

the Men's Club of Temple B'nai Abraham decided to "adopt" the Jewish population remaining in Burma.

At the suggestion of Rabbi Barry Friendman of Temple B'nai Abraham, I contacted one of our congregants, Stephen Greenberg, who, upon hearing of our plans to help the Burmese Jews, immediately offered to contact Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

I received a call from the senator's secretary, who suggested that I write to Maung Maung Guyi, the Burmese ambassador to the U.N. mission in New York, and request an interview.

After receiving no response, I called the embassy and spoke to one of the secretaries but go nowhere. Lautenberg's secretary suggested that I write to the ambassador to the United States in Washington, U Myo Aung. The first secretary of the Burmese Embassy, Soeoe Win, suggested I contact various agencies in Burma to get official permission to mail the package to Musmeah Yeshua. A personal letter to the ambassador from Sen. Lautenberg also failed to get us the permission we desired.

One propitious evening, Henry Guterman called and explained that he had read the story of the Jews in Burma in an issue of the Ready to Wear Buyers Association Newsletter, which had excerpted the article by Shapiro in the B'nai Abraham Men's Club newsletter, The Commentator.

He was certain that he could expedite the shipment of Jewish articles to Burma without the necessity of trying to go through bureaucratic channels. He contacted the Flying Tigers Airline and they guaranteed shipment to Thailand and then to Rangoon.

Three synagogues were represented in the collection of the Jewish artifacts which were prepared for shipment to Burma: Temple B'nai Abraham, Temple B'nai Israel of Millburn and the Garment Center Congregation of Manhattan.

The following letter details emotionally the arrival of the Jewish artifacts in Rangoon.

Dear Mr. Nurnberg,

Your letter reached us safely after a lapse of some time, due to the uncertainty of the mail over here. The parcel of religious articles were cleared from

customs, after settling a rather big amount for customs duty.

The origin of our community is Sephardic, the original members being from Iraq. Prior to the Second World War, there were about 2,500 Jews in Burma, most of whom left at the outbreak of the war, leaving only a handful of Jews of mixed marriage.

The Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue was founded in the year 1893 and in a few years time we will be celebrating its centenary.

It is not possible to repair the synaogue due to lack of donors, besides any money which we do have is allotted to the poor Jews and those who want to

leave to Israel.

Is there any foundation or association abroad which will help to preserve the only synagogue in Burma?

Please convey our heartfelt thanks to the Men's Club of Temple B'nai Abraham for the kind gift sent to us and also of course to you.

This letter is being sent by registered mail because the mail here is not reliable. Shalom.

Sincerely,
Moses Samuels

David Nurnberg is a resident of Millburn, N.J., and editor of the B'nai Abraham Men's Club newsletter, The Commentator, in Livingston, N.J.

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POINTS EAST

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SINO-JUDAIC DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA

By Leo Gabow

A number of items have appeared in Points East, attesting to various Sino-Judaic developments in China. It is important, I think, to bring these items together in order to get a semblance of the whole. I list some of these developments.

(1) An organization has been formed in Shanghai by Chinese scholars entitled the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association (SJSA). Another group of Chinese scholars at Nanjing University has formed the China Judaic Studies Association (CJSA). Still another group in Beijing is planning yet another Sino-Judaic studies group. An Editorial Committee has been formed in Kaifeng, dealing exclusively with the history of the Kaifeng Jews. The first Jewish history research center in China has been established in the Institute of World History, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, its name, the Jewish History Research Center of Shanghai (JHRCS).

(2) A scholar at the Liberal Arts College of Shanghai University has just completed a book entitled Hebraic Culture and the Chinese Jews. In a letter to the undersigned, he wrote, "I wish to call your attention to the fact that I study the problem of Jews in China as well as in the world, not out of mercenary considerations but rather out of admiration for the tremendous contributions made (and being made) by the Jewish nationality to the culture of the whole of mankind, as well as a deep sympathy for the misery and unjust treatment which this nationality has suffered during the past two thousand years. I hope that through my

(continued on page 5)

MY INTEREST IN JEWISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE

By Lu Fan

Quite by chance, in 1963, I received a copy of Saul Bellow's Herzog, and I was immediately fascinated by some of its themes. Over the next 25 years I continued my research of modern Jewish-American writers, and was influential, through book reviews and articles, as well as encouraging my graduate students, in making this group of authors familiar to Chinese scholars.

The reason I am interested in Jewish-American literature is that I found many similarities between Chinese and Jewish cultures:

1. Both cultures are very old civilizations, but both have suffered a lot, yet never their beliefs in the high value of their cultures.
2. Both share the old tradition of a very strong family, and relations between members are close and intimate.
3. The role of the mother is very similar. This loving mother is the center of the family, even if she is not as powerful as the father. She is what holds the family together, and when she is gone the family may collapse.
4. Both cultures value education. No matter how poor, how difficult their lives, Jewish and Chinese parents want their children to have as much education as possible. In both cultures, scholars, although not rich, are highly respected.

5. Another similarity is found in humor, especially self-parody. Both peoples are very proud of their divine connections - the Jews as the "Chosen People", the Chinese as the "Heavenly Kingdom", yet in the everyday world they are not considered "Chosen" or "Heav-

enly"; in fact, they have both been looked down upon and ridiculed. Thus, mocking oneself is preferred to such abuse from others - perhaps this gave rise to the self-parody.

In addition to these similarities to Chinese culture, there are some themes in Jewish-American writing that I found very interesting because they are so different from Chinese culture. One of these themes is the contradiction between Jewish identity and assimilation in the American culture. One of the typical ways of expressing this theme in earlier Jewish-American writers is to write about the tradition and the nostalgia, the success and the remorse. For example, in Abe Cahan's The Rise of David Levinsky, a Jew achieved his success in the American society, but also felt remorse for the loss of his lovely Jewish youth. This kind of nostalgia also exists in Bellow's work, and in Roth's Call It Sleep, of course, in modern settings.

"Father and Son" is an old theme in western literature, but in Jewish-American literature, writers put in something new: The generation gap is coupled with a culture gap between the old Jewish tradition and the new American culture.

Another traditional theme in the old Jewish-American writers' works is the description of a world in which the protagonists are always uncomfortable; he is always an outsider. In almost all of older Jewish writer's works this theme was expressed some way. In Bellow's novels, in the post-holocaust era, the question of persecution always appears, as in Humboldt's Gift and in many other novels.

I am happy that my early work in this field has been of interest to other scholars, and that, through translations, book reviews, and scholarly work, the genre of American literature is gaining a wider audience in China.

(continued on page 5)

From the editor:

What do you do when a dear friend does something that seems to you to be terribly wrong? Do you publicly scold him or her? Do you ignore the problem? According to Jewish tradition, one should first speak privately and lovingly to the offender and only as a last resort should a rebuke be delivered in public.

In my field of work, Jewish community relations, this is the principle we utilize (subconsciously by most of us) when dealing with a community conflict. It certainly guides our dealings with the State of Israel, for any criticism we, as American Jewish communities, have of Israel is delivered privately, either through correspondence or in person. So perhaps we should employ the same principle with regards to China?

This issue is late in being published. I kept on putting it off. To be sure, I was very busy with work; and we moved to a new, old house; and I was pre-occupied with the forthcoming publication of my book *Arguing with God: A Jewish Tradition*. But I suddenly realized that the reason for my procrastination was my continued distress over the repression in China. I felt powerless. My government was not, to the best of my knowledge, articulating the American people's concerns about human rights violations and I knew of no grassroots campaign being waged

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to communicate with Chinese officials. So I delayed and worried.

But finally I thought of applying the principle mentioned above and it helped me shake off my lethargy. A glance at this issue will show the many projects and activities in which SJI is engaged. Perhaps the most effective thing we can do now for the Chinese people - and for our own interests in joint projects - is to pursue these endeavors, to visit China and to communicate our concerns directly, to anyone who will listen. It is all too easy to criticize/ the trick is to get the right parties to listen and respond.

Anson Laytner

TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE

It has been my privilege to have served as President of the Sino-Judaic Institute for almost five years. I leave this post with a feeling that I have gained far more than I have given. I speak of the many new friendships that have developed during my association with the SJI, and the new intellectual horizons afforded me as a result of these friendships.

I have always been impressed by the high intellectual calibre of our membership and their readiness to share their talents with other members. Points East reflects much of this intellectuality.

My resignation as President does not mean that I will have retired from all activity in the SJI. Not only my counsel, for whatever it is worth, but my energies as well, will be available to the new President.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as President, and for the support given me by the membership.

