethnic groups, has asked for information on SJI. He will be going to Japan in 1990, and would like to visit Kaifeng together with an SJI group. Dr. Leslie Lau, Portland, Oregon, an overseas Chinese from Trinidad, has joined SJI after hearing a lecture by going to China to teach in Jinan, Shandong, and plans to join SJI and to visit Kaifeng while in China. We also received an enquiry from Thelma Dorfman, of Mt. Vernon, NY, who is a docent at the Asian Art Department, Metropolitan Museum, has led art tours to Kaifeng, lectured on the Chinese Jews, and has written numerous related articles. Marsha Leon, a journalist and Drama Critic of the Forward, New York, is also interested in the Chinese Jews, and has asked for membership material.

- GABOW ESSAY TRANSLATED  
Professor Gong Fang-zhan of THE INSTITUTE OF RELIGIONS, SHANGHAI ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, writes as follows: "Recently I have translated Gabow's valuable essay, THE ASSIMILATION OF THE KAIFENG JEWS into Chinese. This translation will be published this year."
- Professor Donald Leslie from Australia, was invited to participate in a conference at Harvard University during the month of April. Professor Leslie delivered a paper on ISLAM IN CHINA. Enroute home, Professor Leslie visited with the Palo Alto SJI contingent.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Calling All Shanghaianders

I write to you out of my interest in the Shanghai Jews. I understand from Paula Sandfelder, librarian at the Hong Kong Jewish Club, that Points East is a potentially valuable source for my research. Let me explain myself briefly.

I am the grandson of Shanghaiander and an historian of modern Europe. These traits have somehow intersected to create an interest in the stories and the history of the Shanghai Jewish community. My long-range plan is to collect a large number of direct interviews with Shanghaiander and to use these as the basis for a book on their experience. I am centrally interested in how these refugees managed to recreate a Jewish community blending European and Chinese character thousands of miles from their homelands. My focus will be on daily life, what it was and how it developed. I will seek to understand the unplanned selection process which brought this group of Jews out of Europe, and will also trace the highly dramatic stories of their travels to Shanghai through a world at war. Finally I hope to provoke my interview subjects to reflect on the significance of their experiences as world citizens, for most of them have lived on three or four continents. As of now I have done a dozen interviews and am still in the early stages of research. I realize that similar projects are underway in vari-

ous parts of the world. Maybe together we can preserve the remarkable experiences of the Shanghai Jews.

Sincerely,  
Steve Hochstadt  
Associate Professor of History  
Bates College  
Lewiston, Maine 04240

### A Complaint & A Rebuke

I recently received the February 1989 edition of Points East. On page 2 you have written an editorial concerning certain events in Israel relating to the Law of Return. In it you state "But, as many members of SJI hold, they remain Jews nonetheless."

I do not know if you polled members of SJI to find out how many of them believe in patrilineal descent, but if you were to look at the entire Jewish population there would be few who accept patrilineal descent, and according to the Law of Return it has never been recognized - nor, I am certain, will it ever be recognized. Patrilineal descent is the most sure fire way of creating two classes of Jews. And, to suggest that this is something supported by members of SJI is an abuse of your position as editor.

In addition I am returning to you the Genesis Manuscript which was enclosed with the issue of Points East. You may not be aware but any paper on which the name of God is spelled out, as it is in this manuscript, is to be handled properly and disposed of properly by burial in a Jewish cemetery. In mailing this along with your publication, you have inadvertently caused people to improperly dispose of this printed matter with the name of God on it.

Peter Billig  
Englewood, New Jersey

### A Little-Known Visit To Kaifeng

In June 1908, Kaifeng was visited by a Russian team led by a high-ranking officer, Count Carl Gustaf Mannerheim. He and his staff were on an extended expedition through China

with both military and scientific objectives. His account was published in 1940 entitled *Across Asia from West to East in 1906 - 1908*. In it he wrote: "The Jewish population is very small and is said to number not more than about 55 families, mostly poor people engaged in some small business. I visited Jewish families with 3 different Chinese in order to take some photographs, but I did not see a single full-blooded Jew. All of them had some Chinese blood in their veins, and I saw no typical Jewish heads. From this I conclude that they have really been assimilated by the Chinese population. The celebrated Jewish stones stand in a stinking place among "heaps of refuse", not to call them by their right name."

Ten years later Count Mannerheim was to lead the white guards to victory in the civil war of Finland, his native country. During World War II he had been Commander-in-Chief and in 1946 President of Finland. He must be the best-known Westerner ever to visit Kaifeng, yet he is not mentioned in any books on the Jews of Kaifeng. During WWII when Finland had been forced to fight on German's side, Finland's Jews were not persecuted like the Jews in other countries allied with Germany. For this, the credit goes to Carl Gustaf Mannerheim.

Theodor Katz  
Stockholm

#### A Query on Chinese Jews

I am a graduating senior at Barnard College in New York. I am currently writing my senior thesis on the Chinese Jews. Although I have been conducting research at my own college, most of my information is rather dated. I would like to ask if it would be possible for me to obtain some current information on the Chinese Jews.

I would be most interested in obtaining some history on their background and statistical data concerning the size of their population, number of families still remaining, how they have preserved their religion and culture as well as the attitudes of the Chinese government towards them. In addition, I would also like to look into how they have distinguished them-

selves from the Chinese Muslims and how they have assimilated into the Chinese population. I realize that I am asking for a lot of information and a great deal of effort on your part, but I am working under a strict deadline and would need the information as soon as possible. I would be more than happy to pay for any and all materials that could be sent to me at my New York address. Moreover, if I may also trouble you for an updated bibliography on any contemporary articles currently available, I would be most grateful.

Thank you very much for your time and effort and I hope to hear from you very soon.

Very truly yours,  
Mary W. Peng  
201 Dodge Hall  
Columbia University  
New York, NY 10027

#### SECOND JUDAIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION FOUNDED IN CHINA

Dear Mr. Gabow,

In order to promote Judaic Studies in China, my colleagues at Nanjing University and I have founded China Judaic Studies Association recently. I am enclosing a copy of the news in English for your reference. If you think you could have it published in the States, please do so.

There is an advisory council of CJSA. I wonder if you would like to consider being our advisor.

On behalf of CJSA, I would like to propose to set up a relation with your organization. Please let me know your opinion.

Prof. Xu Xim

China Judaic Studies Association (CJSA) was founded by a group of scholars at Nanjing University on April 13, 1989, in Nanjing, China, according to Xinhua Daily of April 15, the provincial paper of Jiangsu. This is the first organization of such a kind in China.

