capital. Thus China does not appear ready — quite yet — to antagonize the Arabs by establishing diplomatic relations with Israel.

While proclaiming that Israel has a right to exist, China also has called for an international conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, both of which Israel continues to oppose.

Though this factor remains an obstacle to Sino-Israeli political ties, some Chinese leaders think the American Jewish community can influence U.S. policy toward China. At a time when Sino-American relations remain strained because of the events in and around Tiananmen Square two years ago, some Chinese apparently feel that gestures toward Israel would pay important political dividends in the United States.

Given this situation, it would appear that, for now, China will continue to emphasize the non-governmental areas of its ties with Israel, stressing "people-to-people" scientific, cultural, and economic exchanges. This will enable China both to profit from Israeli technology and also possibly score political points in Washington. At the same time, this "people-to-people" diplomacy may establish the framework for formal political ties if at some point Israel agrees to the convening of a Middle East peace conference, or if several important Arab states follow Egypt's lead in signing peace treaties with Israel, or if China decides to adopt the new Soviet approach to Israel, namely, that political ties with Israel are necessary if a major power wishes to play a significant role in the Middle East peace process.

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The Sino-Judaic Institute is a non-denominational, non-profit, and non-political organization which was founded in 1985 by an international group of scholars and laypersons. Its goals and purposes are as follows:

1) To promote friendship and understanding between the Chinese and Jewish peoples and to encourage and develop their cooperation in matters of mutual historical and cultural interest.
2) To assist the descendants of the ancient Jewish community of the city of Kaifeng, Henan Province, in their efforts to preserve and maintain the artifacts and documents they have inherited from their forebears, as well as in their efforts to reconstruct the history of their community.
3) To support the establishment and maintenance of a Judaica section in the projected municipal museum of Kaifeng.
4) To promote and assist study and research in the histories of early Jewish travel in China and in the rise and fall of the various Jewish communities that were established in China in the course of the past thousand and more years.
5) To publish general information and scholarly materials dealing with all aspects of the Chinese-Jewish experience.
6) To serve as a briefing and information center for those interested in Sino-Judaica, and for travelers to Kaifeng and other centers of Jewish interest in China.
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MNEMOSYNE ABROAD: REFLECTIONS ON THE CHINESE AND JEWISH COMMITMENT TO REMEMBRANCE

By Vera Schwarcz
Trans. & rep. from Twenty First Century, v. 13, Feb. 1991

"Chinese history should be studied because it can be seen to make sense in the same world of discourse in which we try to make sense of the West. If we make this kind of sense, perhaps we can make this kind of world."

Joseph Levenson, "The Genesis of Confucian China" [1]

Disparate histories, such as that of Chinese and Jewish culture, may be likened to great rivers. They do not cross, do not flow into one another unless individuals create, or become, an interpretative canal. The one proposed here centers on the valorization of memory in two different worlds that touched my own life. A child of Holocaust survivors from Romania, I have been writing about the dilemmas of Chinese intellectuals for nearly two decades. At first, the cross current between Chinese and Jewish history was subterranean, below the surface of texts that detailed the politics of forgetting which had enveloped the lives of my subjects in China. Now, the time has come to construct, to acknowledge explicitly, the connective channel.

The history of Chinese intellectuals victimized by Mao Zedong is not theirs alone. It demands to be made sense of in the same world of discourse in which I try to fathom the experience of Jewish survivors. In spite of vast differences in cultural outlook and sufferings endured, both speak a common language: the language of memory rescued — with great difficulty — from publicly enforced, as well as personally cultivated, amnesia.

I heard this language afresh in Beijing on May 20th, 1989. It was the first morning of martial law. The tragic fate of the democracy movement was now evident, though mass violence was still a couple of weeks away. On this day, forty intellectuals gathered in a cavernous hall on the Qinghua University campus to commemorate the 80th birthday of a well-known philosopher. The contrast between the imminent repression on the streets (which would distort the entire history of the Tiananmen events) and the rituals of remembrance carried out with intense mindfulness inside the university gates was no accident. It mirrored the tension within Chinese intellectuals themselves. They still struggled to retain fidelity to their own history in the face of a political system determined to dictate the parameters of permissable memory.

The large commemoration hall had been set aside many months before May 20th. It was intended to accommodate hundreds. Now, it held a few dozen guests who managed to come by bicycle on a morning when all bus transportation had been cut off in Beijing. Those present experienced themselves as a fragment, a conscious remainder of community fractured once again by repressive politics. They carried out the commemorative ceremony with added intensity. Their collective reanimation of one man's past was a gesture of mutual encouragement, mutual consolation for the difficult months that lay ahead.

Co-memorializing a still living teacher enabled the assembled guests to reaffirm the Confucian tradition long suppressed by Chinese Communism. Zhang Dainian, the guest of honor, had made his mark in the scholarly world on the basis of his scrupulous and imaginative reinterpretation of traditional Chinese philosophy. His students — disciples, in the self chosen appelation of the speakers at the ceremony — now gathered to pay tribute to the master's weiren, his inner humanity.

They dwelt on Zhang Dainian's spiritual endurance during repeated waves of persecution, from the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign through the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69. Each speaker also offered some token of appreciation: a classical poem or an ink brush painting. The unifying theme of theses offerings was the rugged pine, a traditional symbol of steadfast moral purpose in an unjust and corrupt world. While guns were loaded on the streets of Beijing, these intellectuals managed to create an hour of stillness. Their gathering bore witness to Nietzche's earlier intuition: "The great events, they are not our loudest, but our stillest hours. Not around the inventors of new noises, but around the inventors of new values does the world revolve. It revolves inadibly." [2]

In isolation, each intellectual faced the noisy eventfulness of martial law and the imminent crackdown with terror. Together, however, for a brief moment, Zhang Dainian's disciples managed to tell history their own way. And that story, on this morning of May 20th, revolved around one guardian of tradition. The commemorative ritual embodied and expressed the importance of remembrance for individual and collective survival.

I was the only foreigner at the May 20th gathering. I knew Zhang Dainian, the guest of honor, well. We had been talking about the dilemmas of intellectuals in modern China for a decade.[3] There was between us something known as Chinese as zhiyin, the sound of mutually appreciated music. It wasn't music as such that echoed through our conversations, but rather a shared obsession with the vicissitudes of history. On the day that martial law engulfed the city of Beijing, in the company of practiced survivors — who

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From the editor:

Over my years as editor of Points East, I have had the privilege of reading some remarkable manuscripts, all of which I have had the pleasure of sharing with you.

But it was with mounting excitement that I began to read Prof. Vera Schwarcz's article. Here was something totally different — a first attempt to compare aspects of the Jewish and Chinese worldviews. It is so novel that I decided to feature the entire article in this issue, even though that meant foregoing many other good pieces. (Not to worry though, these will appear in future issues — one thing about our field of interest, the articles are almost never timely.)

To be sure, there are areas for improvement in Prof. Schwartz's article. She is a Jewish scholar of Chinese thought so her grasp of Chinese modalities is deeper than her understanding of Jewish ones. It is my hope that Judaic scholars will assist her in refining her understanding. But even with this caveat, to my mind her study ranks with Prof. Irene Eber's work on the translation of classical Yiddish stories into Chinese and Michael Pollak's discussion of how knowledge of the existence of the Chinese Jews was used (and abused) in the West as a pioneering work of the first order.

I hope you enjoy Prof. Schwarcz's article as much as I did and that it provokes some written responses on your part. With the next issue, we will return to our usual format.

Anson Laytner

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IN THE FIELD

- The documentary "Escape to the Rising Sun," about the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, by Belgian filmmaker Diane Perelsztejn, was shown at the Jewish Film Festival in San Francisco and Berkeley. Video tapes of this film can be purchased for $90, and the film in 16mm may be rented for $200 from the National Center for Jewish Film, Lown Building 102, Brandeis University, Waltham MA 02254-9110, (617) 899-7044, Fax: 617-736-2070.
- Last issue, we described the Chinese Encyclopedia Judaica project which Prof. Xu Xin is heading up. Here is the full list of the compilation committee:
  - Xu Xin, Nanjing University, chairman of the Chinese Jewish Studies Association, compiler and translator of the Anthology of Modern Hebrew Fiction, author of ten essays on American Jewish literature, Hebrew literature, Jewish culture, Zionism and modern Israel, which he has visited.
  - Lin Jijiao, Nanjing University, vice-chairman of the Chinese Jewish Studies Association, author of Aesthetics and Culture, and eight essays on Jewish culture and Hebrew literature.
  - Xu Dingxin, Nanjing University, author of A Concise History of the Hebrews and ten essays on Judaism and Christianity.
  - Gu Shuo, Nanjing University, author of On Western Philosophy and several essays on philosophy.
  - Xiao Xian, Yunnan University, author of Personal Aspects of the State of Israel, and fifteen essays on modern Israel.
  - Wang Yisha, retired curator of the Kaifeng Museum, author of twelve essays on various subjects.
  - Gu Xiaoming, Fudan University, vice-chairman of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, author of Jewish Culture, and twenty essays on various subjects.
  - Yan Ruisong, Northwest University, in Sian, director of the Research Section of Middle East Politics and International Relations, translator of My People, My Country, by Abba Eban, and author of ten essays on the Middle East.
- Funding for the conference entitled "Jewish Diasporas in China: Comparative and Historical Perspectives," organized by Prof. Jonathan Goldstein, West Georgia College, and to be held at the Fairbank Center, Harvard University in August, 1992, has been approved by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Sino-Judaica Institute has agreed to contribute $1000 toward the travel costs of a participating scholar from the Peoples Republic of China. Further details as to participants and titles of papers will be forthcoming in a future issue of Points East.
- Isi Liebler, president of the Asia Pacific Jewish Association, and Chairman, Asia Pacific Section, World Jewish Congress, the latter of which

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

September 3, 1991

In reference to Rena Krasno's article, "Jewish Publications in Shanghai during First Half of 20th Century," appearing on p. 7 in the March 1991 issue of Points East, I wish to add an observation to her report on Israel Messenger (M'Vasser Israel. When Mr. N.E. Ezra died in 1937, in order that Mrs. Ezra could continue the publication and make a livelihood for herself and her two daughters, my father, Rev. Mendel Brown, minister at Ohel Rachel Synagogue, took over the editorship of the journal on her behalf.