Sincerely,
Leo Gabow, Past President

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- **JEWISH HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER, SHANGHAI**
Pan Guang, of the SJSA and the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, has announced the estab-

lishment of the Jewish History Research Center (JHRCS), the first in China. The Center is housed within the Institute of World History, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. The main subjects for study of JHRCS as of now are as follows:

1. Zionism in history (including Zionism activities in China)
2. The Jewish communities in China (especially that in Shanghai)
3. The origins of European anti-Semitism (especially that of the Holocaust)
4. The relations between China and Israel (1949-1989)

The Center is seriously lacking in books and reference materials, and would appreciate donations of relevant resources. The address of the Center is:

Jewish History Research Center
of Shanghai
40 Cao Xi Road (North), 200030
Shanghai, China

Those listed as officers of this new organization are Pan Guang, Director, Deng Xinyu, Deputy Director, and Yu Jianhua, Secretary-General.

It is not clear at this time how this organization relates to the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, which has overlapping officers.

- **NEWS FROM KAIFENG**

In a letter from Liu Wenqing, general manager of the Dongjing Hotel in Kaifeng, he informs us that the new museum was opened on Oct. 1 with rich and colorful exhibits, and that the Jewish stone tablets have been moved there, but are not yet on exhibit.

- **NANJING NEWS**

Prof. Xu Xin, of Nanjing University, who was instrumental in founding the Chinese Judaic Studies Association, continues to work toward mounting an exhibition in Nanjing. His organization has applied to the authorities for permission, and he writes that they are not too sure yet whether they will be "lucky to get the approval." However, if the exhibit is held at the university alone, and does not contain material from abroad, they do not need such approval. They are exploring this avenue as an option. Leo has responded offering assistance and asking for more details.

the title Metziat Asereth ha-Shebatim (Warsaw, 1900), and again in a second edition of the same book, this time entitled Sefer ha-Brih ha-Hadash (Petrikov, 1911). The article also appeared in various periodicals throughout the world. Surprisingly, an almost identical duplicate of the same piece, described as having been condensed by Rabbi Albert Loewy from letters originally written from China by a business traveler named J. L. Liebermann to the latter's father in Silesia, was printed in the Eighth Annual Report of the Anglo-Jewish Association, 1878/79. Even more surprisingly, this Loewy-Liebermann account surfaced again in the May 11, 1879, issue of The London Chronicle, whose editors, caught napping, overlooked the fact that they had published it eleven years earlier under a by-line which credited it to Aaron Halevi Fink.

Stampfer, as noted above, deduces that the Observer article was not written by Eckman. Unaware of the earlier appearance of the article in the Chronicle, he comes to this conclusion mainly because certain of its contents are at odds with a number of chronological details that have come down to us concerning the activities of his pioneer rabbi. Had Eckman ever gotten to Kaifeng, Stampfer also notes, it would have been completely out of character for him to have written only one report about an experience that he would surely have regarded as the high point of his life.

Stampfer argues that what Eckman said and did with regard to the story of the Jews of China was a major factor in keeping that story from being relegated to the dustbin of history. For "even if Rabbi Eckman did not set foot in China," Stampfer tells us, "he kindled a light of interest in Kaifeng Jewry that has never been extinguished." This is perhaps too sweeping a statement, for that interest existed long before Eckman was born, and Eckman was by no means its only proponent in his own time. Nevertheless, while Eckman's knowledge of the history of the Jews of China was necessarily restricted to the sparse and often inaccurate literature that was available to him, his influence on keeping the subject alive was unquestionably of considerable importance. One thing, in any case, we may

take for granted: had it not been for Eckman and for others like him, neither the periodical you are now reading nor the organization it represents would be in existence today.

CHINESE HEBREW PRIMER FINISHED

Jerusalem (JTA 10/10/89): A Chinese scholar has just completed a Hebrew grammar book for Chinese-speaking students.

Cho Chiang, who heads the Institute for African and West Asian Studies at the Chinese Academy of Science, wrote to Ben-Zion Fischler, head of the World Zionist Organization's Hebrew Language Section, saying he was at the point of completing the grammar.

Cho said he would soon be sending Fischler galleys for perusal and comments.

The Chinese scholar's letter, written in flowing biblical Hebrew, explained that while Hebrew is taught at only two Chinese universities - Peking and Nanking - his book is intended to help Chinese speaking students of Hebrew in such countries as Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and the United States.

He wrote that his own study of the Hebrew language was handicapped by the lack of a Chinese-Hebrew grammar.

METROWEST JEWS 'ADOPT' THE 42 LAST JEWS OF BURMA

By David Nurnberg
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Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

Ever since we learned of the existence of Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue in Rangoon, Burma, we were enthralled with the prospect of forging a bond with our Jewish brethren in that country.

The story had its beginning at a chance meeting with Felicia Shapiro, an attorney in New York, who had recently returned from her worldwide travels. She informed me that her most emotional experience had occurred in Rangoon.

The seven days the Burmese government permitted her to remain in that ravaged country were highlighted by

her experience and involvement with Temple Musmeah Yeshua. Shapiro told me that she did not consciously seek to visit religious institutions.

But for some inexplicable reason, she felt impelled to explore Jewish life (if any) in Rangoon. She experienced some difficulty in uncovering the existence of a synagogue, but with the help of a Buddhist Monk, she was able to locate Musmeah Yeshua.

Situated on a dirty and dilapidated street, the synagogue itself stood out in its solid white-washed simplicity. She discovered that it had been erected in 1857 on a modest scale and called, at that time, Matzmiach Yeshu'ah.

In 1893, the Temple was expanded to its present splendor and was renamed Musmeah Yeshua. Most important, it is still being used for worship by the few Jews who remain in Burma, which is now known as Myanmar.

Shapiro's visit to Musmeah Yeshua and the warm welcome she received from Moses Samuels, the trustee of the synagogue, was an emotional experience. It made her conscious that she had her own unique Jewish heritage to explore.

The elegance in the basic construction and decoration of the synagogue was readily apparent to her. Musmeah Yeshua has graceful gold chandeliers, wrought-iron grille work, intricate plaster designs and delicate stained-glass windows. Unfortunately, the peeling paint, cracked walls and rusted grille work indicated that repairs were badly needed.

Samuels expounded at length on the pride the Jewish community took in Musmeah Yeshua. He exhibited the congregation's greatest treasure, its two silver-covered Torah scrolls. When Shapiro asked what she could do to help the congregation, he told her sadly that they had not been able to make or get candles for nine years. It would mean so much, he said, especially for the children, who had never been able to light a menorah.

Two weeks later, when she returned to Bangkok, she was able to get two boxes of candles and persuade tourists who were going to Rangoon, now known as Yangon, to deliver them to Musmeah Yeshua.

As a result of Shapiro's experiences,

But at a news conference in Tel Aviv, the head of the seven-member Chinese delegation, Tang Shnuki, said the sole purpose of the mission is to exchange tourists and "promote the friendship" between the two peoples.

The flow of Israelis into China has diminished to several hundred following the suppression of the democratic movement in China last summer. But the Chinese guests estimated the potential number of Israeli tourists at several thousand a year.

Tang said the stability has returned to China and that the country is safe for tourists. He said that if Israel desired, the Chinese authorities would probably consent to the opening of an Israeli tourism bureau in China.

BOOK CORNER

Pioneer Rabbi of the West: The Life and Times of Julius Eckman.

By Joshua Stampfer, Portland, Oregon: 1988.
Reviewed by: Michael Pollak

On December 5, 1869, Rabbi Julius Eckman, the recently appointed spiritual leader of a newly chartered congregation in Portland, Oregon, presided over the dedication of the congregation's first synagogue. Now, after the passage of nearly a century and a quarter, Joshua Stampfer, the present rabbi of that same congregation, has written the biography of the man who first occupied its pulpit.

For those who want to know more about the story of Jews of China, the appeal of this book lies in its detailed description of Eckman's long struggle to make contact with the Jews of Kaifeng and encourage them to renew their ties to the faith of their ancestors.

Julius Eckman was born in 1805 in the small Polish city of Rawicz. At fourteen, having already received an excellent education in Jewish studies, he was sent to London by his father for the purpose of acquiring a more worldly background in the ways of trade and commerce. His three years in London left him with a good command of English, but with absolutely no desire to devote his life to business affairs. Instead, he returned to the continent and enrolled in the University of Berlin, where he not only received a doctorate in philoso-

phy but also, with the great Jewish scholar Leopold Zunz as his more influential mentor, qualified for ordination in the rabbinate.

In 1849, at the age of forty-four, Eckman sailed to the United States in order to assume a rabbinical post in Richmond, Virginia, thereby augmenting by one the mere half-dozen or so rabbis already officiating in the country. Later, he held pulpits in Charleston, Mobile, San Francisco, and Portland. His theological views, middle of the road for the most part, led him inevitably into conflicts with both the traditionalist and reform-minded members of his various congregations. Notwithstanding this, he was universally respected for his outstanding erudition, his brilliance as a speaker, his endless exertions on behalf of the Jewish education of his congregants and their children, and his generous efforts on behalf of the needy. As the publisher and editor of the West Coast's first Jewish newspaper, The Weekly Gleaner, and later, as a frequent contributor to The Hebrew Observer, he fought vigorously for Jewish causes of all kinds, among them the revitalization of the ancient community of Kaifeng.

