

smuggled, items, worth a quarter of a million dollars on today's market. An investigation, first by the Haifa police and then involving central police headquarters in Jerusalem, Interpol, and eventually the London police, has had only partial success—some 50 items that turned up at a Christie's auction in London last summer have been returned to the museum.

Sources close to the museum contend that about 50 additional objects from the museum's collection have been located at various galleries in London, but nobody seems willing to press the investigation. One source cites a lavishly decorated lacquered wood box that appeared in a Christie's catalog last March, offered for sale at a suggested price of £ 5,500-7,000, "I know it's the museum's, and it's still not back," he laments.

Museum staffers refuse to comment on such allegations, as do the police. "I can't tell you what's going on in London. The file is still open," says Haifa police spokesman Mookly Samberg. In June, the Tel Aviv art dealer who sold Christie's the now-recovered objects was arrested, "but we didn't find enough evidence to bring him to trial," admits Samberg. (The dealer claimed to have purchased the items in Russia.)

Former director Lancman—a one-time Technion lecturer in art who studied for six years in Tokyo—was at one point implicated in the theft. He was fired from his position, which he had held for 25 years.

Although he was cleared in a subsequent investigation, Haifa Mayor Arie Gurel refused to rescind the firing, citing "incompetence." Lancman has been fighting Gurel in court ever since, and the next round in their protracted battle is scheduled for mid-March. Lancman still holds a research position at the museum, and is barred by the municipality from speaking to the press.

When the museum was open, it was the only place in Israel where the public could see a rich variety of Japanese art, according to Rivka Bitterman, the Israel Museum's curator of Asian art. The only comparable collection is a private one belonging to Jerusalem

artist Jacob Pins.

Most of the museum's holdings were amassed in Berlin before World War II by German-Jewish art lover Felix Tikotin, who lost his collection during the war and retrieved it thereafter. In 1956 he visited Israel and decided to donate the art to the city of Haifa. The museum opened in 1959.

In the late 70s, the museum purchased a plot of land next door, with expansion in mind. Four years ago, Lancman found a Japanese donor, industrialist Ryoichi Sasakawa, who contributed \$1.5 million for a new two-story wing, which is to house an auditorium, exhibition hall, library, and offices.

Initially a Japanese architect was hired; Haifa architect Al Mansfeld, who won the Israel Prize for his design of the Israel Museum, later took over; and building work, after numerous delays, began. "But then there wasn't enough money to finish the building," says Mansfeld. "Now, things are getting more expensive, and it's not finished."

But there is still a chance that the Tikotin has not committed *hara-kiri* after all. The museum's steering committee will meet in mid-March to consider its options. Among them: scaling down the new wing to a single story. In the meantime, architect Mansfeld dreams of realizing the elaborate plan that hangs on his office wall, but says sadly: "Nothing functions; everything is ruined. The museum's closure is a shame for Haifa."

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## INDIA-ISRAEL TRADE LOW

Trade between India and Israel is small at present. Diamonds account for \$110 million of the \$130 million in Israeli exports. These are polished, then returned—providing India with a theoretical export statistic to Israel. Other Indian exports to Israel are described as "nominal," amounting to less than \$1 million. The remaining \$20 million consists of chemicals, mainly bromines and pesticides.

Public-sector bilateral trade continues to be off-limits. India is the world's largest importer of fertilizers and Israel is a leading exporter. But fertilizer may be imported only by companies controlled by government-owned firms, and their policy is not to trade with Israel. State-owned Israel Chemicals has for years tried unsuccessfully to penetrate the Indian market.

## SPEAKER AVAILABLE

Ernest G. Heppner is available to lecture on the subject of Shanghai's Jewish community in the 1930/40s. He has spoken on this subject to both the UJA and the UAHC. His book on this topic will be published by Nebraska University Press. He may be reached at: 6930 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis, IN 46220, (317) 255-5090 or 5076.

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# POINTS EAST

A publication of The Sino-Judaic Institute

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JULY, 1992

## EARLY CHINESE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

by Yitzhak Shichor

adapted and reprinted from *Asian and African Studies* 15 (1981), 343-361, Journal of the Israeli Oriental Society, Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Haifa

...China's revised position on the Arab-Israeli conflict is by no means a novelty. It would therefore be misleading to explain it solely in terms of recent events, for that would imply that the periodic shifts in China's foreign policy represent short-term expediency, pragmatism, or even opportunism. While these features should not be ruled out entirely, it is equally important to recognize that Chinese foreign policy is also based on long-term assumptions which provide for a certain degree of consistency, continuity, and rationale.