Henrietta Reifler
Seattle, WA

hai, a part of the Sassoon empire, but he is also interested in the social scene at the other hotels: The Astor House, the Park, the Metropole, Cathay Mansions and the Palace, as well as at the clubs and other venues. He would be interested in hearing of any relevant information. Mr. James Ross, of Cambridge, Mass., is writing a book on the European Jewish refugee community in Shanghai during WW II, and he also is interested in receiving any pertinent material.

- The Sino-Judaic Institute wishes to express its deep appreciation to the Pacific Rim Institute, of the American Jewish Committee, and to its director, Dr. Neil C. Sandberg, for the contribution of $1000 for the purpose of providing books for Chinese organizations and scholars interested in Judaica and Jewish issues.

CHINA AND ISRAEL: A DEEPENING RELATIONSHIP

By Robert O. Freedman

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While the center of world attention currently is focused on the aftermath of the Gulf war and resettlement of Kurdish refugees, another development of potentially great significance to the Middle East is underway — a rapproachment between China and Israel. Sino-Israeli relations began to develop in the late 1970s as China moved away from ideologically based foreign policy, restoring diplomatic relations with the United States, and toning down its support for so-called national liberation movements like the PLO.

At first Sino-Israeli contacts were limited to the military sphere as Israel, possibly capitalizing on China's poor showing in the Sino-Vietnamese war, helped China modernize some of its old Soviet-supplied weaponry. Initially, this was kept a secret as China, particularly after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, sought to keep Israel at arm's length to avoid antagonizing the Arabs.

By the mid-1980s, however, the situation began to change. Following Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's decision to openly improve relations with Israel, China followed suit, albeit at a much slower pace. Contacts between the Israeli and Chinese UN ambassadors took place, followed by UN meetings between the Chinese and Israeli foreign ministers.

By 1989 Sino-Israeli relations had reached what might be called the political "take-off" stage, as agreements were signed on the exchange of students, the establishment of an Israeli academic liaison office in China, and a Chinese tourist office in Tel Aviv.

In 1990 some 70 Israeli scientists visited China, including a nuclear physicist who was invited to Beijing for a month-long visit. At the same time, with the Chinese government evidently serious about improving relations, a Center for Israeli Studies was established in Shanghai as part of the China Institute for Peace and Development Studies.

Directed by Wang Weichou, the Center places primary emphasis on the Israeli economy, politics, and foreign policy, especially Sino-Israeli relations. The Institute, which already has established contacts with several universities in Israel, publishes a journal, Israel Trends, and is currently completing a book, A General Introduction to Israel, which will be the first book on Israel published in the People's Republic.

A related development is the founding of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association — the first such Jewish Studies Association in China. The association grew out of a 1988 Shanghai conference on Jewish culture. One of its first projects is the preparation of a book, Jewish Refugees in Shanghai 1933-45, which will be based on archival material, newspapers, and oral histories of Jews who lived in Shanghai during this period.

With the establishment of the Center and the Association in Shanghai, and the Israeli academic liaison office in Beijing, Sino-Israeli relations began to gain momentum — much to the consternation of the PLO representative in China, Yousef Rajab. In an

interview with the author, he complained that when he protested the opening of Israel's Academic Liaison Office — which he considered a political act — he was told "China needs Israeli technology."

This was one thing on which the head of the academic liaison office, Yoel Gillat, whom I also interviewed, agreed with his PLO diplomatic counterpart. Gillat noted China's interest in Israeli irrigation techniques — a Sino-Israeli irrigation center is being established in Beijing — and desert research, with a Chinese delegation signing an agreement on desert irrigation during a visit to Israel. These scientific exchanges were followed by economic ties in late 1990, as a 14-member Israeli economic delegation arrived in China, and Israel set up a trading company, Kopeko, to promote Sino-Israeli trade.

As important as these scientific and economic contacts are, Israel clearly is interested in closer political contacts as well. These are developing, albiet more slowly than other exchanges. In November 1990 the Israeli Academic Liaison Office was empowered to issue visas for travel to Israel, and one of the leading Israeli specialists on the Middle East, Moshe Maoz, was invited to China where, in the words of Gillat, he was the first Israeli since 1949 to directly present the Israeli point of view on his country's conflict with the Arabs to Chinese academics and government officials.

With the pace of academic, economic, and scientific exchanges well under way, can one expect diplomatic relations to be established in the near future? Although it is far less concerned with ideological issues than in the past, and, for the time being at least, no longer seeks to promote revolution abroad. China still has one major foreign policy problem — Taiwan. In the past, China needed the votes of the Arab states in the UN on the Taiwan issue. While this is less important today, because China itself is a permanent member of the Security Council, China still needs Arab diplomatic support on the Taiwan issue. Also, China is interested in the Arab world as a source of investment

NOTES

1. Joseph Levonson, "The Genesis of 'Confucian China and Its Modern fate', in: Curtis ed., The Historian's Workshop, (New York, 1970) p. 287.
2. F. W. Nietszche, Thus Spake Zarathustra (New York, 1924) p. 158.
3. From 1979 onward, Zhang Dainian has been an active informant in my research project concerning the life of his older brother, Zhang Shenfu (a founder of the Chinese Communist Party and China's foremost expert on Bertrand Russell). The results of our decade long collaboration will appear in my book Time for Telling: Dialogues with Zhang Shenfu, Founder of the Chinese Communist Party. (forthcoming, Yale University Press, 1991).
4. Analects 8:7, translated in Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book of Chinese Philosophy (Princeton, 1969), p. 33.
5. For a thoughful analysis of the etymology of "zachor" see, Brevard S. Childs, Memory and Tradition in Israel (London, 1962) especially pp. 9-16, 66-74.
6. Ibid., p. 18-19.
7. Elie Wiesel, Discours d'Oslo (Paris, 1987) p. 28-29.
8. Edward S. Casey, Remembering -- a Phenomenological Study (Bloomington, 1987) p. 18.
9. Pierre Janet, L'evolution de la Memoire et de le Notion du Temps (Paris, 1928) vol. 2, p. 185.
10. For a fuller discussion of the impact of "River Elegy" upon mass audiences in the People's Republic of China, see Geremie Barme, "TV Requiem for the Myths of the Middle Kingdom," Far Eastern Economic Review (1 September, 1988) 38-44.
11. Franz Kafka, The Great Wall of China (New York, 1946) p. 162.
12. Tu Weiming, "The Way, Learning and Politics in Classical Confucianism" in Classical Confucianism (forthcoming, Singapore, 1990) p.2.
13. Ibid., p. 7.
14. Allen Grossman, "Remarks toward a Jewish Poetry," Tikkun May/June, 1990) p. 47-48.
15. Arnold Jacob Wolf, "Remember to Remember," Tradition (June, 1972). pp. 33-42.
16. Amos Funkenstein, "Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness, History and Memory (Spring/Summer 1990) p. 12; Li Zehou, Huaxia meixue (Aesthetics in Ancient China) (Beijing, 1989) p. 57.
17. For an excellent overview of the meanings, uses of "history" in Chinese culture see, Yves Chevrier, "La Servante-Maitrese: Condition de la Reference a l'Histoire dans l'Espece Intellectual chinois," Extreme Orient/Extreme Occident No. 9 (1986) pp. 117-142.
18. The evolution/distortion of Jewish historical consciousness in the post biblical period is discussed by Yoseph Hayim Yerusahlmi in Zachor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (Seattle, 1982).
19. Funkenstein, op. cit., p. 17.
20. This text and its implications for Chinese culture has been analyzed by Wang Gungwu in "Loving the Ancient in China," Who Owns the Past, (Melbourne, 1985) pp. 176-195.
21. Stephen Owen, Remembrances: The Experience of the Past in Chinese Literature (Cambridge, 1986) pp. 16-32.
22. Ibid., p. 18.
23. Ibid.
24. The concept of nianjiu, "attachment to the past" is discussed in Lin Yusheng, The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness, (Madison, 1979) pp. 158-64.
25. Lu Xun, "In Memory of Wei Suyuan," Selected Works (tr. Yang Xinyi and Gladys Yang) vol. IV (Beijing, 1980) p. 67.
26. Elie Wiesel, op. cit., p. 22.
27. Ibid., p. 23.
28. Childs, op. cit., p. 19.
29. Wiesel, op cit., p. 35.
30. Owen, op cit., p. 24.
31. Su Shi, Su Shi Xuanji (Selected Poems by Su Shi) ed. Liu Naichang (Jinan, 1980) p. 78-79.)
32. Wang Huizu, Bingta menghen lu (Traces of Dream from a Sickbed, (Imperial edition, 1796). p. 3.
33. Quoted and discussed by Alan Mintz in Hurban: Response to Catastrophe in Hebrew Literature (New York, 1984) p. 28.
34. Su Shi op. cit., p. 75.
35. I am indebted to Professor Yu Yingshi of Princeton University for extended conversations about the sources of personal and public memory in traditional China. It was Professor Yu who first drew my attention to the late 3rd century Daoist classic Jin Shu in which appears a most concise warning against indulgence in memory. The passage "Qing you yi sheng, bu yi ze wu qing" may be translated as follows: "Feelings arise out of memory. If there is no memory, feelings will dissolve as well." This Daoist injunction against memory as the focus of disturbing emotion is also echoed in Confucian admonitions on filial piety that require one to maintain mental well being -- if not for one's own sake, at least for one's parents'. In the view of these Confucians, as well as Daoists, to dwell on the painful past is to arouse distressing, dangerous -- and, in the long run, unfilial -- emotions.
36. Alan Mintz, op. cit., p. 30.
37. Ibid., pp. 262-267.
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39. Bei Dao (Zhao Zhengkai), "Huida" (Answer) Xinshi shiji vol. 1 (Beijing, 1985) p. 13.
40. Jean Amery's term in At the Mind's Limits tr. S. Rosenfeld (Bloomington, 1980) p. 6.
41. Art Spigelman, Maus: A Survivor's Tale (New York, 1985).
42. Amery, op. cit., p. 15-19.
43. Li Zehoui "Houji" (Postface) Pipan zhexue de pipan (Critique of Critical Philosophy) Beijing, 1979.
44. Sun Longji, "The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture" In Seeds of Fire (ed. G. Barme) Hong Kong, 1986, p. 32.
45. Dai Houying's novella Ren, a ren (Man, Ah, man) has been the subject of extensive analysis in Michael Duke's work, Blooming and Condescending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era (Indiana, 1985) p. 141-181.
46. Primo Levi, The Drowned and the Saved (New York, 1986) p. 82.
47. Qian Zhongshu "Preface" to Yang Jiang, A Cadre School Life (Hong Kong, 1982) p. IV.
48. Levi, op cit., p. 85.
49. Arthur Kleinman, a psychiatrist and China scholar has been long involved in a critique of the medical profession's use of certain categories to immunize itself against the meanings and implications of human suffering. In a recent paper, "Suffering and Its Professional Transformation: Toward an Ethonography of Experience" (presented at the first conference of the Society for Psychological Anthropology, October, 1989) he took direct issue with the uses of "post-traumatic distress syndrome":