In 1853-54, during his stay in Mobile, Eckman, inspired by the establishment in New Orleans of the Hebrew Foreign Mission, an organization dedicated to the promotion of improved spiritual, social and political conditions throughout the Jewish world, persuaded his congregants and Board of Trustees to follow the lead of the New Orleans Mission and to concentrate initially on working with the Jews of Kaifeng. Fundraising drives were mounted by Eckman's congregation in Mobile, and by Jewish groups in several other American cities as well. The money that was collected was forwarded to the Chief Rabbi of England, with the expectation that he would use it to send a delegate to Kaifeng, the plan being that this delegate would select a few promising young Chinese Jews for training in the basics of Judaism, either in Kaifeng itself or in Europe, and that these youngsters would eventually become the religious leaders of their community. As matters turned out, however, the dangers involved in traveling into the interior of China were at the time so great that the project had to be abandoned.

Eckman's intense interest in the Jews of China, which continued unabated until his death in 1874, inspired him to deliver numerous lectures and to publish dozens of articles dealing with the welfare and potential rehabilitation of the Jewish community of Kaifeng. While his efforts produced no immediate concrete results, they did spread the news that the Diaspora had long ago penetrated to China and that living traces of this Diaspora could still be found in the country. Moreover, his repeatedly proclaimed thesis that it was the moral obligation of world Jewry to provide spiritual and material assistance to these surviving Oriental kinsmen gained many converts.

The question has been raised as to whether Eckman himself ever traveled to China. Rabbi Stampfer concludes that Eckman never set foot on Chinese soil. In spite of this, he points out (p. 126) that there was a two-year period concerning which we are in the dark regarding Eckman's activities, that Eckman could conceivably have visited China during these two years, and that "on March 27, 1868, there appeared in The Hebrew Observer a personal, unsigned account of an adventurer's trip to China. . . Unlike every other article which Eckman published on Chinese Jewry, this one made no reference to any other source, nor did it quote any other traveler. The tone of the article could easily be interpreted as a personal trip by Eckman himself to China." In the end, Stampfer remains unconvinced -- and quite justifiably -- that Eckman ever got to China.

After quoting extensively from the Observer article (pp. 127-29), Stampfer suggests that internal evidence indicates that it was not written by Eckman. In this he is correct, for the article is actually a verbatim reprint of extracts from a report of a trip allegedly made to Kaifeng by its author, one Aaron Halevi Fink, in 1864. This report was published in London in The Jewish Chronicle on February 14, 1868, as the second installment of a three-part series that appeared in that publication between February 7, 1868, and February 21, 1868. A Hebrew version of this series was later printed in a curious collection of three purportedly serious (though entirely fanciful) articles dealing with China and bearing

- DR. ZHANG SUI
Dr. Zhang Sui, of the College of Liberal Arts, Shanghai University, has written to Rabbi Stampfer that he has a large amount of material on the history of Jews in China. These include 1144 pages of the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, dating 1943-44. He also has information about Jews now living in Beijing and on those who have assimilated with Tibetan culture. He has written three volumes, 1) Hebraic Culture and the Jews -- Judaism in the Eye of a Chinese Individual; 2) Judaism and the Kaifeng Jews; and 3) The Jews in Shanghai and Other Regions in China. These are written in Chinese and Dr. Zhang hopes that there will be the opportunity to come to the States for a summer to work on translating these materials and to prepare them for publication.
- NEW OFFICERS
In a round of musical chairs, Al Dien has been elected president of SJI and Leo Gabow has been named treasurer, pro-tem in his case. That means he is to be treasurer until he finds someone to take on the job. Leo is a difficult act to follow, and Al hopes that with everyone's cooperation, we can as a body somehow manage to reach the level of energy which Leo produced on his own. To thank Leo for his years of service, the members in the Bay Area held a subscription dinner at a Chinese restaurant. Twenty-one persons attended, there were speeches and toasts galore. A plaque and a cloisonne bowl were presented to Leo on behalf of the Institute.
- ENCYCLOPEDIA JUDAICA
The set of the Encyclopedia Judaica which we reported in the last issue as being about to be sent to Shanghai, was received there, and Jin Yingzhong, General Secretary of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, has acknowledged receipt of the set and expressed the appreciation of the Association. The donation of the set was a joint project of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle and the Sino-Judaic Institute. A press release was mailed to some 60 newspapers in our file of the Jewish press.
- NEWS OF MEMBERS
* Prof. Irene Eber of the Hebrew

University reports that she will be in the U.S. this spring, doing research on the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Chinese by Samuel I.J. Schereschewsky. She will be in Texas at the Episcopal Archive, at Harvard to work at the Yenching Library, and at a Toronto conference in August.

* SJI member Henrietta Reifler has compiled a booklet Seattle Jews from China: Oral Histories under the auspices of the Washington State Jewish Historical Society. It is available for \$7 (U.S.) through the WSJHS, 2031 Third Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121.

ITEMS

* We have added the Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East, of Jerusalem, to our distribution list.

* We have been sent a copy of paper presented at a meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Region, Association for Asian Studies, in October, of 1989, by Marcia R. Ristaino, "White Russian and Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, 1920-44, as Recorded in the Shanghai Municipal Police Files, National Archives, Washington, D.C." This was sent to us by Frank Shulman, of the University of Maryland.

* Tess Johnston, of the U.S. Foreign Service, and a member of SJI, has been reassigned to Shanghai, and offers to be of assistance. She notes that two of the three former synagogues have been torn down in urban renewal projects.

CORRESPONDENCE

* Phyllis H. Mattson, who is now teaching English at Shandong University, has written that she has met Prof. Lu Fan of that university whose specialty is modern American Jewish literature (Bellow, Roth, etc.). She is at present retired and is translating Bellow's novels into Chinese. Ms. Mattson suggests that Prof. Lu Fan be sent some of our publications and be invited to write an article for us. (Consider it done!)

* A letter from Victor Escroignard, Paris, informs us that he founded the Societe pour le Sauvetage du Patrimoine Culturel des Juifs de Chine (Society for the Rescue of the Cultural Jewish Patrimony of China), that he believes that his

organization can work in cooperation with SJI, and that the aims of his association are 1) to finance the reconstruction of the Kaifeng-fu temple; 2) the reprinting of various writings belonging to this community, which are today dispersed in many libraries and museums, and therefore to give back to the city of Kaifeng a unique part of its historical and cultural heritage; 3) finance the building of a study center of Chinese Judaism; and 4) the promotion of the study of Biblical Hebrew among the Jews of Kaifeng.

* Dennis Leventhal reported in a memo of Aug. 28 that he had met with Mark Talisman, President, Project Judaica Foundation, Inc. and Director, Washington Action Office, Council of Jewish Federations, in Washington, D.C. Mr. Talisman is organizer of the Precious Legacy exhibit (of Judaic treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections) which toured the U.S. with great success. He is interested in providing support to viable Judaic projects in China, under the auspices of such organizations as the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong and the SJI which have established connections in China.

* The "Library and Archive News," the newsletter of the Leo Baeck Institute, of New York, announces the formation of a collection on the Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai (1938-1946), lists some of its holdings, and makes a plea for the donation of related material to the Institute.
INQUIRIES
* Mrs. Evelyn Cohen has asked for help in tracing the roots of her father, the late Louis Govberg (1883-1934), who lived in Harbin ca. 1910 to 1915, and she is looking for directories, etc. of Harbin of that time. We will put her in contact with Isai Kaufman, a member of the Institute, whose father was a leader of the Harbin Jewish community. Other contacts are solicited.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:
Dr.A. R. Crouch's article, "Research

Requested on Christian Resources," Points East, 4. No. 3 (Sept. 89), pp. 9-11, asserts that the Reverend Thomas Torrance's claim that the Ch'iang Min minority tribe of Sichuan were Hebrews has "never been thoroughly investigated by competent scholars."

Considering that Dr. Crouch's list of collected papers on Torrance mentions the latter's close association with Dr. David C. Graham while in Sichuan, I find it most curious that the collection list does not include mention of Dr. Graham's publications dealing with the Ch'iang Min.

Dr. Graham, an anthropologist, discussed in detail Reverend Torrance's "misconceptions" about the Ch'iang Min in several publications during the 1940's and 50's. The specific references include Graham's "The Customs of the Chiang," Journal of the West China Border Research Society, Vol. 14, Series A (1942), and Vol. 16 Series A (1945), as well as his The Customs and Religion of the Ch'iang, Smithsonian Institute, 1958.

The real issue seems to be not so much as whether or not the Ch'iang Min were originally Hebrews, but rather the credibility of Reverend Torrance's scholarship. It would seem that, as much as Christian fundamentalists and the Amishav would like to believe otherwise, unless the criticisms of Torrance can be successfully refuted, we cannot trust Torrance as a reliable guide leading us to one of the "Lost Tribes of Israel" in China.