From the very beginning such assumptions have determined Chinese attitudes towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. First articulated in the 1940s, these attitudes remained basically unchanged to the late 1950s. In those years the Chinese communists treated the Palestine problem in a relatively evenhanded way. Taking care not to alienate Israel, they argued that the problem could and should be settled peacefully by the parties involved, without outside intervention. It was precisely such intervention, they claimed, that underlay the conception, birth, and perpetuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Such a belief, along with other earlier Chinese attitudes towards the conflict, have re-emerged over the past decade, particularly after Mao's death in September 1976. My purpose here is to trace their historical origins and to underline their more fundamental and enduring aspects.

One of the earliest manifestations of the Chinese communist stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict appeared in 1941, years before the PRC was established. In a commentary analyzing the situation in the Middle East, Li Wei-han, a leading member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), also dealt briefly with Palestine. Having attributed the main source of instability in the Middle East, as well as of Arab-Jewish enmity (*chou-hen*), to British imperialism, he regarded both the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine as representing genuine 'national independence movements' (*min-zu du-li yun-dong*) seeking liberation from Britain.<sup>1</sup>

Though camouflaged within a larger context, these remarks conveyed an interesting message: the contradictions between Jews and Arabs in Palestine were regarded by the Chinese as secondary and, by implication, (to use a later term) non-antagonistic; thus they could be settled peacefully. Moreover, the principal contradiction in the Middle East existed between Jews and Arabs, on the one hand, and outside imperialist and aggressive powers, on the other. Presumed to be antagonistic, 'the contradiction between the colonies and imperialism,' Mao wrote in 1937, 'is resolved by the method of national revolutionary war.'<sup>2</sup> Put differently, as early as the beginning 1940s the Chinese believed that settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict was dependent upon a resolution of the more fundamental conflict with imperialism.

Setting a pattern to be followed for many years, this incidental 1941 interpretation of the Palestine problem reflected a distinctive viewpoint. Then and later the Chinese communists were not particularly interested in, nor well-informed about, the genuine historical, political, ideological, and religious aspects of the Arab-Israeli

conflict. Instead, they perceived this conflict, as well as many others, through the prism of their own strategic concerns and security needs. In this perspective events in and around the Middle East assumed threatening proportions in the spring of 1941, for, though remote from China, they could have affected the fate of Chinese communism.

In strategic terms the main threat came from the Germans. Having occupied the Balkans and parts of North Africa, German troops proceeded to the Middle East in a pincer movement, aided by a pro-Nazi coup in Iraq and French Vichy collaborators in Syria and Lebanon. From the Chinese standpoint occupation of the Middle East could have provided the Germans with a stepping stone to Asia, which in turn could have led to an eventual German-Japanese encirclement of China.<sup>3</sup> To frustrate such a scheme the Chinese communists should have promoted a strong British military barrier in the Middle East. Yet in ideological terms, as dictated by the Comintern, Britain was still the main enemy, while Germany, tied to the Soviet Union in a non-aggression pact, had to be considered an ally. Hence, reluctantly and contrary to their own interests, the Chinese urged Arabs and Jews in Palestine against fighting one another and encouraged them to join hands in undermining British 'imperialism.'

The need for such ideological acrobatics had disappeared by June 1941: as the Soviet-German pact collapsed, Germany (together with Japan) became the main enemy, while Britain turned overnight into an ally. Moreover, by that time the British had crushed the Rashid Ali al-Kaylani coup in Iraq and re-occupied Syria and Lebanon, thereby arresting the German advance towards the Middle East. Under these new circumstances it

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**From the editor:**

Apparently our last issue, which featured the wonderful news about China and India establishing full diplomatic relations with Israel, was a big hit. We received many notes of praise, but none so eloquent or appreciated as that from Prof. Louis Schwartz, SJI's "honored founder."

Louis, recently returned to his hometown of Arroyo Grande, California, wrote: "I can't be sure of which of your publications was the best, but this last issue, I believe, has impressed me more than any that I can remember. You are doing an outstanding service for all those interested in Sino-Judaic history and relations. That is indeed a credit to our organization."

Coming from Louis, this is high praise, which I duly (but not so humbly) accept, with the caveat that none of what we do would have been possible without Louis' pioneering activity. Similar debts of gratitude are owed to many on SJI's board but, lest I slight any of my friends, I shall not mention any additional names.