> "The very idea of post traumatic stress as a disorder invalidates the moral and political meaning of suffering. After all in both traditional Chinese and Western culture, the idea of suffering turned on the idea of having to endure or bear great hardship. The idea of suffering carried the moral significance of endurance. Those connotations are lost when suffering is configured as stress with which we cope (either adaptively or ineffectively) or a disease that can be 'cured'". (p. 30)

50. Eugene Rosenstock-Husey, Out of Revolution (New York, 1964) p. 696.
51. See, Arthur Kleinman, The Illness Narrative, (New York, 1988).
52. Casey, op. cit., p. 294.

IN THE FIELD

(continued from page 2)

he is also vice-president, has proposed a Chinese-Jewish Colloquium to be held in Beijing later this year. The proposal was made during a meeting in Melbourne with a Chinese delegation headed by Ambassador Han Xu, who is also president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and a former PRC ambassador to Washington. The proposed colloquium would bring together Chinese and Jewish leaders and academics to discuss a wide range of topics dealing with the contact and interaction between the two peoples over the centuries. Mr. Liebler has been formally invited to Beijing where he hopes to discuss the matter further and to reach a favorable agreement.

In this connection, one might mention that Mr. Liebler has in the past organized two successful Asian-Jewish colloquia of this sort. The first, "Cultural Interaction: Old Societies, New States," was held in Singapore, in September, 1984, and the second, "The Jews and Asia: Old Societies and New Images," was held in Hong Kong, in March, 1987.

- An index to the first five volumes of Points East has been prepared by Albert Dien. No decision has yet been reached on the means of distribution. This and related matters will be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Board of Directors.
- Albert Dien, president of the Sino-Judaic Institute, returned recently from a trip to China, where he met with Zhao Xiangru, the Kaifeng Jew who is a scholar at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Prof. Zhao turned over to the Institute a large number of family photographs, which will be placed in the archives of the Institute.
- Chiara Betta, a member of the Institute, who received a degree with her dissertation on the development of the Jewish community of Shanghai from 1845 to 1932, from the Department of Oriental Languages and Literature, University Ca' Foscari, Venice, has now been accepted at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, where she plans to carry on her research and to earn a doctorate. Mrs. Maisie Meyer, at the London School of Economics, is also planning to write a dissertation on the Sephardi community of Shanghai, 1845-1945. Mr. Peter Hibbard, who lives in Hong Kong, is doing a study of pre-liberation Shanghai, and is especially interested in the Cathay Hotel in Shang-

MNEMOSYNE ABOARD

(continued from page 1)

had learned how to mask personal memories in the garb of public commemoration — I came to understand better my own side of zhiyin.

I had gone to China in 1979 to study the politics of amnesia. In the process, however, I became interested in the connection between memory and cultural identity not only in the lives of Chinese intellectuals, but those of my parents as well. Beneath public, Party enforced forgetting (that I had researched in Beijing and witnessed in my native country of Romania), I glimpsed a wide array of personal strategies for consolation through recollection. These were not novel, or even modern survival techniques. Rather they were rooted in memorial practices as ancient and as varied as the Chinese and Jewish traditions.

Memory and Endurance

At the ceremony in honor of Zhang Dainian's 80th birthday, I reflect anew on the Confucian virtue of endurance. In Chinese, the word for endurance, ren, echoes the moral ideal of "humaneness" (also prounced ren). The first term describes an individuals' capacity to bear up under the burden of prolonged suffering. It holds the key to the second kind of ren, to becoming fully human. The ideograph for "endurance" shows a heart beneath the cutting edge of a sword and suggests a difficult, protracted struggle between inner resources and outer violence.

With martial law in the air, with the students' bold hopes for instantaneous democracy dashed, there was nothing left for older Chinese intellectuals but to retreat into — or rather, to reanimate — the Confucian definition of the moral person. As if describing the predicament of Zhang Dainian and his disciples, Confucius remarked fifteen hundred years earlier: "He has taken humanness as his own burden — is that not heavy? Only with death does his course stop — is that not long?" [4]

Confucius left no doubt about the origins of his own capacity for endurance and for humanness. It lay in disciplined, critical remembrance, in what the Analects called "hao gu" or "love of the ancients." The same kind of "love" lies at the root of Jewish endurance as well. Remembrance lies at the heart of the covenant between God and the people of Israel. To be fully human as a Jew is to be rooted — as in Confucius' world — in conscious memorial practice. In both Chinese and Jewish tradition, memory is neither abstract, nor simply personal. To remember is to take the collective experience of the past to heart in such a way that one is thoroughly transformed by it.

Zachor, the Hebrew word for remembrance, recurs as a constant theme in the Bible. It is the axis around which Jews have defined both their identity and moral practice. Meaning at once, "memorial sign," "memorial offering," "to record," "to commemorate" and "to take the heart", [5] zachor requires constant attention to outer events and inner realities. It is grounded in the idea of a mindful heart — a notion devoid of contradiction in Jewish, as well as Chinese tradition.

Jewish memory words developed out of the root term mind - heart.[6] In Chinese, xin means literally both mind and heart. To remember, thus is linked to a willingness to take into one's inner being the object of remembrance. Language, in both Chinese and Jewish culture, functions as a re-minder, as an aid in the transmission of cultural identity. Both Chinese and Jewish tradition have fostered an uninterrupted sense of cultural identity based on ancient texts that remain compelling and intelligible to the moderns. Heirs of a long, nuanced repetoire of memorial rituals, Jews and Chinese have faced historical crisis well armed. Even in the wake of traumas such as the Holocaust and the Cultural Revolution, something essential has endured within individuals, and prevailed in the world at large. As Elie Wiesel put it in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech: "The call of memory, the call to memory comes to us from the origins of our history. No other commandment figures so frequently or so fiercely as in the Bible. It is incumbent upon us to remember the good that we have been graced with, as well as the evil we have endured . . . To forget is to desert memory, to betray it and history itself. To put it another way, to forget is to risk war."[7]

This link between memory and survival, however, is not the discovery of Jews or Chinese alone. The ancient Greeks understood it also when they elevated memory to the status of a divine being. The goddess Mnemosyne was deemed the mother of the nine muses. Out of her union with Zeus, she gave birth to all the various arts that were to endow human life with grace and meaning. Not only dance and music grew out of the power of memory. Mnemosyne birthed Clio, history, as well.

But the modern West has fled from what philosopher Edward Casey's has called the "dark embrace" of Mnemosyne.[8] Other gods, other ideals have supplanted memory as the source of artfulness and meaning. Descartes led the flight with his fierce determination to ground identity in the individual cogitator as opposed to communal recollection. The rules of his Discours de la methode centered on the elimination, on the suppression of doubt. And memory, as the pioneering psychologist Pierre Janet noted in 1928 "has always preoccupied and annoyed the Cartesians . . . The Cartesian wants nothing to do with memory because memory is filled with doubt, because, since Aristotle, we have had to ask if memory is true." [9]

Post-Cartesian Western thought has had a marked preference for amnesia, purging itself repeatedly of what Confucius called "love for the ancients" in the name of scientific rationality and cultural enlightenment. As a result, we moderns face the world with a much impoverished vocabulary for remembrance — so diminished, in fact, that most the varied use of memory words is now found not in the realm of Mnemosyne's daughter, history, but in computer science. We are in danger of abdicating memorial powers to machines of our own creation.

Forsaken by the modern West, Mnemosyne remains a resourceful presence abroad. In the recesses of ancients-loving traditions, such as the Chinese and the Jewish ones, memory continues to nurture a sense of cultural identify in spite of historical crisis

and historical trauma. Even when warring with tradition, even when doubting its viability in the age of critical reason, Chinese and Jewish modernizers maintain a dialogue with the living past. A commitment to remembrance — to anchor plans for the present and visions of the future in an informed appreciation of the communal past — runs like a golden thread through both Chinese and Jewish history. Whether in the memorial rituals created to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust or in the stories told by China's youth wounded by the Cultural Revolution, one cannot but recognize Mnemosyne at work in a new disguise.