Sincerely,
Dennis A. Leventhal, Chairman
Jewish Historical Society of
Hong Kong

To The Editor:

I have read with great interest your article "China's Israel Policy Reviewed" in the Summer 1989 issue of the Middle East Review. I have been dealing with China's Middle Eastern policy in general, and its relations with Israel in particular, for a number of years, and I quite agree with your criticism of Tian Zhongqing's article of 1985.

As you probably know, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has a Department of East Asian Studies, the only one of its kind in Israel, established some twenty years ago. In recent years it has become one of the fastest grow-

ing departments, with a current enrollment of more than 300 undergraduate students. Our graduates have been studying at the major universities in the U.S. (as well as Europe, Japan, Hongkong and even the PRC).

We would appreciate if you could provide us with some details about your Sino-Judaic Institute and its publication Points East. We are looking forward to a closer and fruitful relationship.

Yours sincerely,
Yitzhak Shicor
Senior Lecturer
Department of East Asian
Studies

To the Editor:

I am a member of the Sino-Judaic Institute. I am collecting materials about the Jews of India and China, especially the former. I would like to purchase items for my personal collection. Hopefully, in the future I will be able to utilize these to create various exhibitions and publications.

I am interested in purchasing photographs, ritual objects, art, documents, books, and all other items detailing the history of the Jews in the East. I hope that you can print this letter in Points East where it can reach a number of people who might have items for sale. This would allow me to build my collection so that it will be worth publishing and exhibiting.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Kenneth X. Robbins, M.D.
5055 Seminary Rd., Suite 108
Alexandria, Virginia 22311

To the Editor:

Gu Xiaoming is not "almost single-handedly" developing Jewish studies in China. Other achievements, though admittedly scanty, are: In Nanjing, Professor Xiao Xin is translating Jewish-American literature and Agnon into Chinese; last year, a new translation of Sholem Aleichem's short stories was published; a book by Zhu Weizhi on early Israelite history appeared last year in Zhejiang province; a book of essays on modern Israel is in preparation at Yunnan University; modern Hebrew has been taught at Beijing University for the past three to four years. This, no doubt, is only a partial list.

Gu Xiaoming may be wasting his time and resources by translating the Old Testament anew. More than 100 years ago, in 1874, S.J.I. Schereschewsky published the first translation of the Bible into spoken Chinese. Schereschewsky was from Lithuania and had attended the Zhitomir Yeshiva. He was, therefore, able to translate the Old Testament directly from Hebrew into Chinese. A revised version of the 1874 Bible was reprinted in 1899 and all subsequent revisions are based on this 1899 edition.

I am currently reading Schereschewsky's revised 1899 Bible and am comparing it to a later, 1939, edition, as well as to the Hebrew text. Thus far, I have found no "missionary distortions" in either the 1899 or the 1939 text. To the contrary, the Chinese text is often more felicitous than the English Masoretic translation.

Irene Eber
Professor of Chinese History,
The Hebrew University

To the Editor:

Beth Hatefutsoth, the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv, opened its gates in May 1978, and has since been acclaimed for its innovative and imaginative treatment of the Jewish heritage as well as for its contribution to Jewish education and self-understanding.

Beth Hatefutsoth is producing a film based on the exhibition "A Passage Through China."

The film deals with the Chinese Jewish community between the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century and focuses on two major communities, Shanghai and Harbin. There is no doubt that these were among the most fascinating Jewish settlements in the diaspora, especially because of their interaction with various cultures; the British, the French, the Russians and, of course, the Chinese which is an interesting subject by itself. This cosmopolitan atmosphere, together with the typical communal structure, gives a unique picture of a Jewish life gone by.

The film will make use of interviews with members of the communities who will tell their own stories about life in this part of the world and personal stories which portray the life style of the Jewish community. Archive foot-

nected with the Hebrew tradition of the levirate, because, for various reasons, the custom of marrying a widow to her brother-in-law has prevailed in many cultures around the world. It was practiced by people in ancient Assyria, Arabia, Abyssinia, old Persia, India, Africa, Australia and North and South America (as noted in the latest editions of Encyclopaedia Britannica and in The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics). Indeed, when the noted American anthropologist G. F. Murdock assembled a worldwide sample of 185 social groups from the 19th and 20th centuries, he found that 69 percent of them showed preference for some such form of secondary marriage. A frequent reason for it was that when a woman had married out of her family or clan she was unable to go back to it, and needed protection. Anyway, that single custom can certainly not be used as evidence for a survival of ancient Hebrew traditions in West China.

The difference between Torrance's early lecture in 1923 and his second, eleven years later, is pronounced -- not because he had unearthed more factual information, but because of the increase of his obsession. In the meantime, he had sought further Biblical resemblances, and believed he had found relationships between very disparate rites and customs in East and West Asia. Also, he told the Ch'iangs whom he knew -- both personally and through two Chinese evangelists -- that they were ancient Jews who had forgotten some of their original traditions. He not only reinterpreted some of their customs in the light of this imagined conception of his, but also taught them some ancient Hebrew traditions, as far as he knew them from his Bible studies. Then, after all this preparation, he and his helpers told their Ch'iang disciples, "Now that you are really Jews again, you can take the further step of becoming Christian."

His idea for converting the Ch'iang to Christianity by this method was not a late development, however. Already, in the conclusion to his 1923 lecture, he announced his plan for converting Ch'iang people to Christianity. Apparently, in his efforts to convince them that they were ancient Jews, in order to accomplish this purpose, he managed to convince himself that they actually were.

Dr. Graham, though a missionary himself, was disgusted with Torrance's irresponsible tactics in trying to reshape the Ch'iang's religion and customs for his own single-minded purpose. As a more scientifically-minded scholar, who had been trained in anthropological methods, Dr. Graham conducted his own researches among the Ch'iang in the course of collecting trips for the Museum of the West China Union University, which he headed. In a series of three articles for the journal of the West China Border Research Society -- of which he was a charter member at its founding in 1922 -- he demonstrated how very unmonotheistic the Ch'iang people actually were. (The first of these articles was "The Customs of the Ch'iang", JWCBRS, Vol. 14, Series A, 1942; the two others followed in Vol. 16, Series A, 1945.) His final, comprehensive statement regarding Ch'iang culture was a book published by the Smithsonian Institute in 1958, entitled The Customs and Religion of the Ch'iang.

This book demolished anything that might remain of Torrance's imaginary reconstruction of Ch'iang history and religion. In the first place, Graham said, "The writer can say confidently that he has not found or heard of one reference on the oracle bones or in any Chinese history that would indicate that the ancestors of the Ch'iang of western Szechuan migrated eastward from western Asia, or that they are descendants of the Israelites. On the contrary, there is strong evidence that in ancient times they lived in northeast China and that they migrated westward"

As to Torrance's claim that the Ch'iang had a "lost" sacred book or scroll, Graham said: "It is well known that the Ch'iang have no written language. How then, can they have sacred books? A Ch'iang priest sometimes has a book which contains many pictures, but not a word in writing or printing, which is used in divination. The other kind of 'sacred book' is not written, but memorized by the priests and repeated from memory during their ceremonies. They are the equivalents of the sacred books changed by Buddhist and Taoist priests in China and by Tibetan lamas." Even the sacred white stones that so impressed Torrance, were shown by Graham -- and some of his colleagues

-- to be a common feature among other West China tribes. In short, the Ch'iang religion had many things in common with those of neighboring peoples; they were by no means exclusive, or unique to them as Torrance so persistently claimed.

Lastly, regarding the "semitic features" that Torrance kept reporting in his descriptions of the Ch'iang people: when I once had the privilege of travelling through the heart of the Ch'iang territory with Dr. Graham, he pointed out to me how greatly their physical appearance differed from Torrance's assumptions. They were typical West China tribesmen, with features much like those of their semi-Tibetan neighbors.

Mr. Torrance left China in 1934, while I only came to Chengtu in 1937, spending a few months doing research on the Tibetan collections in Dr. Graham's museum; so I never met him. But I often heard Dr. Graham and other members of the Border Research Society talking about his "reprehensible tactics" in trying to convert the Ch'iang. They generally concluded by saying, "Now, the Ch'iang are ruined for any serious anthropological research."

In short, any theories grounded upon the baseless statements of Mr. Torrance must themselves be baseless, and no field study among present Ch'iang groups could prove them true. However, it may no longer be possible to do field work among the Ch'iang people, because these tribesmen are reported to have been either dispersed or assimilated in the course of the troubled years in the West China borderlands following the 1950 invasion of Tibet, and the Red Guards who came there after 1966 tried to eliminate any cultural diversity.