The aim of the Association is to push forward the studies of Jewish culture, history, religion, philosophy, literature, arts, nation, and community of the Jewish people. To be more

specific, CJSA sets its tasks as follows:

- a. Contact with scholars in academic fields to carry out Judaic studies in China;
- b. Hold seminars and public lectures to promote a better understanding of Jewish culture and the Jewish people in China;
- c. Initiate a periodical, Judaic Studies; organize and publish a series on Judaism;
- d. Set up a center for Judaic studies;
- e. Offer courses related to Judaic studies at colleges;
- f. Raise money, both at home and abroad, to set up a China Judaic Studies Foundation to subsidize the publications of Judaism and reward those who have made outstanding achievements in this field;
- g. Promote the cultural exchange programs with scholars and organizations all over the world and hold both domestic and international conferences on Judaic studies in China.

CJSA expresses its interests for contacts and communication with any organizations and scholars in the field of Judaism. Those who would like to learn more about the Association or to care to give any kind of generous contributions to the foundation may contact Professor Xu Xin, English Department, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China, or Professor Lin Jiyao, Philosophy Department, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China.

Professor Xu, according to The Jerusalem Post, is one of a few Chinese scholars who have visited Israel. During his visit, he gave a talk at the Truman Institute, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, on "Jews and Judaism in Chinese Eyes."

#### SELECTIONS FROM S.J.I. BOARD MEETING April 9, 1989 San Mateo, CA

- A. Ideas to increase membership were discussed, including
  - a. contacting congregational rabbis to promote SJI trip (a bulletin stuffer) and subscription to POINTS EAST;
  - b. running ads in Jewish magazines and

Talmud. However, this is hardly evidence to show that they were not orthodox rabbanite Jews.

He is also quite right to query when they might have been influenced by Maimonides and his ritual. What we do know is that their prayerbook manuscripts are remarkably similar to those of the Yemen and of Maimonides. We do not know what if any manuscripts the original Jewish settlers in Kaifeng in the Sung (the synagogue was started in 1163) brought with them. Mr. Escroignard may well be right that all the extant manuscripts are based on those obtained from later visitors, though we have almost no evidence. However, if these Jews were Karaites, as Mr. Escroignard suggests, how and why did they acquire what are undoubtedly rabbanite prayerbooks (and, I believe, rabbanite Torah scrolls, though this needs to be established).

He gives five practices which we consider against the rabbinic halacha.

1. Fasting on the sabbath. Unfortunately, he has misunderstood the Chinese word wrongly translated by Bishop White as "fast". It simply means "purification," i.e. the Kaifeng Jews purified themselves spiritually for the sabbath.
2. Bowing down and bare-footedness in the synagogue. I see nothing heretical about this, Jews elsewhere go down on one knee and wear only soft shoes.
3. Sacrifices. I see no evidence that the Kaifeng Jews carried out temple sacrifices as suggested by Mr. Escroignard. The word sacrifice is a doubtful word to use for Chinese practices of "ancestor worship," and where used by foreigners, e.g. de Gouvea, is best ignored.
4. Construction of a temple. I see no reason to think that the synagogue in Kaifeng was other than a normal Jewish synagogue with Chinese architecture. The words used for synagogue are identical to those used by Muslims for their mosques.

5. Extraction of the sciatic nerve. I am not knowledgeable in this field, but have always assumed that this refers to the porging of the hindquarters needed for kashrut. Most scholars have linked this to Jacob's struggle with the angel.

Mr. Escroignard stresses, in particular, the possibility that the earliest Jewish travelers, for example the Radanites of the 9th Century, might have been Karaites. This is of particular interest when we remember that the Nestorians and other non-Catholic Christians and the non-Sunni Alids were the first to travel to China and the east. However, this seems inappropriate for our Kaifeng community.

We are, in fact largely in ignorance of the date and route to China of the Kaifeng community or of any earlier migrants. Mr. Escroignard is quite right to query some of the hidden assumptions of previous analyses. Unfortunately, his own evidence is not convincing, with too many errors and non-sequiturs.

For example:

1. Marco Polo did not mention Islamicised Jews. Semmedo did, much later, in the 17th Century.
2. Chu-hu-te is clearly Juhud "Jew", with no relation to Shufut. He has mixed up French and English romanizations.
3. There is no evidence for a link with the Black Jews of Cochinchina. The Kaifeng Jews came from Persia, speaking and writing Judaeo-Persian, and with their Hebrew (we should say their Hebrew manuscripts) a Persian Hebrew.

Mr. Escroignard has made some interesting points, but his evidence and arguments are not accurate enough to justify his conclusions. I myself have no doubt that these Kaifeng Jews were rabbanites, maintained their orthodoxy as far as they were able to into the 17th and 18th Century.

#### JEWIS IN TAIWAN

reprinted from  
The Jewish Post and Opinion

WITH THE RETREAT of Chiang Kai-shek and his forces to Taiwan, and the subsequent expansion of the U.S. Military presence on the Island, Jewish religious services were organized and held in the Military Compound for Jewish personnel. Jewish businessmen, who were from different parts of the world, who were coming to Taiwan in ever increasing numbers, some to settle and others to conduct and supervise, at regular intervals, their business activities, participated. The Passover Seder, in the Officers' Club, would attract about 200 men, women and children. Wine and Matzah were no problem then. All the needed supplies arrived on time, courtesy of the military.

The first organized Jewish Community was established on Taiwan in 1975. Chosen as president was Yaacov Liberman, who was born in Harbin, China, and had left for Israel with the first group to leave Shanghai on December 24, 1948. Supporting him were also two Israeli brothers born in Tientsin, China, David and Rafi Mense.

After the closing of the U.S. Military facilities, a villa was rented in Tienmou, a residential suburb of Taipei. By sheer coincidence, the villa was almost next door to the Saudi Arabian Embassy. The community center is now further away, but still in Tienmou.

THE COMMUNITY is registered with the authorities, but its functions are considered private. Only civil marriages are recognized. Shehita is permitted, but not available at present. There is no Mohel to perform circumcisions. When one is needed he comes from Hong Kong or Japan.

Regular Shabbat Services are held Friday evenings only at the synagogue, at the Community Center. The services are conducted by the members, supervised by an Israeli Businessman who was born in Aleppo, Syria.

Regular Shabbat services are also being held, every Friday evenings, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon/evening, at the President Hotel, one of the leading Hotels in

more likely that the writing of Maimonides, who lived from 1135 to 1204, had come earlier to China to influence from that time the liturgy of the temple of Kaifeng. If the hypothesis that "Yad HaHazaka" of Maimonides had come relatively early to the city, how is it that the Talmud neither preceded nor followed, and how is it that a temple rather than a synagogue was built in this particular case. Jean Domenge tells us that in 1721, as he was visiting the sanctuary, an old Jew pointed out to him a paper posted on one of the columns, and said: "It's the assessment of the Mineaha for the whole year." Domenge interrogated the old man on the sense of the word "Mineaha" thinking that perhaps it was meant to be "Mishnah." It seems he was mistaken, however, because of a bad pronunciation of the term "Minhag," which signifies precisely arrangement, order, direction. The mistake contributed to the reinforcement of the idea that those in Kaifeng could be Talmudic Jews.<sup>6</sup>

However, the determining characteristics of the rabbinical type of Judaism does not appear anywhere in Kaifeng. In fact, the Talmud is completely absent. It is not even mentioned. Contrarily, the Maimonidian elements that are found there are secondary and are not sufficient in and of themselves as tangible proof to assert unreservedly that the Jews of Kaifeng belong to the rabbinic movement.