Recently, the Chinese film series, River Elegy (first aired for a mass television audience in the summer of 1988) catalogued the memory metaphors that weigh most heavily on the modern Chinese imagination. These include the Yellow River, the imperial dragon and the Great Wall.[10] These symbols are very different from those that animate Jewish remembrance: The rivers of Babylon, Masada and the Wailing (Western) Wall, to name but a few of the loci of Jewish remembrance. How then is one to cross the great divide between the Wailing Wall and the Great Wall, between what is more conveniently distinguished in French as le mur and la muraille? How is one to make sense of the cosmological, historical, and linguistic differences between Chinese and Jewish memorial practice? How is one to meet Joseph Levenson's challenge of bringing China into the same world of discourse in which we try to make sense of the West?

When such questions threaten to overwhelm the possibilities of thought, Franz Kafka can be counted on for help. His story, "The Great Wall of China" — written in 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution and Kafka's own diagnosis with tuberculosis — opens up a world where Chinese and Jewish dilemmas intermingle quite freely. In this work, the most tortured of moderns takes on the voice of an ancient builder of the Great Wall. In that time-worn tongue, the author begins to probe the connections between memory, power and an ongoing sense of cultural identity.

Kafka's Wall builder confesses from the beginning that he is but a small brick in an edifice of what will become the hallmark of China's greatness. Kept wilfully ignorant of the nature, the extent, the plan of the huge imperial project, each mason works for a limited amount of time on a fragment of the whole. And yet the urge to know, the urge to create something that will withstand the test of time, unlike the Tower of Babel, triumphs over the comforts and the prohibitions of a memoryless, historyless building plan.

Forbidden to think about the nature of his labors in the native context, the Kafka's mason turns to comparative history: "During the building of the wall and ever since to this very day I have occupied myself almost exclusively with the comparative history of the races — there are certain questions which one can probe to the marrow, as it were, only by this method — and I have discovered that we Chinese possess certain folk and political institutions that are unique in their clarity, others again unique in their obscurity. The desire to trace these phenomena, especially the latter, has always teased me and teases me still . . .[11]

Like Kafka's builder, I also feel drawn to the obscurities of comparative history. My studies of Chinese memory and amnesia have brought me closer to the dilemmas of Jewish survivors. Repression, reservation, distortion proliferate, in the shadowy realm inhabited by both Chinese intellectuals and Jewish survivors. I want to explore the "unique obscurity" of each. But first, certain "clarities" within each tradition must be affirmed. These are nowhere more apparent than in the cosmologies that inform Chinese historical practice on one hand, and Jewish religious belief on the other.

Differences in Chinese and Jewish Cosmology

In the traditional Chinese world view there is no transcendant being, no God in the Jewish sense of the world. Confucian memorial practices are rooted in an organic cosmology that assumes a fundamental unity, an intimate collaboration between Heaven (Nature) and man. Jewish memory, by contrast, is rooted in a covenant with a supreme force beyond the human universe. The God of Israel sets the tone and becomes the ultimate model of fidelity through remembrance. The Jewish community, in turn, emulates this example of mindful memory with varying degrees of success, often falling far short of it.

And yet, out of the disparate cosmologies represented by biblical Judaism and ancient Confucianism, there emerged a similar emphasis on the sacredness of history and on the individual's obligation to take collective memory to heart. In ancient China, during the same axial age that witnessed the birth of Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism, the Sages taught about the Dao. Called simply "the Way", the Dao, unlike the great theological religions, defined the meaning of existence in distinctly humanistic terms. While Hindus, Buddhists and Jews puzzled over the origins of the universe, of suffering and of man's dominion over nature, the Chinese sages taught the message of tian ren he yi, that Heaven and man are one. In this world view, which Tu Weiming has described as "anthropocosmic," humanity becomes a co-creator of the universe, a guardian of natural processes, a "participant of the creative transformation of Heaven and Earth."[12]

By the time of Mencius (371-289 BC), ancient Chinese had developed an entire rationale, indeed a plan, for the perfectability of human nature through self cultivation. Vague intimations about the unity of Heaven and man developed into a detailed vision of "divine humanity". Anyone could become a Sage by grasping the sacred significance of "learning" (xue) — an activity that was not simply, or even primarily cognitive. Rather, it demanded intense psychological concentration in order to realize and manifest one's humanness (jen). As Mencius put it: "For a man to give full realization to his heart is for him to understand his own nature and a man who knows his own nature will know Heaven." [13]

In biblical Judaism, by contrast, man and God face each other as creature and Creator. The ontological gulf is crossed not through "learning" in the sense of self cultivation but through a covenant that defines and maybe precisely when nearing these thought-defying realms, they borrow, they rely upon the language of the Hebrew Bible. Primo Levi, for example, in a chapter called "Shame" describes the physical and mental anguish of survivors by recalling the second verse of Genesis where "anguish inscribed in everyone the 'tohu-bohu' of a deserted and empty universe crushed under the spirit of God but from which the spirit of man is absent: not yet born or already extinguished."[48]

Those of us born after these traumatic events must approach the memorial record with care. We have to be mindful of cultural and historical precedents as well as our immeasurable distance from those who survived such sense shaking experiences as the Holocaust and the Cultural Revolution. Otherwise, we risk arrogance, denial, or both. We must be on guard against intellectual constructs that seek to distance us from unanswered questions in the survivors' memoir literature. In both the Chinese and Jewish contexts, barriers have already been erected in the guise of sympathy for victims of "post-traumatic distress syndrome."[49] But survivors are more than victims. They are carriers of dark secrets that affect us all. We do not need new medical categories to encapsulate -- and dispose of -- their narratives. Rather, we need to expand our notion of historical understanding to make room for their troubling memories.

The Historian as Physician of Memory

The effort to flee from memory is as old as history itself. Whether they followed the model of ancient Chinese diviners who sought to codify the pattern of cosmic events, or, the modern priesthood that holds dominion over empirical facts, professional historians have shied away from Mnemosyne's dark embrace. Memorial evidence is too fragmented, too murky to be "true," if by truth we mean serviceable generalities for the so-called common good.

But the value of remembrance lies precisely in its ability to challenge prevailing notions of the common good. In China, on the eve of martial law in 1989, intellectuals were powerless to question the State's version of recent events. With tanks already on the streets of Beijing, questions could only be posed obliquely. And yet in the very moment when history seemed defeated, the memorial gathering for Zhang Dainian reaffirmed the ability of intellectuals to survive repression with a modicum of integrity. In the company of Chinese intellectuals attending that commemorative occasion, I cameto appreciate anew the resiliency of Jewish survivors as well. Both have deep roots in memorial traditions that precede and encompass traumatic events. Both have developed strategies of overcoming publicly enforced as well as personally cultivated amnesia. In spite of such adverse soil, remembrance has continued to flourish, to be a source of renewal in both Chinese and Jewish culture.

This enduring attachment to recollection runs counter to the modern Western commitment to progress through reason. The utility of Descartes, however, is becoming increasingly outworn. Widely disparate thinkers are currently reclaiming the neglected, doubt-ridden terrain inhabited by Mnemosyne. Eugen Rosenstock-Husey is one of the historians who pioneered the study of memory by historians. In 1964, he had the audacity to publish an Autobiography of Western Man. Wrestling with the aftermath of the two world wars -- two events not unlike the current "revolutions" in Eastern Europe in that they challenge, empty all forms of political discourse -- Rosenstock-Husey could not but bid a "farewell to Descartes," the title of his book's epilogue. This farewell was accompanied by willingness to probe the problems of collective and individual remembrance. But how is the historian to venture into the Menemosyne's uncertain domain? As a "physician of memory" Rosenstock-Husey argued:

> It is his honor to heal the wounds, genuine wounds. As a physician must act, regardless of medical theories, because his patient is ill. So a historian must act under a moral pressure to restore a nation's memory, and that of mankind. Buried instincts, repressed fears, painful scars come for treatment to the historian. The historian regenerates the great moments of history and disentangles them from the mist of patriculurity.[50]

Two and a half decades after, Rosenstock-Husey wrote these words, the need for "physicians of memory" is even greater to counter the flood of nationalistic mythology cresting in newly "democratized" corners of the world. At the same time, however, we cannot take the heroic image of the "physician" at face value. The medical profession has shown itself to be every bit as immune to the deeper meanings of suffering as the historical one. Doctors have grown used to treating medicable diseases, not the kind of chronic illness Rosenstock-Husey was seeking to heal. [51] It would be a great mistake, if we now traded an earlier, priestly image of the historian for the equally limiting medical one. Rosenstock-Husey himself courted this danger when he sought to life the "great moments of history" out of "the mist of particularity". The old rhetoric of enlightenment colored his voice even as he claimed to be leaving Descartes behind.

"Particularity," misty and messy, is the very stuff that a comparative historian must contend with all the time. To consider the Chinese and the Jewish commitment to remembrance in one project, for example, is to risk injuring the distinctive meanings of each. I took this risk here because the great wall dividing the two traditions that affected my life has begun to crumble. But, this is not simply a personal project. It is a way of bearing witness to a new meaning of historical understanding. Out of the disparate particularities of Mnemosyne abroad it is possible to weave a new tapestry. "Misty details" need not be expunged but may be cherished here.

If memory is to recover her rightful place as Mother-Muse of history, her dark, shadowy weight cannot be wished or analyzed away. In the words of philosopher Edward Casey, Mnemosyne's "thick autonomy" must be recognized as both the repository of past experience and a growing fund for new experience.[51] Without memories, we have no history at all. Memories translated into history allow the future to be born anew.