CHINESE OPEN ISRAELI TOURISM OFFICE

(reprinted from The Forward 9/29/
89)

Jerusalem: China opened an official tourism bureau in Tel Aviv, an act which is seen as the first step toward formal relations between Israel and China

donations may be directed to:

Star of the East Foundation
International
9348 Civic Center Drive,
Suite 101
Beverly Hills, California 90210
United States of America
Telephone (213) 285-8088

We gratefully acknowledge contributions from the following members for shipping expenses for the Encyclopedia Judaica and other Judaica materials to China..

Mr. & Mrs. Jack Cowl
\$50.00

Mr. & Mrs. Nigel Thomas
\$100.00

Mr. Marvin Josephson
\$500.00

SOME COMMENTS ON THE ORIGIN AND BELIEFS OF THE CH'ANG PEOPLE

By Prof. Schuyler V. R. Cammann
(Originally published in Hong Kong Jewish Chronicle, Feb. 86, pp. 41-44; reprinted by permission)

In view of my long-standing interest in the non-Chinese tribes of West and Southwest China, I was distressed to hear that the Ch'iang tribesmen in Szechuan are again being misrepresented, due to the uncritical acceptance of misinformation about them that was written earlier in this century by the Reverend Thomas Torrance, a Scottish missionary working for the American Bible Society. The lack of firm foundation behind Torrance's statements was exposed in detail by the missionary-anthropologist Dr. David C. Graham in the 1940's and 50's. But it appears that the latter's more solidly-based information about the Ch'iang and their religion have since been forgotten, while Mr. Torrance's misconceptions have resurfaced and attracted new attention, because of his sensational claims that the Ch'iang people were originally Jews, survivors from the Ten Tribes of Israel who were carried away by the Assyrian King Sargon in 722 B.C.

Actually, the Ch'iang, or "Chiang Min", were a very ancient people in East Asia. They are mentioned in Chinese history as one of the three groups of "barbarians" called San Miao, and they appear in the earliest records of the Chinese people, on the Shang oracle bones -- hundreds of years before Sargon conquered Israel. Their own traditions tell that they came from northeast China to their traditional homeland on the borders of West China between Szechuan and Tibet -- not from Asia Minor, as Torrance imagined. In fact, he himself admitted that their language, house-styles, and many of their customs were closely akin to their semi-Tibetan neighbors, the Ch'iang people, as well as to those of the Nosu ("Lolo") and Miao tribesmen who lived further to the south. He also reported that they ate pork, had no feeling against ingesting blood, and did not practice circumcision. In short, they were typical of the aboriginal peoples that the Chinese have driven before them in the process of expanding their nation from the Yellow River heartland. Their only real difference, he felt, was in their religious beliefs; but we shall see that he misinterpreted those.

Thomas Torrance came to China as a missionary sometime around 1915, and in 1918 he first encountered the Ch'iang people. By 1920, he had written a short pamphlet about them: "The History, Customs, and Religion of the Ch'iang, an Aboriginal People of West China," originally published by the Shanghai Mercury. Although no copies of this pamphlet are now available, some of the basic ideas in it were doubtless repeated in a lecture called "The Religion of the Ch'iang" that he gave for the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, which was later published in its journal (Vol. 54, 1923). Then in 1934 he gave a similar lecture, entitled "The Basic Spiritual Conceptions of the Religion of the Ch'iang," for the West China Border Research Society, in Chengtu, later published in its journal (Vol. 6, 1933-34). His final presentation of his fully developed ideas about the Ch'iang people and their religion came out in England, after he had left China, in a little book called China's First Missionaries: Ancient Israelites, published in London in 1937. It is most interesting to read these publications in the order in which they

first appeared, for then they reveal the progressive development of a deep obsession. In 1934 he admitted that he early reached the conclusion that the Ch'iang had originally come from somewhere in Asia Minor, and that their religion had an "Old Testament" pattern; yet in 1923 he still declared, "Chinese historians say they are a part of the San Miao, the aborigines of China." But in the same early lecture -- and in the subsequent article -- he claimed "the most wonderful thing about the Ch'iang next to their long existence as a separate people, is their religion. It is purely monotheistic and has remained so for time immemorial." He continued to stress his opinion that the Ch'iang were monotheistic, in spite of all the evidence that had already been accumulated by Chinese scholar-researchers, and was still being augmented by Dr. Graham's fieldwork, conclusively proving that the Ch'iang religion contained many gods and demons, and was not monotheistic at all.

In Torrance's later writings he tried to make the point that the Ch'iang apparently practiced the Hebrew tradition of the levirate, as another clear indication of some ancient connection. He was particularly impressed by this after two Chinese friends brought him a translation of a stone tablet erected at Lifan, a Chinese administrative center in the Ch'iang country. Written in the 6th year of Kuang Hsu (A.D. 1881), this said in part:

"If anyone marries the wife of a deceased relative, though a distance removed, it still reckons as adultery . . . For marrying the wife of a deceased elder or younger brother the penalty is death by strangling . . . In this district of Lifan an old bad custom still persists of a man marrying the wife of a deceased elder or younger brother . . . The reason for this is alleged to be the fear of marrying her to a stranger because that would hinder the prosperity of the household, so it is thought to be a marriage of convenience . . . But this ignores Chinese law . . . and merits severe punishment. From now on the people in the Lifan prefecture are forbidden to continue this custom." (The entire translation appears in the JWCBS, Vol. 6, 1933-34; only a portion is given in his book.)

However, this West China custom need not have been in any way con-

age, filmed in China, will be incorporated into the film and will serve as an illustration to these stories.

So far interviews with members of the communities were conducted and filmed costing \$4,000. However, in order to finish the film Beth Hatefutsoth needs an additional sum of \$21,000 which will cover other budgetary elements, such as editing, film rights, graphics, etc. Contributions would be sincerely appreciated.

Enia Zeevi Kupfer
Director, Projects Department
Beth Hatefutsoth
Ramat Aviv P. O. Box 39359
Tel Aviv 61392 Israel

To the Editor:

I am preparing a book on the Holocaust. Tentatively titled Rays of Light: Wondrous and Precious Miracles of the Holocaust, the book is a collection of stories told by people who survived because of acts of human kindness, inexplicable events, courage and cunning.

The purpose of the project is to preserve for future generations unusual and wonderful stories of events that happened in the days surrounding the Holocaust. They should represent evidence of human kindness, faith, extraordinary intelligence, unbelievable coincidence, or unexplainable "miracles." We want to concentrate on the wonders and positive aspects experienced during a time when the world was bathed in horror.

My company, Knowledgistics Corp., will underwrite all expenses dealing with The Miracle Project. When it is completed, we will find a publisher to bring it to the world. If it becomes profitable, Knowledgistics Corp. will donate half of the net profits proportionately to one of four organizations."

You do not have to be a writer to participate. We understand (if you write carefully or speak slowly) German and Yiddish. At this time, all we need is a general description of the event, including dates, places, and names. It would be easiest if you have access to a tape recorder and could tell your story in your own words. We have both mini and regular tape players. We will then contact you by letter or telephone for greater details and prepare your story for publication.

Through Letters to the Editor which

have been published in many Jewish periodicals, I have received submissions from all over the world. But, as you will understand, I have selected only a small percentage of these for publication.

Sincerely,
Arnold Geier, Editor
The Miracle Project
6901 S. W. 147 Avenue, 3-B
Miami, Florida 33193, USA
Phone: (305) 382-3917

SINO-JUDAIC DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA

(continued from page 1)

tional affairs, adopt an attitude toward the Jews quite different from that in the past."

(3) A Chinese professor at Shandong University is currently translating the novels of Saul Bellow into Chinese. She finds many similarities in the Jewish and Chinese family structure and has a great interest in "Judaic Culture." She will shortly be sending us an article dealing with her researches for printing in Points East.

(4) Moshe Dayan's autobiography has already been translated into Chinese, as well as the New York Times book on the Yom Kippur War. Also being translated are Tokayer and Swartz' The Fugu Plan; David Krantzler's Japanese, Nazis and Jews; Josephus' The Jewish Wars; Herzl's The Jewish State, and other Judaic works. Some of these translations have already been accepted for printing by Chinese publishers.

(5) At least four Chinese scholars have written books on the history of the Jewish presence in China, as well as on the history of the Jews throughout the Diaspora. We have received summaries of some of these books with requests as to the feasibility of translating these works into English.

(6) We are working with various groups in China for the purpose of bringing a Sino-Judaic exhibit into China. We have reason to think that we may achieve success in this matter.

There is an intellectual ferment among a number of Chinese scholars vis a vis Judaic history and culture. The Sino-Judaic Institute is working closely with these scholars, answering questions, supplying them with Judaic literature,

and hopefully to arrange closer cultural relations with the aforementioned groups.

For example, The Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle and our Institute, have shipped an entire set of the Encyclopedia Judaica to the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association. We have received acknowledgement of the shipment from the SJSA, with the following comment. "On behalf of, and in the name of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, I thank you very much. This Encyclopedia will provide SJSA scholars with many hours of interesting research."

There is a good deal more to be said of our activities in China, and we will in the future provide our readers with additional data relative to Sino-Judaic developments.