Maimonides was hostile to the Karaites, however, in Kaifeng several practices were in use which directly transgressed the Talmudic Halakha. Some of these practices were even characteristic of heresy and attributed to Karaism:

- Fasting during Shabbat. One fasted Four Days a month, and during Shabbat, which was considered a day of abstinence, one ate no cooked food;
- prostrations and prayer barefooted. Zaddokite fragments from the Genisah in Cairo use the term "house of prostration" to designate the temple. In rabbinic tradition, the taking off of one's shoes was

reserved for the cohanim at the time of the priestly benediction which they charged with pronouncing upon the assembly of the faithful;

- sacrifice. The description given by Antopnio De Couvea in 1644 of the function of the Jewish priest in Kaifeng Fu is strangely reminiscent of the role of the "cahen" of the Ethiopian Israelites. They were entitled to collect the tithes that proceeded the ritual slaughter, as well as sacrifices on other diverse occasions;
- construction of temples in the Diaspora. According to Maimonides, only sacrifices which took place in the Temple of Jerusalem were valid; and
- extraction of the sciatic nerves of ritually killed animals. The extraction of nerves, almost unknown among rabbinic Jews, isolates the Jews of Kaifeng to the point that they are referred to by the expression "the religion of those who remove the nerves."

Despite all these givens, to attribute the qualities of rabbinic Judaism to these Israelites ignorant of the Talmud is meaningless by definition. The hasty conclusions classifying them should be reconsidered, taking into account all the elements in their entirety, and not relying too much on liturgical fragments which were imported.

In his recent Points East article, Nigel Thomas tells that the Arab historian, Ibn Khordadbekh, knew of the existence of Jewish Karaites as well as of their close relations with the Radanite merchants.<sup>7</sup> Professor Szymon Szyszman, an eminent specialist on Karaism, also has shown exhaustively that Khazar Judaism was part of Karaism, notably in its extension into Khorassan.<sup>8</sup>

Elsewhere, the conclusions of the study done by Chen Yuan lead one to believe that it is in this direction that one must search for the dogmatic as well as the linguistic origins of the Israelites of Kaifeng-Fu.<sup>9</sup>

An attentive study of the role of

Chinese Israelites on silk and commerce, as well as their relationship with Radanites, is warranted. The research effected in this direction should prove promising in enlightening the original character of the Judaism practiced in Kaifeng.

Tales brought out by Arab historians, including El Dad Hadani, show that already in the first millennium of the Christian era, the Radanites had sewn a commercial network whose boundaries extended from the edges of the Sahara to the confines of China. Constantinople and the banks of the Black Sea made up the central axis. The commercial empire of the Radanites coincided with the expansion of Karaism, that is to say, before the eleventh century. At this time, Babylonian Talmudic Judaism had not yet extended its supremacy in the wake of Arab conquests.

#### NOTES

1. S. Feist, Stammenkunde der Juden, Leipzig 1925.
2. See the list of liturgical works originally from Kaifeng: The Survival of the Chinese Jews, D. Leslie, pp. 154-156.
3. Brotier, Vol. 148, fol. 17-19
4. Mr. James Thomas, The Lost Tribes, a Myth, p. 417.
5. The Survival of the Chinese Jews, p. 23.
6. See Juifs de Chines, p. 122.
7. Points East, Vol. 3, 1 February, 1988.
8. Les Khazars, problemes et controverses, Rev. Hist. Rel. t. 152, 2 1957, Szymon Szyszman. Ibid.: Le roi Bulan et le probleme de la conversion des Khazars, Emphemerides Theologicae Lovanienses t. XXXIII, fasc.1, 1957. Ibid.: Ou la conversion de roi khazar Bulan a-t-elle eu lieu?, Hommages a Andre Dupont-Sommer, 1971. Ibid, chap. I, f.1-2, II, f.1-2, Le Karaisme, edit, l'age d'homme, Lausanne, 1980.
9. Ch'en Yuan and Yeh Han: Study on the Israelite Community in Kaifeng, Shanghai, 1923.

#### A Response

by Donald Daniel Leslie

Mr. Escroignard is completely justified in writing that the Kaifeng Jews had no knowledge of the Talmud when the Jesuits Gozani and Domenge visited them early in the 18th Century. It is also unlikely that they had ever held any parts of the

- c. targeting activities in those cities which hosted the Kaifeng exhibit. Stampfer will work on Conservative rabbis and cities which hosted the exhibit, Dien will work on the AACCS and Belzer the CCAR.
- d. Vera Schwartz will be invited to serve on the Board in light of her abilities and connections in the field. Dien and/or Gabow will make presentation at the CAJE Conference (for Jewish educators) in Seattle in August.

#### B. Shanghai Jewish Studies Association

1. Some books and mailings have been sent out. Jeff Smith of "Bridge to China" (Oakland, CA) should be used to expedite delivery of books. Seattle Jewish Federation is ready to donate Encyclopedia Judaica and will do so once "Bridge to China" is contacted.
2. Regarding showing the Kaifeng exhibit in Shanghai, we want to use the Beth Hatefutsoth material but there was some question whether China would accept it. Dr. Pan saw no problem with the exhibit but noted that SJSA would have to decide if it can exhibit something with "Israel" on it and if so, in what form.

#### Dr. Pan's Proposal

Representing the Chinese Association for International Friendly Contact (or is that Friendly Contacts with Peoples of Other Countries?), Dr. Pan urged that we consider supporting that organization's proposal to reconstruct the synagogue in Kaifeng. He noted that primarily this would be for tourism but that it could also be a center for Jewish life in China. Because the Association is Beijing based he felt it could exert positive influence on both the national and provincial governments, in order to get the necessary approvals. Discussion focused on the issue of building a shell of a synagogue, i.e. one without a Torah or a rabbi. Gradually people came around to the concept of such a building serving as a cultural center/museum along the lines of the cultural centers being

set up in Moscow, Leningrad and elsewhere in the USSR. Isi Leibler and the World Jewish Congress could be contacted for their support. The idea was seen ultimately as preferable to building a synagogue per se. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the new SJI president and whom-ever he designates work with Dr. Pan and the Chinese Association to pursue the construction of a building in the shape of the old synagogue in Kaifeng and also to explore working with the Kaifeng museum to provide the exhibit.