(NOTES follow —)

Sodality there is a great need for interdependence . . . And, in typically, infantile fashion, when a man's somatized needs are satisfied over by another person, then he must surrender his Heart-and-Mind. Thus the individual comes to obey authority. In this way the Chinese adult never totally outgrows childhood. Throughout Chinese history, the Chinese common man has been the little child of a paternal, but dictatoral ruler." [44]

The memoir literature after the Cultural Revolution bears ample witness to the cult of loyalty that flourished during the late Mao era. Unlike the recollections of Jewish survivors who catalogue catastrophies endured, Chinese remembrances are filled with details about participation in the Mao cult -- even if/when the narrator was a victim of the Red Terror. A deep sense of religious community was fostered in China during the Cultural Revolution (unlike the scrupulous demarcations of the death camps). Daily practices such as the morning bow to the picture of the Chairman, the work place recitation of quotations from the Red Book, the ritualized exchanges of quotations before any purchase in the supermarket, the "loyalty dances" that took the place before calestenics all contributed to a sense of a shared faith in Mao's divine proletarizing mission.

In Man, Ah Man, one of the earliest novels to explore survivor memories of the Cultural Revolution, a young woman explores the meanings of jiaoxin -- that "handing over of heart-mind" which students, teachers, peasants and workers practiced daily during the Cultural Revolution. Giving concrete form to Sun Longji's meditations on sodality, this novel dresses up memory in the garb of a surrealistic dream. As in Kafkaesque world, an entire city is afflicted by a strange illness: people are ripping out their own hearts to offer them up in public places. The one person who will not tear open her chest is deemed mad.[45]

Complicity and acquiescence constitute a powerful undercurrent in Chinese memoir literature. Since the Cultural Revolution was an intra-family affair, few Chinese were able, or willing, to risk the kind of "madness" that would have cut off the nurturing bond to Mao Zedong -- and through Mao, to the community as a whole. In retrospect, shame looms large in survivors' minds, even if only as a shadow holding back the details of remembrance.

Not that the weight of guilt is absent among Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. It is very much there, but different from the sense of complicity that animates the most thoughtful of Chinese memoirs. Primo Levi gives voice to this feeling of unworthiness when he writes: "The worst survived, that is, the fittest; the best died . . . We, the survivors, are not the true witness . . . We survivors are not only an exiguous but also an anomolous minority: We are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch bottom." [46]

The extreme conditions of depravation and humiliation suffered by Levi and others in the death camps were unmatched in China, even in the so-called "cow pens". And yet, survival during the Cultural Revolution also required "prevarication" and "good luck." Most of all, it depended on real or simulated enthusiasm for Mao's religious campaign. Qian Zhonghu, the noted literary critic, who was deported to a labor camp in 1969, describes the impact of this coping strategy in the preface to his wife's memoir, A Cadre School Life: "Our only boldness was a lack of enthusiasm for the endless movements and struggles we participated in . . . An acute sense of shame can result in selective amnesia. A guilty conscience can make you guarded." [47]

Many intellectuals in China shared Qian Zhongshu's "boldness." Very few, however, have been able to articulate its deforming impact on their remembrance. Yang Jiang, Qian Zhong Shu's wife -- an accomplished dramatist and translator in her own right -- acknowledged both selective amensia and an enduring attachment to Chinese memorial tradition in her recollection of the Cultural Revolution. Her intensely understated memoir is modeled on a late eighteenth century work, Six Chapters from a Floating Life. Like its precedessor, Yang Jiang's work dwells on the small details of daily survival: a stray dog, a chance meeting with her husband, the jade color of leaves in the countryside after the rain washed off the dust.[50]

Political persecution and physical depravation is alluded to rather than described here. The very indirectness of Yang Jiang's work testifies to what her husband called the burden of shame, the guardedness that follows upon complicity. Such reticence can -- and has been -- mistaken as simply a preservation tactic in the post-Mao era. Yang Jiang, after all continues to live and write on the Chinese mainland, in the midst of the very community that inflicted suffering upon intellectuals like herself and her husband. But there is more than self-preservation at work here. Precisely because Yang Jiang and Qian Zhongshu are such mindful rememberers, they can draw upon classical Chinese precedents to make sense of their predicament in Communist China.

The historical trauma of the Cultural Revolution did not occur in a memorial vacuum. Much as Mao Zedong tried to eradicate old ideas, old books -- and the people who embodied them -- traditions of recollection survived his ravage. The very characters used in Chinese writing, bring with them a tradition of acquiescence to and interrogation of patriarchal authority. When Yang Jiang uses an intensely personal memoir from the 18th century to frame her labor camp experience, she is, in effect, taking history back from Mao. She not only survived his persecution campaigns, but managed to record them in a way that transcends Mao's memory denying logic.

Similarly, Jewish survivors of the Holocaust reach back in time to find words, metaphors, sanctions for remembering the most mind baffling of experiences. Some, like Elie Wiesel, have dwelt on the virtues of silence, on the impotence of words beyond a certain point of pain and horror. Others, like Primo Levi, Dan Pagis and Paul Celan, have probed more deeply the vertigo of language and memory. They emerged from the darkness of suffering with snatches of remembrance that directly challenge the logic of murder and amnesia. Even when writing about the most incomprehensible aspects of the Holocaust -- transforms communal identity. Israel emerges as a people in conscious relationship to the absolute power of God. Jews become witnesses to God's role in history. They become, what poet Allen Grossman recently termed a "God bearing" or theophoric nation.[14] To be "chosen" in this sense is to take on the burden of human events in light of a transcendant purpose.

While the ancient Chinese also experienced themselves as unique in history — and called their realm Zhong guo, the Central Kingdom, out of which emanated all civilizing wisdom — human events continued to be interpreted in an organic universe. Jews, by contrast, fastened upon certain events and endowed them with sacred significance. Out of a vast field of historical experience, six "key memories"[15] were chosen to be remembered each day. These events reaffirm through re-collection the essential meaning and obligations of Jewish identity. Out of the six "memories" — the Sabbath, the revelation at Sinai, the Golden Calf, Miriam's sin of speaking ill of her brother Moses, Amalek's ambush of the Jews on their way out of Egypt and the Exodus — it is the last which is most formative for Jewish historical consciousness.

The departure from the house of bondage is a concrete sign of God's direct intervention in human events. Exodus starts the ticking of "real" historical time and marks the beginning of the historical mission of the Jews. This one event, which is the first of the six memories recaptured in the daily devotions of pious Jews, became the model for divine intervention in human affairs. It promised — allowed, really — Jews to endow history with meaning, much the same way as Mencius' self cultivation enables a man to know his own heart and Heaven at the same time.

The intelligibility of history thus is dependent upon a sense of how an individual or a culture fits into the larger pattern of cosmic significance. From very different starting points, Chinese and Jews alike came to see in human events a critical mirror for communal identity. For Jews, history was meaningful because man is made in the image of God and because the community of Israel was chosen to understand and bear witness to God's purpose in the world. For Chinese, history was meaningful because man is part of the very same organic universe in which various forces play out their cosmic design and because human beings have the unique capacity — indeed responsibility — to record and interpret the concrete unfolding of the Dao.

Underneath both the Chinese and Jewish concerns with meaningful history lies a powerful conviction that time is real, that events in time are crucial for communal identity and welfare. Unlike the Hindu, the Buddhist and the Christian world views that emphasize the illusory, painful limiting nature of human time, Chinese and Jewish traditions insist that human destiny is fulfilled through historical time.

If we can put aside, for the moment, outworn debates about circular versus linear concepts of time, we may be able to glimpse a similarity between Chinese and Jewish attempts to historicize time. What matters in both cases is a collective sense of coming into being through history — what the Jewish philosopher Amos Funkenstein has analyzed as the distinctive "historical consciousness" of the Jews, and Chinese philosopher Li Zehou described as a "Chinese disinterest in eternal time in favor of experimental, human centered temporality."[16]

To experience oneself as rooted in historical time is to forego the consolations offered by world views that dwell on the illusory nature of early life. Chinese and Jews alike have cultivated the soil of historical remembrance because they believed it to have the same kind of sacred properties — the same ability to heal and to guide — that other religions invested in trans-temporal religious practice. Confucianism, because it had even less room for supernatural forces than theophoric Judaism, considered historical knowing a form of sacred wisdom.

Confucius himself was the first sage to embrace the sacred calling of history when he assigned himself the task of editing the chronicles of his home state of Lu. His Spring and Autumn Annals became a model for scrupulous yet morally motivated his-

toriography. Si-Ma Qian, the Grand Historian of the Han Dynasty (220 BC-200AD) followed this sacred calling with his own magnum opus, the Shiji, completed after the author chose castration over suicide so as to bring to fruition a task begun before political humiliation. Si-Ma Guang, the philosopher-official of the Song Dynasty (900-1300 AD) furthered and deepened the Confucian attachment to history in his masterpiece, Mirror for Government. For all three epitomes of Chinese historical practice, the calling of the historian was a sacred obligation. Although the urge to instruct political rulers was never far from their minds, all three sought to use actual, real events in human history to illuminate the meaning of the Dao, of the way. They became guardians — indeed, architects of collective Chinese memory — because they believed the historian to be a diviner, a seer who had the responsibility of decoding a cosmic pattern.