MY INTEREST IN JEWISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE

(continued from page 1)

Prof. Lu Fan, formerly was a Professor and Chairman of the Institute of Modern American Literature at Shandong University, which she founded in 1963. She was the first scholar in China to be interested in Jewish-American literature, and through her writings influenced many other scholars to specialize in this field. Her many publications analyzing this literature may be found in the journal, Wen Shi Zhe (Literature, History and Philosophy), an internationally well-known journal available in the libraries specializing in Chinese studies. Her interest in American Literature was cause for punishment during the "Cultural Revolution" when her early works were destroyed and she was physically punished as well. Prof. Lu Fan was a visiting Professor in Chinese Literature at Harvard in 1984-85, and is now retired. She would welcome correspondence. Address: Prof. Lu Fan, #1 Compound, Lao Xiao, Hong Jialou, Shandong University, Jinan, Shandong Pr., PRC.

SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE INAUGURAL DELEGATION TO CHINA PLANNED

By Fredric M. Kaplan

I am delighted to advise that the Board of Directors of SJI has enthusiastically approved reorganizing our SJI Inaugural Delegation to China in October 1990. In its discussion, the Board felt strongly that it was important for us to maintain contact with our friends in China. Moreover, it has been made abundantly clear that friends and organizations with whom we have been associated in China are also vitally interested in continued contacts. We therefore feel that our goals and long-term objectives can best be served by a renewed SJI Delegation to China.

Several SJI members, including our Chairman Art Rosen and myself, have visited China since the June distur-

bances and we have been received there with customary warmth, friendship, and Chinese hospitality. In other words, our old friends are still our old friends.

As you can see, we have constructed an itinerary that offers the most sought-after destinations in China, and travels at a time of year that does not conflict with Jewish holidays and when the climate is generally temperate and delightful in all regions of the country.

As this will be the first SJI-sponsored group in China, the tour should carry some historic implications. Efforts will be made to meet with participants in the Hebrew language program at Beijing University, and to meet with Chinese colleagues and contacts working on Jewish issues at the Chinese Academy of Science branches in Beijing and Shanghai as well as with members of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association.

Of course, sites of Jewish interest will be visited and lectures and meetings will be provided on subjects re-

lated to Jewish heritage in China. Additional sightseeing and shopping excursions can be arranged for those who may desire activities in place of the meetings.

The complete price for the 1990 program will be \$4,150, which includes a \$500.00 donation to the non-profit Sino-Judaic Institute. The price is inclusive of roundtrip airfare (on United Airlines) from San Francisco, all hotels (first-class throughout), meals, transportation and scheduled activities in China/hotels, breakfasts and sightseeing in Hong Kong; and visa fees.

The group will be limited to a maximum of 22 persons (including leaders) and early indications are that this new tour will fill up rapidly, once publicity begins.

If you and/or your relatives or friends wish to join us, please fill in and return the enclosed 1990 reservation form, together with your deposit of \$500.00 per person. We'd also be happy to hear your comments on the structure or details of the itinerary itself.

5. There are 18 synagogues and Jewish Prayer Halls in India today, down from 35, and some are on the verge of closure.

6. The few remaining Jewish schools in India today have an enrollment of but five to fifty percent Jewish students.

7. Some of the Jewish cemeteries in India are deteriorating and are in a state of dilapidation.

8. There are religious and social differences among the Baghdadi, Bene-Israel, and Cochini Jewish communities of India.

9. Many Jews and Israelis sojourn in India searching for alternative religious and cultural experiences, unaware of the existence of their Jewish brethren in India and their ironic prospect of their imminent extinction.

10. Full diplomatic relations between India and the State of Israel were severed after 1967.

We are facing perhaps the last generation of the Jewish community in India. The hope for the renewal and revival of the Jewish community in India is dependent upon the rekindling and reawakening of the Jewish identity among the Jewish people living and sojourning in India, and upon the recognition of their existence by Jewry worldwide.

Star of the East Foundation is a religious, educational and charitable foundation, established in 1988 in the United States of America, and is dedicated to ease the suffering of the Jewish People living in India and Asia-Pacific, through a broad range of humanitarian and educational programs.

The second purpose of Star of the East Foundation is to preserve, promote and perpetuate the unique history and culture of the Jewish people of India and Asia-Pacific, through a series of multimedia productions. The materials will be distributed and housed as an archival collection in Jewish institutions worldwide.

Listed below are programs, activities and multimedia productions of the foundation, listed in order of planned implementation.

1. Full documentation of the poverty conditions of the Jewish people living in India will be gathered by a four-member multimedia staff team. Six-hundred individuals will be interviewed in India, and 300 people in Asia-Pa-

cific, using videography, photography, audio cassettes and a social survey questionnaire.

Only with complete documentation will worldwide Jewry be convinced of the urgency of the situation and become motivated to give the timely help necessary. The multimedia documentation will become the centerpiece for a worldwide fund-raising campaign, to raise the money necessary to carry out the work of the foundation.

2. Establishment of Star of the East Foundation branches in Canada, England, Israel, Hong Kong, Japan and Australia.

3. Establishment of a Shelter and Rehabilitation Center for the Jewish homeless of Bombay and the Konkan Region of Maharashtra State of India. Shelter, food and medical attention will be available. Rehabilitation programs for self-sufficiency will be started, including a cottage industry for the production of Jewish handicrafts of India for export worldwide.

4. Sponsorship of rabbis to India. Various rabbis have expressed their desire to serve in the program, and will leave for India as soon as funds are available.

5. Establishment of Jewish Educational Outreach Centers at Poona, Calcutta, New Delhi and Bombay. Thousands of young Jewish people from America and Europe come to India each year, to seek out Indian gurus. The Jewish Educational Outreach Centers will establish contact with the young travelers and others. A rabbi will hold services, and each Center will have an up-to-date resource and information center, including a library with the latest Jewish teachings on video, from Israel and around the world. Lectures, workshops and other educational programs will be held.

6. Initiation of a fund-raising campaign of Siyum Hatorah; the inscribing of a Sefer Torah, to be presented to the Jewish community of New Delhi, India. There are 305,804 letters which make up the five Books of Moses. A donation of eighteen dollars per letter, totals five-and-a-half million dollars.

7. Distribution of Mezuzot (Prayers for Doorposts), Tefillin (Phylacteries), and Tallit (Prayer Shawls).

8. Facilitate "Adopt A Synagogue of India" Program by sister Synagogues around the world.

9. Preservation of a Jewish village in the Konkan Region of Maharashtra State, India as a folk museum.

10. Establishment in India of a Jewish Youth Camp and Retreat Center to disseminate religious and educational programs.

Serving to preserve, promote and perpetuate the existence of the Jewish culture in India and Asia-Pacific, Star of the East Foundation will produce a broad range of multimedia productions. The productions will elucidate the religious, cultural, and historical aspects, illustrating the people, synagogues, institutions, monuments and cemeteries of the Jewish people living in India and Asia-Pacific.

In India, the productions will include the Cochini, Bene-Israel, and Baghdadi Jewish communities in New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Cochin, Ahmedabad, Pona and Konkan. The Asia-Pacific productions will include the Jewish people of Burma, Thailand, Singapore, The Philippines, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tahiti and Hawaii.

Listed below are multimedia productions planned by Star of the East Foundation:

1. Multimedia Documentation, using videography, photography, and oral history.

2. Publication of Two Reference-Resource Books to Jewish Communities; one featuring India, the other featuring Asia-Pacific. Both volumes will be Color-Illustrated and Trilingual (English, Hebrew, Spanish). First printing to be 10,000 copies, to be distributed worldwide.

3. A series of on-going Booklets, Articles and Newsletters, also trilingual.

4. Graphic Productions, including Slide-Show Presentations, Greeting Cards, Calendars and Posters.

5. Exhibitions of Photography, Videography and Graphic Productions in Jewish Museums, universities and Community Centers worldwide.

6. Benefit performances of Docudrama, Concerts and Productions.

Star of the East Foundation is a tax-exempt Foundation, and all donations are tax-deductible in the United States and Canada. This year, branches of the Foundation will be established in five other countries. All enquiries and

SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE 1990 INAUGURAL DELEGATION TO CHINA

Proposed Daily Itinerary

October 17-November 4, 1990 (Revised - 11/1/89)

Led by Arthur H. Rosen, Chairman, SJI

DEPART US

Day 01 Oct 17 Wed Dep. New York/San Francisco via United Airlines Flight UA805 for Hong Kong; Depart 1:45PM

ARRIVE HONG KONG

Day 02 Oct 18 Thu Arrival 9:20PM. Transfer Ramada Renaissance Hotel

FLY BEIJING

Day 03 Oct 19 Fri Fly Beijing via CA 102, dep. 12:20PM, arrive 3:10PM. Transfer to Jiango (or Jinglun) Hotel.