#### Elections

Gabow sought to resign but was dissuaded from doing so. Kaye's nominees declined to stand. After discussion it was moved, seconded and passed that Gabow remain as president but that Dien will collect and parcel out all non-essential correspondence to more appropriate officers. It was moved, seconded and passed that R. Krasno be appointed to the Board and also serve as Secretary. It was moved, seconded and passed that Art Rosen be made Chairman of the Board.

#### Kaifeng Museum Photo Exhibit

Belzer reported that SJI member Josephson is holding a bar mitzvah in August in the Kaifeng museum and that he is interested in helping us bring the Kaifeng Jews photo exhibit there at that time. It was moved, seconded and passed that Belzer and Rosen contact the American Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth regarding the borrowing or purchase of the Kaifeng photos for exhibition in Kaifeng.

Dien remarked that he had met with the assistant director of the museum who suggested that the 4th floor of the museum be made into a Jewish exhibit, with the steles etc. Shirley Wood will be contacted regarding the status of the museum.

#### New Business

1. Pollak received approval to reprint portions of the Chinese Haggadah for next Passover and to send it free to members. Pollak and Gabow are collaborating on

an updated Chinese Jewish bibliography to be published in cooperation with HUC. Contact has been made with the Soviet Jewish Historical Society which in turn has led to Sino-Judaic leads in Tashkent and Leningrad.

#### AN AMERICAN IN SHANGHAI

(continued from page 1)

without money helped to relieve the misery of poverty, physical oppression from the Japanese, and even occasional bombings by American planes.

Other sites of Jewish life held brighter memories. The old Jewish club was not the scene of a Chinese wedding. A visit to the former Ashkenasi synagogue revealed a sparsely attended lecture whose audience was more interested in the excited Jews in the lobby than in the droning speaker. Fan Yu-fei, one of the Chinese officials who accompanied the tour group, noted that the synagogue had been the auditorium for his school down the street. Later Tekoah put on a yarmulke and recited the Kaddish in the same pew where his family used to sit, while a cameraman for Israeli television recorded the scene for a documentary on the trip. Across town the Sephardic synagogue was also still in use by the local Department of Education, this time for a poetry reading to a packed house.

The emotional highlights of the reunion were visits to former homes. Yehuda Halevy was born in Shanghai in 1937 to an Iraqi family who had fled conscription in the Turkish army. After wandering in his old neighborhood looking vainly for a familiar house near a pharmacy, he met an old woman who knew his father's name. Soon a crowd gathered around the TV camera, as residents who had not moved in 50 years recalled his older brother playing baseball and his "beautiful sister"; finally one man said, "You don't remember me but we played marbles together." Halevy's life symbolizes the personal links between China and Israel that might be the foundation for more formal relations between these two nations. Leaving Shanghai as a boy in 1948 to participate in Israel's independence, Halevy rose to become

a brigadier general in the Israeli Army and, later, President of Israel bonds. He believes that his good fortune is due to the openness of Shanghai, where he learned toleration in the most international of cities, and to the independence of Israel, where he could become "a Jewish general in a Jewish army in a Jewish state."

With the spontaneous help of a stranger, I also found a personal landmark, my grandparents' former apartment on a busy downtown intersection. A family now squeezed into my grandfather's medical office. Amid the crush of furniture, the owner proudly revealed a personal computer.

The Chinese were remarkably welcoming to the International Assembly. After decades of neglect, the Chinese are quite interested in renewing their understanding of Jewish history. Just last October, scholars from many disciplines organized the Jewish history in China. They plan a public forum on the Shanghai Jews and hope to translate the most important religious and secular Jewish books, including the Talmud.

Official China is somewhat more reserved, unwilling to jeopardize its close ties with Arab countries by sudden diplomatic overtures toward Israel. Certainly every effort was made to provide luxurious accommodations and assistance in rediscovering Shanghai. Problems were rapidly smoothed out by Mr. Yu-fei, an official of the Foreign Affairs Office in Shanghai who normally accompanies political VIPs. But political sensitivity was aroused by enthusiastic coverage of the trip in the Israeli press. A planned series of meetings with government representatives, including the Mayor of Shanghai, fell through. Commemorative plaques were to have been placed at important Jewish sites in Shanghai, but at the last minute they were not ready. Two hours before departure from Shanghai, the cameraman's 25 video cassettes were temporarily confiscated, apparently to insure they contained nothing damaging about China. Chinese bureaucrats were anxious, nevertheless, to meet behind the scenes with Tekoah, and Halevy, seeking especially to encourage Jews in Israel and America to invest in China's modernization.

Halevy urged the Chinese to continue public efforts to recover their historical links with Jews. Although the Jewish community's buildings still stand, there are no markings to indicate their former use. Had the Cultural Revolution wiped out all physical trace of Shanghai's Jews? Halevy and Sasson Jacoby, whose father had been a rabbi there, crawled backstage at the Sephardic synagogue, hoping to find some symbolic remnant of its original purpose. Behind a curtain, illuminated by a flashlight, they uncovered the Star of David and a Hebrew inscription.

Perhaps the Chinese are ready to uncover some neglected corners of their own past. According to the returning Shanghaier, the Chinese are totally free from religious prejudice. Yet they also noted the dramatic changes in Shanghai. Leonof remembered the dirty squalid city of his youth: "I have come back to a China completely reformed." The crush of street crowds was familiar to Halevy, but now he saw "dignity, pride and people who are smiling." Pollack expressed a common sentiment: "Our gratitude is everlasting to these people who in those days decided to treat us like human beings." The brief chapter of the Shanghai Jews, symbolizing the historical openness of the Chinese people, might help to link modern China with its Jewish heritage.

#### JUDAICA PRESERVED IN JAPAN

(continued from page 1)

mented. "The museum is in a serene garden and holds 300,000 documents, including 3,000 volumes of Hebrew literature and Judaica and a dozen Torah scrolls housed in a small ark. Famed 17th and 18th century Eastern European Talmuds and artifacts from everyday Jewish life are dispersed among the intercultural exhibit."

"Mr. Harada's interest in Judaism stems in part from his belief that his ancestors were Jewish and may be part of the ten lost tribes of Israel. He sensed the Jewish people's deep respect for the Torah and education, and he believes there are similarities between Shinto and Jewish religious rituals," Mr. Shaw related.

"After World War II, Mr. Harada feared the growing secularism in his

country and the decline of traditional crafts and customs," Mr. Shaw said. "So he founded the Nippon Shuji Educational Federation to teach orthodox calligraphy and the traditional spiritual nature of brush writing. The private schools now have 800,000 students in 18,000 branches."