This vision of the historian's sacred calling developed directly out of the ancient Chinese office of the shi, the scribe in charge of recording the meaning of oracle bones. The interrogation of Heaven and the recording of human events that followed gave Chinese historians their first sense of empowerment. Subsequently, the shi became involved in astronomy and the establishment of the imperial calendar. Cosmic and human events remained related in the office of the historian-astronomer. During the long course of Chinese imperial historiography, the accumulated wisdom of the past assumed greater and greater authority. Even when thoroughly politicized as a guide to bureaucratic practice, history did not lose its claim to the repository of ultimate value in Chinese society." [17]

Reference to history was also held in sacred regard in biblical Judaism. God's purpose was known through the actual, eventful experiences of the Jewish people. The unfolding of His vision was synchronous with the unfolding Jewish history. With the destruction of the Second Temple, Jewish life entered a long period of displacement. Away from the sacred sites of Jewish origination, history became

a reminder of losses suffered. Jewish historical knowing became wedded to religious memory — a compensation for exile that made it meaningful and bearable. Chinese historiography, by contrast, did not carry this compensatory burden becuase it never lost contact with the soil of Chinese cultural origination. Firmly grounded in the valley of the Yellow River, Chinese historical practice developed a wide array of conventions ranging from dynastic annals, to local gazeeters and exemplary biographies. Jewish historical consciousness in exile, "by the rivers of Babylon" as it were, paid less attention to local events and was more mindful of the ways in which contemporary events mirrored biblical paradigms.[18]

Although the biblical past was the primary one, a sense of the importance of historical precedent deepened over the course of Jewish history in a way that parallels Chinese attachment to historical references in philosophy, poetry and bureaucratic practice. According to Amos Funkenstein, in the realm of Jewish law, of Halakha, distinctions of time and place were scrupulously maintained. Not unlike in Chinese guides to imperial government, in rabbinical debate "every event was worthy of remembering, including the minority opinion." [19]

Chinese and Jewish rememberers treasured the details of human history. They were considerably less interested in the logical connections between cause and effect that so fascinated Greek historians and Hindu cosmologists. What mattered for Chinese and Jews is meaning in history — or to put it more precisely, the conviction that human events are decipherable like texts, are sacred texts in themselves. Attachment to language, and through language to texts is a marked feature of both traditional Chinese and Jewish culture. In both, what was prized, what was cultivated through arduous study, is the ability to read history with moral discernment.

When Confucius said of himself" "I transmit, but do not create, I believe in and love the ancient (hao gu)[20], he both consolidated and revolutionized his own culture. Until then, ancestor worship sufficed to bond individuals, especially of noble lineage, to their particular familial spirits. With Confucius, however, the ancestors became absorbed (not repudiated, Heaven forbid) into the "ancient" — a moral ideal with which one could challenge and judge contemporary times. There was no need to invent new, abstract ethical criteria. For Confucius, it sufficed to insist, over and over again, that the present live up to the past, to become worthy of its inheritance.

In Chinese, the ideogram for the past is literally synonomous with "above." Last month, last week is visually, conceptually above today and tomorrow. When Confucius asked his contemporaries to hark back to the ideals of the ancients, he was asking of them no more, and no less, than the Jewish prophets who reminded contemporaries of the fall from the covenant. To be historically minded in this sense is to be reminded of a past that is anything by passe. It is, instead an ethical imperative, a call to action, a call to return — if not to the actual state of affairs in ancient times, then at least to a state of mind less at ease with the corrupt, forgetful ways of the present.

Fu gu, "return to the ancient", has been the rallying call for reform in China, since the time of Confucius. In the Han, Tang, Song, Ming and Qing dynasties, individuals gathered under the fu gu banner to quarrel with everything from the literary style to the agricultural policies of the State. Some reformers were treated as crackpots, others persecuted as disloyal subjects of a present oriented imperial government. Most were venerated by posterity because they dared to remember the ancient and had lived by something other than the cannon of contemporary expedience. Fu gu thought, in the words of Stephen Owen, was the very incarnation of the Chinese "covenant of remembrance," whereby one cherishes the past and hopes to be worthy of remembrance in turn. [21]

Remembering the rememberer becomes a consummate art in classical Chinese literature. In Jewish tradition, it became the very stuff of life, and death, as experienced in the diaspora. In biblical times, zachor was a religious commandment which bound the Jewish people to the God of the Exodus. In exile, the convenant of remembrance bound Jews to one another through the vast reaches of alien space, and time. As the writer of Psalm 137 warns, life itself withers in exile unless watered by consciously cultivated historical memory: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

This fierce attachment to memory does not make sense unless we recall the biblical admonitions against Israel's frequent proclivity to amnesia. In fact, the Jewish commitment to remembrance makes no sense unless we grasp the psychological realism that undergrids it. People, Jews, forget all the time. It is more convenient to forget than to remember. Hence the effortfullness of memory.

In this matter of psychological realism, as with their historical realism, Chinese and Jews are like. Though spared the anguish of Jews in exile, Confucius, nonetheless, railed against contemporaries who would rather forget than "love" the ancients. An itinerant teacher, he was unrewarded with office in his life time precisely because it was easier for Chinese rulers (and subjects!) to move on in time, to adopt, to adapt morality and historical vision to state — building requirements of the day.

The Jewish psalmist who equates amnesia with powerless and speechlessness finds kindred spirits among Confucius' followers. One ardent proponent of fu gu thought was the Tang poet Meng Jiao who wrote:

> Hold with the past, don't lose the past:
> If you lose the past, your will easily breaks;
> If you lose the past, even the sword snaps;
> If you lose the past, the zither too laments. [22]

Crippled hands and mournful zithers came to symbolize Jewish and Chinese ambivalance about historical memory. Neither tradition left any doubt about the importance of remembering the past. Neither, however, assumed remembrance to be

tural Revolution.

Simply put, the Chinese intellectuals' world was never as hermetically sealed as Jean Amery's in Auschwitz. Even in Dachau, Amery reminds us, some inmates could read Goethe for spiritual relief. In China, such furtive consolations proliferated even more. Philosopher Li Zehou, for example, managed to hide Kant's Critique of Pure Reason among his belongings in 1972 as he set off for what he believed to be a life long exile in the countryside. A few years later, Li Zehou emerged with a thorough critique of Kant[43] - a concrete testimony to one survivor's faith in the power of the mind, so unlike the devastating disillusionment experienced by Jean Amery.

Chinese intellectuals seemed to have never lost the certainty that their suffering was part of a larger tragedy visited upon the Chinese nation as a whole. The Cultural Revolution, in spite of its pointed humiliation of the "stinking ninth" was an intra-family affair. What kept this Red Terror somewhat in charge, and what accounts for its distinctive brutality as well, is that it was an internacine struggle. Far from setting the superhuman (Germans) against the inhuman (Jews), Mao's campaign exploited the deepest loyalties within Chinese society.

The Cultural Revolution, young critics agree today, was the outgrowth of old habits of thought, especially of the need to belong to a group and to submit unquestioningly to paternalistic authority. Sun Longji, in a scathing series of essays entitled The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture, argues that Chinese culture has been held in thrall for centuries by "sodality" -- a network of human relations built on a system of favors and obligations that keeps an individual "infantilized" from birth to death. If we are to understand how and why Mao became the unchallengeable Great Helmsman during the Cultural Revolution, how and why his ardent followers committed unchecked atrocities in the name of loyalty to this Great Red Sun, we cannot but reckon with Sun's claim that:

"Within the network of Chinese

I had previously imagined.

Both the Holocaust and the Cultural Revolution assaulted traditional values in the name of an incomprehensible, all powerful demonology -- so-called humans (Aryans and Proletarians) against the so-called social vermin (Jews and class enemies). Both in the Holocaust and in the Cultural Revolution it was intellectuals (those most dependent upon, most addicted to traditional culture) who suffered the greatest injuries in mind, body and soul. In both settings, it was intellectuals who emerged with a conscious sense of complicity in the horrors of their time. It is they who continue to nurture the frail but life sustaining bonds of remembrance between the present and the past.

The Cultural Revolution and the Holocaust, however, are also very different events: During the Holocaust, Jews in concentration camps faced a predicament that transcended both precedent and reason. Primo Levi and Jean Amery -- barrack mates at Auschwitz -- have pointed out that the lager was a world apart, a universe with his own "death logic." Prisoners [40] had been thoroughly dehumanized through the foodless, airless transport trains, through the daily spectre of mass murder in the gas chambers, through forced labor and the endless, intentional humilation of the roll call -- day or night, winter and summer. To be a concentration camp inmate was to be a number, not a sentient being. If Germans styled themselves to be humans larger than life, the Jew was less than an animal. As the opening quote of Art Spiegelman's vivid tale Maus makes it clear, Hitler consigned his victims beyond the pale: "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human." [41]

Demonology prevailed in China during the Cultural Revolution as well. Mao's victims were labeled "snake spirits" and "cow demons" before being incarcerated into "cow pens." This systematic dehumanization of the "enemies of the people" had begun in the 1950s. But during the sixties it became a means for mass persecution.

In spite of the life-denying labels, however, Mao's reign of terror never reached full fledged genocide. Intellectuals (zhi shi fenzi the "knowledgeable elements") were targeted for persecution over and over again during the long Mao era from 1942 to 1976. But each campaign against intellectuals, including the 1957 "Anti-Rightist" campaign and the Cultural Revolution assault on "the stinking ninth" (a collective indictment of the intelligentsia deemed by Mao to be more odious than traitors, Guomindang agents, landlords, capitalists, etc.) was carried out in the name of real, or imagined charges against individuals. No group was singled out for systematic destruction the way that the Jews had been during the Nazi terror.

Hence the breakdown of the inner world of Chinese victims was never as encompassing as that of the inmates in the death camps. Intellectuals in Hitler's concentration universe were stripped of all of their spiritual resources. As Jean Amery writes, "the intellectual person was isolated, thrown back entirely upon himself . . . he no longer believed in the reality of the world of the mind . . . the reality of the camp triumphed effortlessly over death and over the entire complex of so-called ultimate questions." [42] Simply put, Amery argues, the intellectual was defeated, not only annihiliated in Auschwitz. The mind had been brought to its limits, and found impotent. In fact, Amery concludes, the intellectual was less fit for survival than other camp inmates because of his lingering attachment to useless philosophical ideas, to fragments of meaningless poetry, to the subtleties of language.

Chinese intellectuals, by contrast, never experienced such extreme spiritual depravation. Although they were the objects of repeated criticism campaigns, they never lost a sense of connectedness to the nation and its cultural past. The survivor literature in China is full of consolations derived from reciting Tang poetry in Mao's prison cells, from reading Mao's anti-Confucian rhetoric with an eye to the lingering values of Confucian humaneness. Almost every intellectual sent down to forced labor "education camps" managed to hide some slim volume of spiritual nourishment beneath the Quotations from Chairman Mao that was the only truly safe book during the agonizing years of the Cul-

ally nourishes his descendants who partake of the ritual of earing zongze (rice dumplings wrapped in leaves).[37]

Rituals like the Dragon Boat Festival and Passover cement the bonds between past and present. They make some future possible, conceivable, despite the historical traumas that continue to haunt Chinese and Jewish culture in the 20th century. In the wake of the Holocaust and of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese and Jewish writers could not but reanimate and interrogate the language, the values of the past. To write is, literally, to remain in a continuum with Qu Yuan and the poets of Lamentations.