BEIJING

Day 04 Oct 20 Sat AM: Temple of Heaven, Summer Palace, Beijing Zoo.
PM: Optional: Visit to Beijing University, observe Hebrew language classes; shopping tours.
Evening: Welcoming Banquet with Chinese scholars and Beijing residents with interest in Sino-Jewish questions.

BEIJING

Day 05 Oct 21 Sun Great Wall of China and Ming Tombs, full-day excursion

BEIJING/KAIFENG

Day 06 Oct 22 Mon Fly Beijing-Zhengzhou via CA#3182, 12:20pm/2:00PM (we will use BJ-Kaifeng direct flight, if available), transfer to Kaifeng by Dongjing (Eastern Capital) Hotel.

KAIFENG

Day 07 Oct 23 Tue Tour former Jewish section of Kaifeng, including former synagogue site, visit Kaifeng Provincial Museum, possibly including new Jewish History Section (which may be open at this time).
PM: Dinner with Shi, Zhao, and Ai family members (Kaifeng residents of Jewish descent).

will need to set up a faculty, including teachers proficient in Hebrew. But all this depends on financial support which is critical as funds for these special studies are not available from either the Chinese government or the school. **Question: How will you keep up your own studies and will you study Hebrew yourself?**

Xu Xin: I will continue study and research and the interchange of ideas with other Chinese Hebrew scholars. Of course, I wish to learn Hebrew and hope there may be an opportunity for me to do so, possibly while researching in either Israel or the U.S.

Question: Why do you feel you have enough expertise to do this and what are your academic credentials?

Xu Xin: First, I have studied Jewish literature and history for many years and my published articles based on this research have been recognized by Chinese scholars in the social sciences.

Second, I have had a great exposure to Jewish life: living with a Jewish family in the United States, corresponding with international scholars, and my visit to and lectures at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Few Chinese have been exposed to Jewish culture, literature, history and religion to the extent that I have.

Third, I have wide contacts with Hebrew scholars both at home and abroad.

And, finally, as President of the China Judaic Studies Association, I am determined to further the study of Judaism in China. Where there is a will there is a way and I believe that not only am I able to do it, but able to do it well!

Question: What materials would you most like sent from the U.S.

Xu Xin: We need books about Jewish history, customs, religion, literature, and about the current situation in Israel today. Hebrew language reading books and Hebrew-English dictionaries would also be most welcome as would be Talmud and the Judaic Encyclopedia in English.

(Materials can be sent to Professor Xu Xin, English Department, Nanjing University, Nanjing, People's Republic of China.)

'WE WISH TO THANK THE SWIG FOUNDATIONS, WHO ON BEHALF OF THE OWNERS OF THE FAIRMONT HOTELS, CONTRIBUTED \$3,000.00 TO THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE, TO ASSIST US IN CARRYING ON OUR WORK.'

ISRAEL PLANS BEIJING CENTER TO AID SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

By Daniel Southerland
(reprinted from the Washington Post 12/15/89)

Israel is seeking to establish its first formal foothold in China -- an academic center in the Chinese capital to promote scientific and technological contacts between the two countries, academic sources said today.

To avoid antagonizing Arab nations, the Chinese government has consistently rejected formal relations with Israel. But the two nations have developed informal trade and scientific ties. A breakthrough occurred three months ago, when China opened a permanent travel office in Tel Aviv. The academic center in Beijing is to be headed by members of Israel's National Academy of Sciences. The Israelis believe they can provide agricultural technology to boost China's stagnating farm production. In the absence of diplomatic relations, the center is considered likely to pursue other Israel interests in China.

No date has been set for the center's opening. The Chinese and Israeli foreign ministers reached an unannounced agreement this fall on establishing the center during a meeting at United Nations headquarters in New York.

YOU GOTTA HAVE FRIENDS

(reprinted from the Northern California Jewish Bulletin 1/19/90)

Jerusalem: The Chinese branch of the Friendship League wants to make friends with the Israeli branch. Attorney Moshe Meron, president of the 13,000-member Friendship League of Israel, said last month that he had received a letter to that effect from his Chinese counterpart. This is the Chinese chapter's first acknowledgement of the Israelis' two-year-long offer of the hand of friendship, Meron said.

STAR OF THE EAST FOUNDATION TO ASSIST INDIAN JEWS

By Michael Goodman

India and her people, one nation in history to nurture Jewish culture without persecution or prejudice, has sustained the faith of the Jewish people of India for more than two thousand years.

Since ancient times, India has been a vibrant center of Jewish culture, yet few people in the world are aware of the existence of Jewish culture in India. Following independence from the British in India and Palestine, and coincident with the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, India has witnessed the emigration of the majority of new Jewry to Israel, the United States, England, Australia, and Canada. **Assimilation and attrition endanger the existence of Jewish culture in India today. The progressive deterioration and disappearance of the Jewish communities in India is abetted by the fact that:**

1. There are no rabbis, Jewish educators or social workers among the Jewish communities in India today.
2. There are 6,000 Jewish people in India today, down from a maximum population of 35,000.
3. Ninety percent of the Jewish people in India today are over sixty years of age.
4. One third of the Jewish people in India today live at the poverty level of the Indian people.

- Day 08 Oct 24 **KAIFENG**
Wed AM: Tour Imperial Song Dynasty restorations; also visit Kaifeng notable Confucian Temple, Iron Pagoda, Dong Da Mosque, and other historical sites.
PM: Free for individual touring, meetings
Evening: Dinner discussion with Prof. Shirley Wood, long-time Kaifeng resident, member of Henan Province People's Politic Consultative Congress, and a student of local Jewish history.
- Day 09 Oct 25 **KAIFENG/XI'AN**
Thu Bus to Zhengzhou. Fly Zhengzhou/Xi'an via CA#5209. Transfer to newly renovated Bell Tower Hotel.
- Day 10 Oct 26 **XI'AN**
Fri Full-day excursion to Qin Dynasty excavations; Banpo Village (6,000-year-old neolithic site); Hua Qing Springs, site of the baths of imperial concubine Yang Guifei, also the site of the 1936 kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek.
- Day 11 Oct 27 **XI'AN**
Sat Visit Shaanxi Provincial Museum, China's greatest repository of Tang Dynasty art; city monuments and structures from Chang'an (Tang) period.
- Day 12 Oct 28 **XI'AN/SHANGHAI**
Sun Fly Xi'an/Shanghai via CA#2501 or CA#2521. Transfer to new wing Jinjiang Hotel (original section of Jinjiang formerly owned by Sir Victor Sassoon).
- Day 13 Oct 29 **SHANGHAI**
Mon AM: Tour the Bund, Waterfront, Nanjing Road District; free-time for shopping.
PM: Optional: Meeting at Fudan University with President Hua Zhongyi and Vice-President Zhuang Xichang, along with Prof. Gu Xiaoming and other members of the History Department; meeting with officials of Shanghai Judaic Studies Association.
- Day 14 Oct 30 **SHANGHAI**
Tue AM: Tour former Jewish sites near Jingjiang Hotel: former "Russian" Ashkenazic Synagogue, Jewish Club, Municipal Children's Palace (former Kadoorie Mansion), other Jewish sites.
PM: Free
Evening: Shanghai Banquet, including invited guests from among the Shanghai Judaic scholars community.
- Day 15 Oct 31 **SHANGHAI/GUILIN**
Wed Fly Shanghai/Guilin via CA#5321, 7:05AM/9:30AM. Transfer to Holiday Inn Hotel.
- Day 16 Nov 01 **GUILIN**
Thu Full-day boat excursion on Li River to view region's stunning karst mountain landscape.
Evening: Fly Guilin to Hong Kong via Dragonair #816, dep. 8:05PM, arrive 9:55PM. Transfer Ramada Renaissance Hotel.
- Day 17 Nov 02 **HONG KONG**
Fri AM: Hong Kong Island/Peak Tour to Aberdeen.
PM: Shopping Excursions.
- Day 18 Nov 03 **HONG KONG**
Sat AM: Shabbat Service at Hong Kong's lovely Ohel Leah Synagogue, followed by Kiddush at adjacent Jewish Recreation Center.
PM: Free
- Day 19 Nov 04 **RETURN FLIGHT TO SAN FRANCISCO ***
Sun Return flight via UA 801 (Depart Hong Kong 12:25PM. Arrive SFO 9:45AM. same day).

* PLEASE NOTE: Optional additional days in Hong Kong as well as other stopovers in Asia may be arranged. Please advise China Passage at time of reservation.

EARLY CHINESE SUPPORT FOR THE JEWISH NATIONAL MOVEMENT

By Rena Krasno & Ora Elgar

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the "Father of Modern China," based his ideology on the famous "Three Principles", nationalism, democracy and socialism. He believed deeply in the necessity of nationalism in his own country and, as a result of this conviction, was sympathetic to national aspirations of other peoples.