"During the Chinese cultural revolution in the late 1960s, thousands of ancient manuscripts were rescued from China and brought to Japan. These manuscripts formed the core of the World Study Library, a multilingual treasury of world culture open to the public," Mr. Shaw noted. Visitors are free to browse through books in the collection on Judaism, Israel and Jews in the Far East.

#### TWO CHINESE REFERENCES TO THE JEWS OF CHINA

By Reinhard F. Hahn

The SJI recently received copies of two Chinese works containing references to the Jews of China. These works will be included in the up-to-date addition to the collected bibliographies of Rudolf Loewenthal,<sup>1</sup> a project which is currently under way. One of the works was published during the Republican era. The other one appeared quite recently, ten years after the end of the "Cultural Revolution." Both of them contain relevant sections as parts of discussions on more general topics. Furthermore, both of them are directed at a readership which is assumed to know little or nothing about the religion, the history and the culture of the Jewish people within a Chinese or global context.

In the following, the contents of the two sections in question will be presented in annotated translation. Some notes will appear within square brackets inserted into the translation. Most of these will refer to dates, to literal translations of terms and titles, to names in their non-Chinese original, and (as an alternative to now more usual *pinyin*-system transliterations) to Wade-Giles system transliterations of names and terms the reader will encounter in some Western works. Also appearing in square brackets will be insertions that clarify the original texts in the translations. More substantial annotation will appear in end notes.

The second, **Chesed El**, which we only found on a subsequent visit, is located on Oxley Rise. This more impressive and grandiose edifice was built in 1905 as a private temple by Sir Manasseh Meyer, after a dispute with the leaders of **Maghain Avoth**. **Chesed El** houses a remarkable **Talmud Torah** and is the home of the all-encompassing **Jewish Welfare Board**.

The Board maintains an old age home and a Jewish cemetery; it stocks matzot, wine and kosher meat; it provides "Festival Rations" (the **Hanukkah Ball** is an annual highlight) and "Rabbis Emoluments."

In both synagogues, on the pews and rosters, appear the ubiquitous names of Sasson and Elios — two of several prestigious Jewish families which have been prominent in Oriental Jewry. One encounters their names from Baghdad to Hong Kong, from Shanghai to Singapore. Both buildings are constructed in the Sephardic style with a central **bimah** and an upstairs gallery for the women.

The Hebrew School teaches Torah, Hebrew, History, Holidays and Religion. The Rabbi prepares all boys individually for Bar Mitzvah. Youth activities range from a Hassidic Film Festival Video to soccer matches. Some youngsters attend a six-week Youth Camp for Religious Learning in Melbourne, Australia. It seems to be universally true; larger communities nourish the smaller ones with our shared Jewish legacy. That is well-illustrated by looking at the Jewish Community of Bali. The three Jewish families in Denpasar, Bali's capital, observe their religion as well as they can, lighting candles, saying prayers, marking their doorposts and teaching their children. But for them, the biannual trips to Singapore community receives nourishment from Australia and, in turn, gives nourishment to their Balinese brothers.

Today, in 1987, there are two hundred Jewish souls in Singapore. We were informed, however, that only thirty of these were adult men. It was only natural, on hearing this, to question the feasibility of maintaining two congregations with such limited numbers. We then learned that the ranks are augmented by Israelis who serve as military advisors. The indigenous

congregation, however, encompasses a complete spectrum of endeavors, from merchants to professionals. Twice a year Jewish families from all the outlying areas are brought to Singapore for Passover and the High Holy Days. A communal Seder is the social high point with guests welcomed to the homes. For **Yom Kippur** there is another occasion of in-gathering.

The president of the **Maghain Avoth** is Mr. David Marshall, who is known as Singapore's "Father of Independence." He intervened with Chou En-lai so as to make it possible for Jews to leave Shanghai after 1949. David Marshall was the First Chief Minister in 1955-1956 and represented Singapore in the United Nations in 1968. He is presently Ambassador to France, Spain and Portugal.

A luminary of the **Chesed El** was the late Sir Manasseh Meyer, an extremely wealthy Jew who was knighted for his public service in raising the cultural level of the city. It was he who broke away from the original **Maghain Avoth** to set up his personal edifice on the grounds of his palatial estate on Oxley Rise. His charitable generosity, and that of his family, has helped maintain the House of Jacob in such a minuscule nation so far from the heartbeat of **Eretz Yisrael**.

#### LOEWENTHAL BIBLIOGRAPHY FUND

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Sidney Raffel  
Louis Schwartz  
Mina Schwartz  
Robert Beer

Support is still needed for this important project. Please consider a donation.

## THE ISRAELITES OF KAIFENG AND THEIR TRADITIONS

by Victor Escroignard  
translated by Cherie A. Ekholm

The Judaism practiced for some time in this ancient imperial city of Honan province shines uniquely. The existence of this Israelite temple is a curious oddity as there is no equivalent in China nor elsewhere in the world. The only temples whose existence has been related to us in the Diaspora are those of Elephantine, and more particularly, of Onias the High Priest in Heliopolis.

The existence of this temple is in direct contradiction with Talmudic prohibitions. The architecture of the complex is Chinese, but its composition in three distinct parts reminds one strangely of the Temple of Jerusalem. The evidence is before us: it is the "mikdash me'at" according to the expression coined by the pseudo-Jonathan, a miniature temple, rather than a synagogue (bet haknesset).

Thus one begins by disengaging the fundamental structure from the later rabbinical elements imported from Kerala or even from Adramaut. The haggadah is Yemite Arab and the Pentateuch codes comes from Cochin — maritime relations between India and China were already well established.<sup>1</sup> The liturgical elements existing in Kaifeng are well known: the Kaddish, the Haggadah of Passover, and several fragments of Maimonidian tradition.<sup>2</sup>

No one has been able to determine with precision the period during which these elements of the rabbinic tradition were introduced in Kaifeng-Fu. However, it seems that their importation would be a little in advance of the arrival of the Jesuits in China. In a letter dated 1725, the Jews told Gaubil that they had not seen any outside Jews for more than one hundred years.<sup>3</sup> These "Black Jews" from Cochin also told C. Buchanan in 1807 that they had conserved the names of the different Jewish colonies from Tartaria and China.<sup>4</sup> But by all evidence, the rabbinical elements were introduced well after the construction of the temple, which was completed in 1163.<sup>5</sup> It is

22. Tan (T'ang) dynasty (618 - 907 C.E.).

23. In Socialist China, the term *minzu* in reference to ethnic groups of China - all of which enjoy certain constitutional rights as committees, and most of which have autonomous areas - tends to be translated into English as "nationality". (Cf. n. 5) Note that at this time the descendants of China's Jews, together with approximately some thirty other groups (e.g. the Turkic Tuva and Ili Turk of Xinjiang), are not officially classified as separate *minzu* but are officially regarded as belonging to one or more of the 56 currently recognized *minzu*; e.g. the Tuva tend to be counted as Mongol, the Ili Turk as Uzbek, and the descendants of Kaifeng's Jews as Hui or Han. Although there has been no fundamental change, a measure of gradually increasing *de facto* recognition may be reflected in the fact that in recent years, probably beginning with the 1982 national census, at least some portions of such officially unrecognized groups have come to be locally registered as *jumin* 'residents,' e.g. the Ili Turk *jumin* (Zhao X.R. and R.F. Hahn, [forthcoming], "The Ili Turk People and Their Language," *Central Asiatic Journal* 33 {3-4}).