Dan Pagis, born in Bukovina in 1930, expressed this indebtedness to tradition most eloquently in "Sealed Transport" (Karon hatum), a cycle of poems about the destruction of European Jewry during the Second World War. In this collection, Pagis bears witness to personally endured trauma in a unique voice that nonetheless maintains a vivid link to the literature of the Psalms and of Lamentations. When he finally comes to the subject of his own survival, the poet shows himself unable to give up the burden of remembrance. With one foot already out of the nightmare, a new passport in hand, he writes:

> Imaginary man, go. Here is your passport.
> You are not allowed to remember . . .
> You have a decent coat now, a prepared body, a new name ready in your throat.
> Go. You are not allowed to forget. [38]

Similarly, the young Chinese poet Bei Dao, born in 1949 along with Mao's China, has steadfastly refused to forget the ravage of the Mao's revolution. In 1978, when Deng Xiaoping was just beginning to bring the nation out of the shadow of Maoist politics, when young people were being asked to get over the tragedies of the recent past and to dedicate themselves with optimism and renewed faith to the project of reform, Bei Dao penned his refusal in the form of a poem entitled "The Answer." Full of unanswered questions about Mao's past and Deng's present, the poet wrote:

> The Ice Age is over now,
> Why is there still ice everywhere?
> The Cape of Good Hope has been discovered,
> Why do a thousand sails contest the Dead Sea?
> Let me tell you, world,
> I -- do -- not --- believe!
> Even if a thousand challengers face you
> Number me as one thousand and one.
> A new constellation of glimmering stars
> Adorn the unobstructed sky,
> they are five thousand year old pictographs:
> The staring eyes of future generations.[39]

This haltingly crafted Chinese poem expresses the same determination to bear witness as Dan Pagis' tightly woven one. Here too, a young man uses personal memory to interrogate public history. Mindful of the "five thousand year pictographs" that are his inheritance, Bei Dao insists that old answers will not do in the present crisis. The "staring eyes of future generations" demand that he not forget, not "get over" the Cultural Revolution. Like Dan Pagis, Bei Dao refuses to cross the boundary with a new overcoat, as if all was well now.

Nothing was quite well (the "Cape of Good Hope" had been discovered, but .....) for these writers who could not forget the historical traumas of the 20th century.

The Holocaust and The Cultural Revolution

How can one speak in the same breath of two such disparate events as the Holocaust and the Cultural Revolution, you ask? If what you are concerned with is the magnitude of suffering, the numbers killed or the kinds of humilations endured, then the writings of Chinese and Jewish survivors cannot be considered side by side. But if, on the other hand, you are interested in the fertility of memorial traditions in the face of historical trauma, then the Holocaust and the Cultural Revolution, illuminate each other a great deal. If furthermore, you hear -- as I did -- Chinese intellectuals use the precedent of the Holocaust over and over again to explain their own wanton persecution during the Cultural Revolution, then the boundaries between Chinese and Jewish survivors wear thin indeed. Almost unwittingly, one is cast in a cosmopolitan world of memory metaphors, where, as Joseph Levenson insisted Chinese usage must be allowed to make sense in the same world of discourse in which we try to make sense of the West.

For me, Chinese and Jewish memory metaphors began to cross, to interrogate one another in 1980 in the mining village of Datong. This North China hamlet houses Buddhist cave sculptures from 6th century as well as an abandoned Class Struggle Education Museum. Built during the Cultural Revolution, the museum was intended to commemorate the murder of Chinese miners in the Japanese labor camps of the 1940s. But Mao's political purposes, his penchant for bold, didactic lessons from the past took over. Around a few local remnants, the exhibition hall became a theater for his urge to engrave ever lasting messages about class struggle on the minds of new generations of Chinese proletarians. They forgot the museum soon after Mao's death.

In the cavernous, now deserted Class Struggle Exhibition Hall, I began to think about the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, about its initially modest, black and white photographs and now increasingly, lavish contemporary monuments. In Datong, I began to take stock of what happens when remembrance becomes de-gutted, its compelling, troublesome inards cast out in favor of glossy lessons about the past.

In Datong, genuine remembrance appeared sequestered to a few dark corners where the mythifying light of political commemoration failed to penetrate. After Datong, I continued to find such corners, such snippets of the past -- some poems, some memoirs in which Chinese and Jewish rememberers took me closer to the real anguish of the Cultural Revolution and of the Holocaust. Their shared understatement, their willingness to strain inherited idioms to accommodate unprecedented nightmares suggested more common ground than an easy, or a natural function of human community. Instead, they both nurtured a commitment to historical memory that took account of the prevalence of amnesia. They both textualized memory and transmitted it from generation to generation with sacred awe.

Expressions of the Commitment to Remembrance

Memory is a natural function of human beings. The commitment to remembrance, however, is a profoundly natural act that varies from culture to culture. Chinese and Jewish tradition share an attachment to the past that is informed by a long standing appreciation of the human proclivity to both remember and to forget. In both cultures, memory is not left to nature, or fate or the foibles of human interest. Rather, it is cultivated through a relationship to fragments of the invisible, vanished past which nonethless claims the loyalties, the emotions of the present.

Stones, persons, tales, texts — and most concretely, language itself — is used as a reminder in Chinese and Jewish culture. Even when they dwell on forgetfulness, Chinese and Jewish writers are reminding their countrymen about the importance of a commitment to the past. Meng Jiao's "Autumn Meditations," appeal for conscious remembrance by reminding contemporaries that Confucius, the arch memoralist, was also grieved by amnesia:

> "And the Master's tears for
> the loss of the past
> In those days fell in torrents."[23]

Mournful as Meng Jiao was, his was not a lacrimose, nor a passive attitude in the face of the natural erosion of a commitment to remembrance. Rather, the fugu poet was a cultural activist. A moody, determined rememberer, he tried to live connected to the soil of former times. Similarly, the Jews exiled in Babylon did more than weep for the loss of the land of Israel. They cried, and wrote and told tales that kept the idea of a return alive in spite of political repression and the natural desire to adjust to the present.

In the 20th century, Chinese and Jewish writers have continued this commitment to remembrance in the face of far more traumatic breaks with the past than experienced by their forerunners in Confucian or Babylonian times. What is striking is not the persistence of cultural memories, but faith (both personal and social) in the possibility of rebirth through recollection.

China's foremost modern writer Lu Xun, expressed this faith in a characteristicallly gloomy fashion. Having lived through revolutionary times, he knew only too well the dangers of forgetting, of moving in step with the new as if the old was a discardable cloak. But Lu Xun could not, would not take the mantle of the past off so easily. He bore witness to the traditional Chinese value of nianjiu, attachment to the past.[24] He likened his stories to unforgettable nightmares. He refused to get over them. Instead, he not only recalled the past, but took it to heart, was willing to let it trouble him:

> I have some memories, but fragmentary in the extreme. They remind me of fish scales scraped off by a knife, some of which stick to the fish while others fall into the water. When the water is stirred a few scales may swirl up, glimmering, but they are streaked with blood, and even to me they seem likely to spoil the enjoyment of connoisseurs. [25]

Lu Xun was a mindful participant in times of revolutionary change, but never joined the Community Party. After his death in 1936, Communist revolutionaries like Mao Zedong deified Lu Xun without troubling themselves with the problem of memory. They never understood why Lu Xun held on to the bloody fragments of the past. They never looked past a melancholic attachment to the long lost glories of Chinese history. But Lu Xun knew that memories, especially bloody ones, like fishscales, are the very stuff of personal and cultural survival.

In very different historical circumstances, Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel also affirmed the importance of bloody memories for his own and his people's survival. In his Nobel speech, Wiesel used an old Hassidic tale to illustrate the importance of

memory to those who would survive with hope:

> Once, the great Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem-Tov, the Master of the Good Name, undertook an urgent, dangerous mission — to hurry the coming of the Messiah. His punishment for having tried to change the course of history was exile. In his cast out loneliness, he was followed by a faithful servant. The servant begged the Master to use his magic powers to cancel the exile. The Master was powerless. He, in turn, asked the servant to pray. The simple man knew nothing but the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
>
> Together the Master of the Good Name and the simple servant recited the alphabet. Over and over again until suddenly, the Baal-Shem recovered his powers. He recovered his memory." [26]

Speaking in French, the Translyvanian Jew concluded his Oslo story as follows: "C'est memoire qui a sauve le Besht, c'est elle qui sauvera l'homme du desespoir. Disons-le tout de suite: un espoir sans memoir est comme une memoir san espoir. Ort de meme que l'homme ne peut vivre sans reve . . . . Si le reve reflete le passe, l'espoir appele l'avenir . . . l'oppose de l'avenir n'est pas le passe, mais l'oubli de passe." [27]

For Elie Wiesel, as for Lu Xun, there is a deep link between memory, dreams and the difficult struggle against forgetting. Lu Xun never received a Nobel prize for keeping his country's dreams and nightmares alive, though he earned it. Like the Translyvanian survivor of the Holocaust, the Chinese writer was willing to let the past wash up, wash over him again and again, especially when his contemporaries appeared most taken by the promise of a revolutionary future. That is when Lu Xun reminded his countrymen of the most painful, most difficult parts of their shared past.

To remember, in this sense, is to dare to re-animate the past. To give it a second chance, yet another life in a way that marks, transforms the present life of the rememberer. Both Chinese and Jewish tradition offer precedents

for this practice of mindful recollection. Embedded in the Biblical usage of zachor, for example, is the idea of memorial sign, something that alters not only stone and parchment but the heart itself.[28] Subjective and objective meanings of memory intermingle freely in this language/thought world which requires active participation by those who live in keeping with covenant of remembrance.