Hearing from Louis made me realize that many of you who joined SJI in recent years may not be aware of the history and scope of SJI's activities. To fill this gap, I have included in this issue my report on SJI to the NJCRAC Plenum this past February. Brief though it is, I think it will help give everyone a sense of how much we have accomplished — and of how much we have yet to do.

Anson Laytner

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**IN THE FIELD****• NEWS FROM KAIFENG**

The recognition of Israel by China has spurred some new developments in this area. In a letter from Prof. Zhao, he reports that the city and the provincial governments have approved the establishment of "The Society for the Study of the History and Culture of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng." (See story in this issue.) In addition, the municipal government has gone on record as approving the plan to erect a Chinese Jews Historical Memorial Hall on the site of the former synagogue, establishing a Jewish cemetery, and setting aside an industrial park for foreign Jewish investment. Prof. Zhao now wishes to push ahead to obtain permission for a national, all-inclusive organization dedicated to research on the Kaifeng Jews.

**• NEWS FROM SHANGHAI**

— Jin Yingzhong and the Shanghai Jewish Studies Association: Jin Yingzhong, the General Secretary of the SJSA, in a letter dated April 10, says that the Shanghai municipal government is planning to restore the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, on Shaanxi Road, as a historical monument, to house a Museum of the Jews in Shanghai. Ohel Rachel, formerly on 200 Seymour Road, was founded by Sir Jacob Sassoon, in his wife's memory, and consecrated in 1920 by Rabbi W. Hirsch. At present, it houses the Shanghai Bureau of Education.

— Prof. Jin also reports that SJSA plans to conduct research on the Hongkew ghetto in Shanghai, where the Jewish refugees were forced to live during the War. He also says that an attempt is being made to locate the "Jews' Gate" in Hangzhou, mentioned by the Arab geographer Ibn Battutah in 1346.

— Prof. Tang Peiji was elected president of SJSA, Profs. Pan Guang and Gu Xiaoming are vice-presidents, and Mr. Jin Yingzhong continues as secretary general. The plans for SJSA for the coming year include working together with the Shanghai Huating Overseas Tourist Co. to initiate an activity called "Reunion of

the Jewish Community in Shanghai," and to help to restore one or two former Jewish sites in Shanghai.

**• NEWS FROM NANJING**

Prof. Xu Xin reports that Nanjing University has established a Center for Jewish Culture Studies. The chief goals of the Center are to carry out Judaic studies on a high academic level, to offer university courses on Jewish history, culture, literature, Hebrew language and Judaism, to enroll students for graduate study in this field, to hold academic conferences on Jewish subjects and to publish its own magazine. Prof. Xu has been appointed the Center's first Director. Congratulations Prof. Xu! (Prof. Xu will be speaking at the Conference on Chinese Jews at Harvard University this August and then will be on the West Coast until early September.)

**• NEWS FROM BEIJING**

The Chinese-Jewish Colloquium, organized by Isi Leibler of the World Jewish Congress, was held in Beijing, April 6-8. (See story in this issue.) Also, nearly 150 Jews from around the world gathered together for a Pesah (Passover) seder. It was the first time that the number of people was so great that the seder had to be held in a rented hall. A Chinese chef prepared the traditional Chinese passover dishes of potato kugel, matza balls and tzimmes!

**• PAN GUANG IN AMERICA**

Prof. Pan Guang came to the Bay Area recently and spoke at the Jewish Community Center. The program that evening included a showing of the film "Escape to the Rising Sun," followed by Prof. Pan's presentation on the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. He also spoke at the Center for East Asian Studies, Stanford, on "China and Israel 1948-90: Analysis of a Relationship." He spent a day at Berkeley, and Miriam Petruck, who once taught Hebrew at Beijing University and knew Dr. Pan from those days, was his host there. Nigel Thomas arranged for him to give a talk at the Temple Menorah, in Redondo Beach, CA on June 10. He then left for the East Coast where he had an active schedule of lectures also planned. This included one at the

(continued on page 6)

This possibility raises the question of whether the scrolls were, as supposed by most scholars, locked away in the Qumran caves for almost 2000 years until they were discovered by Arab youths in the 1940's and obtained by the western scholars in 1947 on.

Altman does give some evidence. He writes:

"About 800 A.D., writes Charles Pfeifer in his book, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible, "the Nestorian patriarch Timotheus I wrote a letter to Sergius, the Metropolitan of Elam, in which he described the discovery of a large number of Hebrew manuscripts in a cave near Jericho," a discovery also cited by John Allegro in his account of the scrolls. The eventual disposition of these manuscripts is not known."