24. Northern Song (Sung) dynasty (960 - 1127 C.E.).

25. The reign (1908 - 1912) of Puyi, China's last emperor.

26. A nation-wide modernization program in the area of agriculture, industry, defense and science/technology, initiated during the late 1970s.

## A NEW HOTEL IN KAIFENG

Dongjing Hotel sits on the shore of the Baogong Lake in the southwestern part of the city. It is close to the lake in the north and the ancient city walls in the south. The surroundings are picturesque. The hotel is easily accessible. Kaifeng was the Chinese capital during the Northern Song Dynasty. Known as Dongjing (Eastern Capital), it was one of the largest cities in the world in those days. This is the origin of the hotel's name.

Dongjing Hotel consists of three

buildings of China's national style. The courtyard is secluded and quiet, adorned with a great variety of trees, shrubs, flowers and other plants. The hotel has a total floor space of 16,000 square metres and 400 beds, including a special-class suite. The rooms are furnished with all modern conveniences and facilities. A Chinese restaurant, a Western-style restaurant, a bar, a ballroom, a sports ground, a swimming pool and a gymnasium serve all guests. Foreign currency can be converted in the hotel. There are also international and domestic postal and telecommunications services.

Dongjing Hotel has a Song-flavour restaurant where people can taste delicious dishes handed down from the imperial court of the Northern Song Dynasty more than 900 years ago.

Both Chinese and overseas guests will be welcome to the new hotel.

Hotel address: Dongjing Hotel  
14 Yin Bin Road  
Kaifeng, China.  
Telephone: 31075.

## THE TASHKENT CONNECTION

By Michael Pollak

During the April 9, 1989, meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sino-Judaic Institute, I discussed a letter dated March 27, 1989, that I had just received from Mr. Valerie V. Engle, president of the Jewish Historical Society of Moscow. This organization, established in November 1987 by a group of Russian Jewish scholars, had initially written to Mr. Dennis A. Leventhal who, in addition to being chairman of the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong is also a director of our own organization, requesting, among other things, that the Hong Kong and Moscow groups cooperate in "the scientific investigation of Jewish history in the Far East." Mr. Leventhal, after replying favorably, provided SJI with copies of Mr. Engel's letter and his own, and suggested that SJI get in touch with Mr. Engle.

As a result of all this, I have now exchanged several letters with Mr. Engle, and have also sent him a number of books and articles of Sino-Judaic interest, together with the assurance that more would be forth-

coming. In turn, Mr. Engel has promised to send SJI copies of various Russian publications that deal with the subject.

About nine years ago, I was told by an official of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations that there was a good reason to believe that a very large collection of Sino-Judaic materials, many of them totally unknown to the West, was preserved in a library located in the city of Tashkent. Because I have never been able to determine the accuracy of this statement, I asked Mr. Engle, in a letter dated January 28, 1989, to query his colleagues about the matter. His reply, contained in the letter (noted above) that was brought to the attention of the SJI Board during its April 9 meeting, suggests that while he himself knows nothing about the alleged Tashkent collection, his organization does have both the expertise and the desire to proceed with hits and other kindred problems that may arise.

As a first step, Mr. Engel has enlisted the assistance of two members of his society, Dr. Sergei Martinov, director of a Jewish cultural center in Tashkent, and Dr. Avrum Demin, a scholar with an interest in Sino-Judaic studies who is based in Leningrad. Mr. Engle has asked Dr. Martinov (who speaks English, Hebrew and Chinese) to look into the claim of the existence of a large Sino-Judaic collection in Tashkent, and has also asked Dr. Demin to cooperate with SJI by providing us with copies of Russian documentation that may be of value to us.

Further developments will be reported in *Points East* as they come up.

## JEWES OF SINGAPORE

by Thelma E. Dorfman  
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On tour in the Far East, my husband and I were delighted to discover, in Singapore, an impressive synagogue, Maghain Avoth, on Waterloo Street, in this Strait-Chinese-City-Nation on the tip of the Malay Peninsula. The Jewish Community, although founded in 1840 by Baghdad Jews, did not actually build this synagogue until 1878. This was the first Jewish house of worship in Singapore.

1. The book *Henan fangyu renwen zhilue* [Geographic and cultural annals of Henan] by Wang Youqiao [Wang Yu-ch'iao] (1932, Beijing: Beiping Xibei Shuju Fahang) did not escape Loewenthal's attention. It is mentioned in passing as containing a reference to a work by Shi Jingxun [Shih Ching-hsun],<sup>2</sup> but it is not listed as a bibliographic item in its own right. Passage 2 (pp 199-200) of a section on religion in Chapter 3 ("*Zhengzhi, zongjiao*" [Politics and religion] is devoted to Judaism, while Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism are discussed in other passages. The discussion seems rather sketchy and appears somewhat disjointed to the Western reader, as tends to be the case with compositions in Classical Chinese. Unlike in many other Chinese works, Judaism and Jewish culture are described as being essentially quite separate from, and certainly not subordinate to, the religion and culture of the Islamic Hui (Huihui, or Dungan) minority. However, only Christianity, not Islam, is mentioned as being derived from Judaism.

«(2) *Youtai-jiao* [Yu-t'ai-chiao, "Jewish teaching," i.e. 'Judaism' or 'Jewish sect']: namely *Yisileye-jiao* [I-szu-yeh-chiao,<sup>3</sup> "teaching/sect of Israel"], also rendered as *Yiselie-jiao* [I-se-lieh-chiao],<sup>4</sup> being the Israelites or the Jewish people.<sup>5</sup> At the time of the retreating Song,<sup>6</sup> the Jewish [group of] dynastic adherents [following the Song court to the south] consisted of the seven clans Shi [Shih], Jin [Chin, Kin], Li, Zhao [Chao], Gao [Kao], Ai [Ngai] and An, accompanied by the bearer (or hawker) Zhang (Chang), who also called "*Diliu Zhang*."<sup>7</sup> [The Jews] had arrived in China by way of Tianshan Nanlu,<sup>8</sup> having brought as tribute fancy cottons. According to the records, there used to be

seven clans and eight households [of Jews] in ancient Kaifeng, in Yu [Yu, today's Henan Province]. It is furthermore reported that when they first arrived in China, there were the seventeen clans Li, An, Ai, Gao, Mu, Zhao, Jin, Zhou [Chou], Zhang, Shi, Huang, Li, Nie [Nieh], Jim, Zhang, Zuo [Ts(u)o] and Bai [Pai, Pe, Peh, Po], among which the two li, the two Zhang and the two Jin shared the same names but were genealogically unrelated. During the Ming dynasty [1368-1644 C.E.], the Li clan excelled with regard to proficiency in scripture recitation and Hebrew<sup>9</sup>, worthy of being called *manla*.<sup>10</sup>