The Passover ritual is the most concrete embodiment of this requirement for personal commitment in commemoration: "In every generation let each person regard himself as though he had emerged from Egypt," tells us the Haggadah. Distance from the time of the Exodus event does not sanction self abstention from its memorial obligation. The Seder ritual is meant to cement each year the connection of past and present, to display — bring into play — what Wiesel termed the "mysterious power of memory, without which existence is neutral, passive and opaque."[29]

Similarly in Chinese tradition, memorial rituals were developed to cement a living connection with the distant past. Mourning ceremonies strengthened the bond between ancestors and descendants by fostering among the living a concrete indebtedness to the dead. Beyond the memories of one's own family or clan, the Chinese language itself, and Confucian culture more generally, elaborated a nuanced vocabulary for reminders that nourish remembrance.

At the heart of Chinese cultural practice lies the expression and experience of huaigu — a meditation upon, a cherishing of the past. Like the Hebrew word zachor, the Chinese ideograph huai has embedded in it the willingness to take into one's bosom the object of remembrance. Subjective and objective meanings of memory are mingled here as well, and not by accident. To give oneself over to huaigu, like participation in the Passover seder, requires the rememberer to inscribe the past into his or her own heart.

Such cherishing meditations upon the past were provoked by, built into Chinese religion, Chinese poetry, even into the architecture of Chinese gardens. Bent upon transforming a place into a site for active, personal reminiscence, the Chinese garden guides the vistor with carefully planned paths, poems inscribed on rocks. All these are meant to allude to, to reanimate the experiences of the rememberer's forerunners.

One place in traditional China well known for its ability to unlock the mysterious powers of memory was the Weeping Stele on Mount Xian. Built in the middle of the third century by Yang Hu — a local governor, this fragment of stone became a sacred place for subsequent generations of rememberers. They reenacted Yang Hu's mountain climb, they gazed out upon the vast expanse he had first glimpsed and wept in ritual commemoration of an individual who had come to this wilderness to think about the nameless dead. Not unlike Jews who continue to meditate and weep at the Wailing Wall — also a fragment from a broken yet re-collected past — the Tang Dynasty poet Meng Haoran (689-790) took the pilgrimage to the Weeping Stele and wrote:

> In human affairs there is succession and loss. Men come and go, forming present and past. Rivers and hills keep traces of their glory, And our generation, too, climbs here for the view . . . Yang Hu's stele is still here: Done reading, tears soak our robe.[30]

The Weeping Stele, like the Wailing Wall partakes of the alchemy that is memory. A broken fragment becomes transformed into a potent, cherished reminder. A pilgrim to Mount Xian is renewed through the act of co-commemoration, though communion with a lost past and a community of contemporary and former rememberers.

In the world of the Tang poet, however, unlike the Jewish tradition, the passage of time is experienced as something quite natural. The losses it occasions are no more than what is to be expected through the succession of generations. Rivers and hills maintain traces of the past that forgetful humans overlooked. The world of nature is a guardian of remnants that bring back the full flavor of the past in the eyes of caring beholders such as Meng Haoran.

Jewish remembrance, by contrast, is marked by a profound dislocation from space. Always mindful of the predicament of exile, the rabbis insisted upon a fierce attachment to time and time bound events such as the Sabbath, Exodus and the revelation at Sinai. After the destruction of the Second Temple — and later with repeated expulsions as the one from Spain in 1492 — rivers and hills could not be counted on to safeguard remnants of Jewish memory. Human memory had to bear this burden instead.

In the classical Chinese lexicon, memory is a less cumbersome affair. Anchored in a world that is replete with reminders (from ancestor villages to imperial temples) a rememberer has the luxury of drifting in out of several memory worlds at once, of playing with time. This sense of playful, nature-nourished recollection is quite alien to Jewish tradition. Its hallowing of time is a serious undertaking, precisely because it is intended to compensate for losses suffered in the realm of space.

In classical Chinese poetry, one of the most suggestive metaphors for the experience of recollection is menghen — "dream traces," especially of spring dreams. Menghen connotes a graceful, delicious dalliance with the past in a season marked by constant change. It suggests that what once was cannot be brought back, but it can be dreamt up momentarily, provided one does not grasp it too firmly, or burden it with more meaning than a spring dream might bear. The Song dynasty poet Su Shi (1037-1101), a scholar official like all the intellectuals of his time, embroidered upon the classical usage of menghen, when he wrote:

> The east wind cannot yet enter the east gate. But riding horses, we seek out the old place. Men, like wild geese, keep the promise of return. While things vanish like a spring dream without a trace . . . Since we have agreed to meet here each year. Why bother calling back the spirits of the dead.[31]

In Su Shi's poem, a group of friends has just set out for a reunion at a lake. Spring, with its east winds, finds no admittance to this rural hideaway. The poet and his friends, like wild geese, have kept the promise of return. Their yearly gathering, according to Su Shi, has the power to obstruct the course of natural amnesia, even of death itself. Spring dreams leave no trace but in the poem itself. It memorializes the vanishing moment. It recalls the past momentarily, and lets it go again.

Subsequent generations of Chinese writers elaborated the metaphor of menghen to fit disparate memorial experiences. In all of its proliferations, however, the link between remembrance and the traces of a vanishing spring dream was maintained with delicate care. In poetry, as well as in prose, memory is seen as something precious and tenuous all at once. The historian Wang Huizu (1731-1807) articulated this duality most clearly in a preface to his autobiography, Dream Traces From a Sickbed: "Having been paralyzed in old age, I think about the past all the time: everything is still very clear in mind, so I started to dictate this history to my two sons . . . . Su Shi's said that 'things vanish like a spring dream, without a trace.' But I don't care to look at life as though it were a dream. Perhaps dreams are unreal. But traces of recollections are not. Therefore I have tried to record my life as honestly as I can."[32]

The urge to leave a trace, to write an instructive history of his life for posterity, led Wang Huizu to endow recollection with more significance than Su Shi was willing to seven centuries earlier. The cumulative record of Chinese history, the vast corpus of literary musings on menghen enabled the Qing historian to give memory more substance than the poet before him. By checking and verifying the evidence in his autobiography, Wang Huizu sought to make remembrance something more than a vanishing dream. He enhanced traces with a lifeweight lacking in the season of pure change.

A rather different intensity animates Jewish reflections on the truth value of remembrance. In the wake of exile and repeated historical trauma, memory had to lament, to console and to commemorate all at once. There was little room even in classical Judaism for doubt about the evidence of recollection and even less for soft spoken analogies to the world of nature. Instead of traces of spring dreams, the poets of Lamentations, for example, forced themselves to recall events that curdled the stomach and singed the eyes. Writing about children expiring from hunger in the streets of a besieged city, one of them confessed:

> My heart is in tumult
> My being melts away.[33]

Meaning literally, "my liver spills on the ground" — (nishpakh la'arets keyedi) — this metaphor for recollection colors all of Jewish memorial literature. Its visceral violence mirrors the brutal persecution that is a frequent theme in the literature of penitential poems (piyutim) from David Bar Meshullam of Speyer (who memorialized the mass suicide of a Jewish community in 1096, at the height of the First Crusade) to Hayim Nahman Bialik (who bore poetic witness to the Kishinev pogrom of 1908).

The experience of gut splitting anguish was not alien to Chinese poets. They called it duan chang, a metaphor for being broken hearted that means, literally, "torn apart inards." Some of the Chinese poets' best work was born out of these wretched depths. But whereas the remorse and agitation of the Jewish authors of penitential prayers, or piyutim, was rooted in historical trauma, Chinese writers' inspiration often came from personal loss confronted in the world of nature.

Su Shi, the Song dynasty poet who had likened memory so skillfully to the traces of a spring dream was also the author of one of the most powerful memorial poems in classical Chinese literature. Mourning the death of his wife, the poet longs for her distant grave with the full force of duan chang:

> A decade splits off your death
> From my life, a dreary desert
> No mind can cross.
> Your orphaned grave's too far away,
> No place beyond the tall, straight pines.
> To break my heart, to voice my bleak lament.
> Night brings spring dreams,

> I'm home again.
> Outside the window,
> I watch you comb your hair.
> We look, but do not speak,
> A blank page marred by streaks of tears.
> And even if our paths did cross
> You would not know me,
> A man grown ghostly pale.[34]

The double loss of death and distance took this Chinese poet into some of the same thickets as Jewish poets who stretched language to accommodate the demands of the commitment to remembrance. But the Chinese writer's excursion into this ache-filled region is constantly moderated by a cultural injunction against dwelling on the painful past too long. Although memory is to be consciously, artfully cultivated, it must not become an overwhelming obsession. A Daoist classic of third century went as far as to identify memory as the source of all emotional troubles, suggesting that harmony within and beyond the self is best maintained through forgetting: "Emotions (that upset natural harmony) arise out of memory. Where there is no memory, emotions (obsessions) will dissolve as well."[35]

The Daoist preference for unruffled amnesia was qualified in Chinese culture by a Confucian appreciation of the healing power of memorial metaphors. As in Hebrew literature, remembering is a sacred activity that mends the breach between past and present. It regenerates even in the process of mourning. For the Lamentation poets there was little doubt that mournful verses can and did comfort Zion, "like the restored children of a grieving mother."[36]

On the Chinese side, a similar faith in the comforts of recollection lives on through the remorse filled epic, the Li Sao. Authored by Qu Yuan, an exiled official who committed suicide in 27 BC, this poem became an inspiration for generations of Chinese intellectuals who found themselves outcasts in times of greed and violence. Qu Yuan's meditations on the grief of wandering away from home are recalled every year during the Dragon Boat Festival. The memory of China's earliest and most famous political dissident liter-