N.E.B. Ezra who was the publisher and editor of a Zionist magazine, Israel Messenger, in Shanghai, was well aware of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's ideological principles. He entered into correspondence with the Chinese leader seeking his support for the Jewish national cause.

On November 2, 1917, Britain issued the Balfour Declaration which stated that it favoured "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people", and that it would "use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object."

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was sympathetic to the Jewish struggle and in 1918 the Chinese government officially endorsed the Balfour Declaration. This letter of endorsement was published throughout the world both in its original Chinese and English translation. Its publication spurred other countries to follow China's example.

In 1920, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen wrote a letter to N.E.B. Ezra, which was published in the Israel Messenger. The original of the letter is now in the files of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem. It states:

April 24, 1920 20 Rue Moliere
Dear Mr. Ezra,

I have read your letter and copy of Israel's Messenger with much interest and wish to assure you of my sympathy for this movement which is one of the greatest movements of the present time.

All lovers of democracy cannot help but support the movement to restore your wonderful and historic nation which has contributed so much

to the civilization of the world and which rightly deserves an honourable place in the family of nations.

Yours very truly,
Sun Yat-Sen

On July 24, 1922 the Palestine Mandate was approved by the Council of the League of Nations, of which China was a member.

China persisted in its encouragement of Jewish aspirations in Palestine. On November 2nd, 1927 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, Admiral Tai Ping Kang wrote a letter to N.E.B. Ezra which was published in the Israel Messenger. It stated:

"How quickly the 10th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration has come. I hope you and your colleagues will continue to work for an independent Jewish nation. You have a wonderful history and deserve to exist as a people and a government."

In 1947, Dr. Sun Fo, the son of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen and Vice-President of the Republic of China at the time, wrote a member of the Zionist organization in Shanghai:

Nanking, 4th July, 1947

In reply to your letter, I wish to state that the Zionist Movement is championing a worthy cause. I am glad that the late Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's sympathy for, and support of, the movement have produced results. As a lover of democracy, I fully endorse my late father's views.

Assuring you of my wholehearted sympathy and wishing you success.

I am very truly yours,
Sun Fo

The Israeli People, with all its tragic past and isolation, honour the memory of one of the world's greatest leaders - Dr. Sun Yat-Sen - who extended his understanding assistance at a critical turning point of its history.

CHINA CENTER FOR JUDAIC STUDIES OPENS AT NANJING UNIVERSITY An Interview with Xu Xin

By Beverly Friend

In the midst of the current intellectual

and political upheaval in China and castigation of the United States as a philosophical villain, friendship between a Chinese scholar and a Jewish American professor has led to the initiation of a China Judaic Studies Association at Nanjing University.

When Chicago scholar James Friend visited The People's Republic of China in 1985, all set to teach English at Nanjing University, he was amazed to discover a Chinese professor who had never met a Jew teaching Jewish-American literature. Not only was Xu Xin (pronounced Shoo Shin) teaching and translating the works of such authors as Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud, he was also writing articles on such unique subjects as "The Schlemiel in Jewish Literature."

The following year, Xu Xin broadened his scope by immersing himself in American Jewish Culture. He came to the United States to teach at Chicago State University where Friend chaired the English Department, lived with the Friend family, attended a Bat Mitzvah, a Jewish Wedding, High Holiday and Friday night services (primarily at the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation in Evanston), and read voraciously on Jewish topics.

In the second year of Xu Xin's U.S. experience, Friend died suddenly of a heart attack and thus did not live to see Xu Xin's return to China via Israel, where he not only visited Jerusalem but delivered a lecture on "Jews and Judaism through Chinese Eyes" at Hebrew University's Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace.

Since his return to China, Xu Xin has set up a China Judaic Studies Association and Rabbi Arnold Rachlis of Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, Evanston, Illinois is one of the Association consultants.

A mail interview with Xu Xin elicited answers to the following questions:

Question: What is the purpose of a China Judaic Studies Association?

Xu Xin: Although the Chinese people have never anti-semitic tendencies, few Chinese really know anything about Jews. In fact, in 1949 the study of Judaism became a suspended subject creating a whole generation of academics profoundly unfamiliar with Hebrew scholarship and Jewish affairs.

When I returned from my trip to the U.S. via Israel, I was invited to describe my experiences to the student body of Nanjing University. I was saddened by the lack of information revealed by the questions the students asked me during the lecture. The time has come to do something about this gap in their knowledge. And this is the goal of the Association.

Question: What are the goals of the Association?

Xu Xin: To carry out Judaic studies in China; organize and publish a series of articles and books on Judaism; offer related courses; hold seminars and public lectures to promote a better understanding of Jewish culture and the Jewish people; raise funds to set up a Judaic Studies Foundation to subsidize publications and award Chinese scholars who have made outstanding contributions to the field; build a library for research and study, and develop both domestic and international conferences on Judaic studies.

Question: How did you first get interested in Judaic Studies?

Xu Xin: I first got interested because of my study of Jewish literature. To study the literature of a people, one needs to know something about its history, culture, and civilization. I think it is almost impossible to appreciate Jewish literature to the fullest without knowledge of Judaism. The problem in China is that Judaism remains a suspended subject for the last 40 years. Literature about Judaism is not available for the Chinese as a result of very few Chinese scholars involving themselves in Judaic studies. You have to do it on your own if you want to know something about it. The turning point of my interest was in 1985 when I met Jim (Friend).

Question: What books did you teach in the early courses at Nanjing University. What stories did you translate and what critical articles did you write?

Xu Xin: Most of the materials I used in my early courses were the handouts I compiled by myself because we did not have any access to books published outside of China, especially to textbooks. My translations included works by both Jewish and Christian authors: I. B. Singer, Clifford Odets, Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer, John Cheever, Saul Bellow, Ernest Hem-

ingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Baldwin, and other contemporary authors.

But my critical essays focused on Jewish authors almost exclusively, and I wrote on such topics as "Characters in Singer's Short Stories," "Jewish Humor," and "The Image of the Schlemiel in Jewish Literature."

I am currently translating a novel by S. Y. Agnon and aim to complete the work this summer.

Question: When you met Jim, was he the first Jew you had ever known? How did knowing him influence you?

Xu Xin: Yes, he was not only the first Jew I had ever known in person, but also the first Jew I knew well. His influence on my interest in Judaism could never be overestimated. As early as 1985 when he first came to teach in the English Department at Nanjing University as a visiting professor, while I was Deputy Chair of the Department, we had many discussions on Jewish history and Jewish American literature. His knowledge and insight impressed me and aroused my interest. This was a turning point for me.

A year later, when I went to teach in the English Department at Chicago State University, I did not just stay at Jim's house as an ordinary guest. Rather, I lived there as a family member. Not only he, but his wife, his in-laws, Dr. and Mrs. Oberfeld, and his daughters, Tracy and Marla, all shared their lives with me.

During that time we attended synagogue frequently, celebrated Jewish holidays both at the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation in Evanston and in a tiny temple in Alpena, Michigan. Sometimes the Friends arranged time especially for me to experience Jewish life. It was a total immersion and gave me insight into their religious life.

Question: What did you learn about Judaism in the United States? What especially impressed you?

Xu Xin: Honestly, before I visited the U.S. my knowledge about Judaism had been quite superficial. Then, the actual experience of living with a Jewish family opened new worlds. For instance, the very first week after my arrival in Chicago, I was invited to participate in a Bat Mitzvah ceremony in a synagogue in Milwaukee. It was the first time in my life that I had ever

attended any religious service. What I found there was very touching and moving: man's relationship to his fellow man was so beautiful that I began to feel that the Jewish synagogue was nothing but a home which is graced by many customs and ceremonies, illumined by the sacred lights of festivals and cheered by songs of joy and faith.

The seder service at Passover was another beautiful affirmation. The special decoration of the table, the symbols of the feast, the Haggadah readings, meant more than ceremony because it integrated tradition with contemporary values and applied that tradition to modern society. Judaism shows the ability of the Jewish people to take elements from the outside culture and adapt them for their purposes without losing their essential character.

Years ago, when I was asked why I had an interest in Jewish American literature, I said something like this, "It seems to me that there exist many similarities between the Jewish and the Chinese civilizations. I believe that the literary achievements of the Jews include things beneficial to the growth of our national literature." Thus I feel that Judaism, as a high form of civilization of human beings, includes things beneficial to the modernization of the Chinese.

Question: What is the reaction to all this at your university in China?

Xu Xin: The reaction is positive and encouraging. Many people have talked to me and asked for further information about the Center. The editor in chief of the Journal of Nanjing University has already agreed to set up a special column for Judaic studies in the Journal this fall. However, we must be realistic. This is the very beginning of our project and I think it will take some time before the subject becomes popular. The most important thing is for us to make a start.

Question: Will you be teaching classes in Judaism soon?

Xu Xin: Presently I am not teaching any because it is such a new subject and time is needed to prepare teaching materials and handouts. However, I plan to offer a course in Judaism to students in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year. After that, we