Their religion also used to be called *Tiaojin-jiao* [T'iao-chin-chiao, "Religion/sect that plucks out sinews"], because it is contained in the *Chuang-shi-ji* ["Record of the creation of the word," i.e. the patriarch Ya'aqobh (Jacob)] injured his thigh tendon when he struggled with heaven [Gen. 32:25-33], and that consequently the sinews are plucked out from bovine and ovine flesh to be consumed. Moxi [Mo-hsi, i.e. Mosheh (Moses)] having been entrusted as the founder of the religion, and divine providence being considered pre-eminent, [Judaism] is in fact the source of Christianity. When Hui people arrived at Kaifeng, they interacted and intermarried with ethnic groups from western lands. The mosques [*libai-si*] of both religions [i.e. Judaism and Islam] also having been called *gingzhen*<sup>11</sup> of old. Thereupon, the Hui sect suddenly flourished and separated from it [i.e. Jewry]. As for the Jews, they reside in a different place; they are not connected to other ethnic

groups in terms of blood relation, language and religion; and it is frequently the case that they hoard goods to reach wealth. Those living isolated in Kaifeng have lost their special characteristics and have been gradually assimilated among the Hui and the Han.<sup>12</sup> As for the members of the said group residing in Kaifeng at this time, they are mostly poor and run small businesses. They have sold their *Yangpi jingdian* ["Sheepskin scriptures"]<sup>13</sup> to the Englishman Li Timotai,<sup>14</sup> a Syrian inscription to a German and the [pair of] stone lions in front of the temple to some Buddhist monk or other at the Shifangyuan [Monastery] outside Caomen. In the first year of the Republic [i.e. 1912], they furthermore sold the temple site to the Anglican church, and with it the three commemorative steles, *Chongjian gingzhen-si ji* [Record of temple reconstruction], *Zunchong-dao-jing-si ji* [Record of the Way of Worship Temple, and *Chongjian qingzhen-si-ji ji piyin timing* (Record of temple reconstruction and the name inscriptions on the reverse side of the parapet)]. These inscriptions relate all religious commandments and traditions, having attracted the attention of those who do research on the religion. They have been taken over by Bishop Huai Luguang [i.e. William C. White] of the Henan Province Board of Education and the Anglican Mission. They are not to be taken out of the country. Being held safe keeping inside Xinggongjiao Anglican Mission, a double[-sided] stele among them, they are being preserved for eternity. Mr. Shi

Jingxun has published the work *Tiaojin-jiao-kao*.<sup>15</sup>

2. The article "Huihui-zu-yuan kao-shu (2)" [Investigative report on the branches of the Huihui/Islamic people (2)] by Mu Dequan [Me Te-ch'uan] (1986, *Henan Daxue xuebao* [*Shehui kexue ban*] [Henan University journal (Social sciences edition)] 1, pp. 42-47) deals with the Islamic Uyghur minority and with Islamized or Hui-integrated sections of the Mongol, Tibetan and Jewish minorities of China. Thus, the passage devoted to China's Jewry (p. 47) is meant to focus upon those members of the Kaifeng *qehillah* who are now considered members of the local Hui community. However, the author refers mostly to the common history of the Jews of Kaifeng and of China in general, and he includes a reference to the descendants of those Kaifeng Jews who remained separate from both the Hui and Han.

«Lastly, the Jews of Kaifeng:

Among the Huihui, there are also Jews [*Youtai-ren*] who have joined the Huihui branch. This was not a very unusual occurrence among the Jews of Kaifeng, although the number of persons involved was not great. The term *Youtai-ren* [*Yu-t'ai-jen*] corresponds to *Zhuhu* [*Chu-hu*], in Chinese historical documents, where it occurs first in the *Yuan-shi: Diji* [Yuan history<sup>16</sup>: Imperial annals]. The *Yuan-shi: Wenzong benji* [Yuan History: Wenzong annals] mentions that "In the third month of the second year of Emperor Tianli's reign (1329), as of old, taxes were regulated with regard to *Zhaoseng*, *Dao*, *Yelikewen*, *Zhuhu*, and *Dashiman* commerce." Also the *Yuan-shi: Shundi benji* [Yuan history: Shundi annals] says, "In the fifth month of the fourteenth year of Zhizheng (1354),

skilled marksmen as well as wealthy *Huihui* and *Zhuhu*, from various places were enlisted and followed the military to the capital." The *Liao, Jin, Yuan san shi guoyu jie* [National language commentaries on the chronicles of Liao, Jin<sup>17</sup> and Yuan] of Qing's Qianlong<sup>18</sup> refers to Jews as *Zhuhe* [Chu-he(h), Chu-ho].<sup>19</sup> In *Shan-ju xin hua* [News from retirement] by Yang Yu of Yuan-dynasty Hangzhou [Hangchou] it is said that "in Hangzhou's Office for Caster Sugar . . . the officials for sugar [trading] are all *Zhuhu* (*Chu-hu*)<sup>20</sup> and Huihui made wealthy through trade." Jews are referred to as *Zhuhude* [*Chu-hu-te*] in the Muslim *Han-yi Tabu* [Chinese translation of Tabu]. The names *Zhuhu*, *Zhuhe*, *Zhuhu*, and *Zhuhude* above are all phonetic renderings of the Arabic word *Djnhudi* [sic].<sup>21</sup>

Being good at trading, Jews left some traces at Luoyang [Loyang], Dunhuang [Tunhuang], Guangzhou [Canton], Hangzhou, Ningbo [Ningpo], Beijing [Peking], Ningxia [Ninghsia], Yangzhou [Yangchou], Nanjing [Nanking] and Kaifeng. Prior to Tang,<sup>22</sup> they used to arrive in China by way of the ancient Silk Road; and after Tang, they tended to take the maritime route. The Jews of Kaifeng constituted a large portion of them; and they settled permanently. In the course of many centuries, they have become one of China's nationalities<sup>23</sup> and have given their share toward creating their home country's history. As for the descendants of these Jews, a portion of them has turned into a constituent of the Hui nationality. The Jewish group

that went to Kaifeng came to China from India on business, selling cotton cloth, and it settled in Kaifeng in the middle of the Northern Song.<sup>24</sup> Three inscriptions have been handed down: *Chongjian qingzhen-si ji* (2nd year of Ming's Hongzhi, 1489), *Zunchong-dao-jing-siji* (7th year of Ming's Zhengde, 1512) and *Chongjian qingzhen-si ji ji piyin timing*. According to the list of names, there were seventeen clans during the Ming period, while during early Qing there were the seven clans Li, Zhao, Ai, Zhang, Gao, Jin and Shi. Tradition has it that, due to a Yellow River flood in 1642 (5th year of Ming's Chongzhen), many people drowned in the city of Kaifeng, and only seven [Jewish] clans returned, this being the reason for the name *Qi-xing Huizi* [Seven-clan Hui]. In order to distinguish them from the Huihui, the Jews used to be referred to as *Lanmao Huihui* [Blue-capped Huihui], because they liked wearing blue [or indigo] caps or turbans of blue [or indigo] cloth, while the Hui have been wearing white prayer caps and turbans of white cloth. Their mosques [*qingzhen-si*], their avoidance of idol worship and their abstinence from eating pork [as common features] provided favorable conditions for the merging of Jews and Huihui. Furthermore, the Jewish quarters were situated within the immediate vicinity of the Huihui neighborhoods; and both [groups] tended to run small retail businesses, particularly in the butcher's trade, specializing in beef and mutton. Due essentially to economic ties and physical proximity, some intermarriage between

Jews and Han, and more commonly between Jews and Hui appears to have taken place. Around the end of Ming and the Beginning of Qing, there were more than two hundred [Jewish] households; and during the last years of Zing's Daoguang [reign (1821 - 1851)], a British missionary survey identified only about three hundred [Jewish] persons. During the years of Xuantong,<sup>25</sup> an investigation of the historian Zhang Xinglang [Chang Hsinglang] identified no more than two hundred; and during the early years of the Republican era, there were only about one hundred and twenty. The overwhelming majority having been integrated into the Hui nationality, some persons residing in Kaifeng's Southern and Northern *Jiaojing* [Teaching the Scriptures] Lane still identify themselves as descendants of Jews. First and foremost, however, they say, "I belong to the Chinese nation, am a Chinese, of Jewish descent." The descendants of those Jews who merged with the Hui tend to be referred to as "Hui," while those who intermarried with the Han are mostly known as Han. All of them consider Kaifeng their hometown and China their home country. They are members of China's great family of nationalities. They love our China, love Socialist China, doing their utmost to give their share toward the establishment of their home country's four modernizations.<sup>26</sup>»

#### Notes

1. M. Pollak, ed., 1988, *The Sino-Judaic Bibliographies of Rudolf Loewenthal*, Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, Palo-Alto: Sino-Judaic Institute.

2. 1946, *The Early Jews in China: A Supplementary Bibliography* (Folklore Studies 5), Beijing: The Catholic University of Peking, p. 381 (p. 191 in Pollak 1988 [see n. 1, n. 13]).

3. The second character is normally read *ci* (*tz'u*), thus *Yicileye* or *Yisileye* < Hebrew *Yisra'el*.

4. This version is not included in Rudolf Loewenthal's list (pp. 258-260; 1939, "The Jews in China: A Bibliography," *Yenching Journal of Social Studies* 1:2, pp. 256-291; pp. 5-7 in Pollak, 1988 [see n. 1]). *Yiselié* is now the official Chinese term for Israel.

5. *Minzu* 'nation,' 'nationality' or 'people' (see n. 23).

6. The Song (Sung) court fled south from the invading "barbarian" Mongol and Jurchen armies and eventually established the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279 C.E.).

7. "Round Zhang," "Bulging Zhang," or "Zhang who goes round and round."

8. South of the Tianshan ["Celestial Mountains"] range in today's Xinjiang (Sinkiang, "Chinese Turkestan"), the *Tianshan Nanlu* ("Road South of Tianshan) ran along the southern edge of the Taklamakan Desert and the north side of the Kunlun Mountains. It touched upon the ancient trading center Khotan (Chinese Hetian [Hot'ien]) and the important Buddhist center and international meeting place Dunhuan (Tunhuang).

9. *Xilabo* instead of standard *Xibolai*.

10. The term *manla* is assumed to be derived from the Muslim term 'mullah' (D.D. Leslie, 1972, *The Survival of the Chinese Jews: The Jewish Community of Kaifeng*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, p. 124; W.C. White, 1966 [2nd ed.], "Chinese Jews: Inscriptional," in *Chinese Jews: A Compilation of Matters Relating to the Jews of Kaifeng Fu*, New York: Paragon, p. 24, n. 20.). (The ordinary Chinese term for 'mullah' is *maola* [Arabic *mawla*].) The term *manla* generally denoted a person with a high level of Jewish education and with the ability to serve as a synagogal functionary, such as sexton (*hazzan*),

scribe (*sopher*) or ritual slaughterer (*shohet*) (M. Pollak, 1980, *Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries: The Jewish Experience in the Chinese Empire*, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, p. 299; Rabbi A. Laytner, 1989, personal communication).

11. Both *libai-si* ("temple of worship") and *qingzhen-si* ("temple of Islam; usually denote only 'mosque.' The term *qingzhen* ("pure and true") denotes the Islamic religion.

12. I.e. the Han "Chinese" majority of China.

13. These are Torah scrolls of sheepskin parchment, which reportedly had been sold, given away and even converted into garment lining. The sale of a scroll or scrolls to an official was the reason for a bloody feud between two leading families (pp. 164-165 in W.C. White, 1913, "The Jews of Kaifengfu, in Honan," in *China Mission Yearbook* 4, Shanghai: Chinese Literature Society of China, pp. 162-165).

14. Probably Dr. Timothy Richard, who in 1900 reported to S.J. Solomon in Shanghai that Monsignor Volonteri had purchased a scroll and other manuscripts for the Siccawei Mission (Pollak, 1980 [see n. 10], p. 207).

15. (Research on Judaism), mentioned also by Loewenthal (see n. 2).

16. Yuan (Yuan) dynasty (1271 - 1368 C.E.).

17. Liao (Khitan) dynasty (916 - 1125 C.E.) and Jin (Chin, Jurchen) Dynasty (1115 - 1234 C.E.).

18. The reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736 - 1795) of the Zing (Chi'ing, Manchu) dynasty (1644 - 1911 C.E.).

19. This version is not included in Loewenthal's list (see n. 2). It differs from *Zhuhu*, in the choice of Chinese characters.

20. This version is not included in Loewenthal's list (see n. 2).

21. I.e. adjectival *Djuhudi* or *Juhudi*. A more likely source is the noun *Juhud*, a Persian variant of the Arabic loanword *Yahud*. Note *Yahudi* 'Jew' vs. derogatory *juhut* 'infidel' in the Modern Uyghur ("Eastern Turki") language of Xinjiang in Northwestern China.