Could some scrolls have been deposited in the caves later than others? This kind of question needs further analysis, though it may not be answerable.

**3. The possible significance for Chinese-western intercourse and for the dating of the scrolls.**

As I have written above, I see no value to Altman's arguments for redating of the scrolls. Nor do I see any likelihood of these "characters" changing our view that Chinese-western links, started by Zhang Qian in c. 130 B.C.E., were minimal until about the 3rd century C.E.

In conclusion I would say two things:

1. So far, the balance of opinion is that these are (probably!) not Chinese characters.

2. If these "characters" really are Chinese characters, somebody must have put them in the margins considerably later.

**NOTES**

1. Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, 2 vols., The American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, Vol. I (1950), Vol. II, Fascicle 2: Plates and Transcription of the Manual of Discipline (1951). See also Frank Moore Cross, ed., *Scrolls from the Qumran Cave I: The Great Isaiah Scroll; The Order of the Community; the Pesher to Habakkuk*, Jerusalem, The Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and the Shrine of the Book, 1972.

2. In Bryan Boswell, "The Scandal of the Scrolls", *The Australian Magazine*, November 9-10, 1991, pp. 50-53. I then discovered Neil Altman, "Dead Sea Scroll Mystery: Why do Chinese Symbols Appear on Two Texts?", *The Washington Post*, March 31, 1991, and "The Truth about the Dead Sea Scrolls" (with separate headings including "Ancient biblical writings may be frauds" and "Chinese symbols cast doubt on text's age"), *Boston Sunday Herald*, December 29, 1991, pp. 21-24. These are newspaper articles, I have not seen

abroad and various academic bodies, in order to advance Kaifeng City's opening to the West and economic vitalization.

Warmest good wishes to you and your family.

Prof. Zhao Xiangru

President, Society for the Study of the History and Culture of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng

**THE TRIALS OF THE TIKOTIN MUSEUM**

by Felice Maranz

reprinted from *The Jerusalem Report*,

March 12, 1992

A rat scurries among the bamboo plants next to Haifa's deserted Tikotin Museum, home to Israel's only public collection of Japanese art. A hastily lettered sign on the door announces that the museum is closed due to construction, a reference to the half-finished concrete shell next to the tiny, once thriving museum. In fact, it's not just the construction, but a series of disasters over the past three years that have forced the Tikotin to close, with no clear date for reopening in sight.

Established in 1959 as a Haifa municipal institution, the museum houses a 6,000-item collection of paintings, ceramics, delicate prints, rare books, sculptures, and antique swords, and boasts a library of 3,000 volumes. At one time, it produced a series of beautiful, authoritative English-Hebrew catalogs, offered concerts, lectures and language classes, and had 50,000 visitors a year.

Insiders are reluctant to discuss the Tikotin's crisis, a situation described as "dirty" by one renowned collector. Problems plaguing the museum include a still-unsolved theft; the firing of the museum's quirky director, Eli Lancman; nasty feuding between Lancman and Haifa city officials; lack of funding; and construction problems.

The museum's first setback came in November 1989, when a thief broke into the poorly guarded building and stole about 200 small, easily

a "learned" article. Altman queries several features of the scrolls. I intend here merely to deal with the one question: "Are there Chinese characters in the scrolls?"

3. Burrows, vol. 1, p. xvi.

4. Professor Mair has written more recently: "I never did come right out and say that the strange symbols actually were Chinese characters, only that they bore striking resemblances to certain characters, e.g. 'ii'."

5. Burrows gave a table, Figure 1, of the unusual symbols. Mair suggested as possible nos. 1, 2, 3, 7 (if so, as abbreviated from the Chinese character 'ii') and nos. 4, 6 (as other Chinese characters).

**THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE CHINESE JEWS OF KAIFENG ESTABLISHED**

Dear Prof. Dien

President, Sino-Judaic Institute

I am pleased to inform you that the Society for the Study of the History and Culture of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng was formally established in Kaifeng on May 1, 1992.

According to historical sources, Jews from abroad came to China as early as the Song Dynasty to settle in Kaifeng. In 1163 they built for the first time a synagogue in Kaifeng. Over the centuries the Jews with their industriousness and wisdom provided outstanding contributions in creating the history and culture of China and in the process of establishing the ancient "capital of seven dynasties," that is, Kaifeng. Today, to study the history and culture of the Jews not only has special historical significance and great academic value but also has real economic and cultural advantage. This society was established through the efforts of scholars and specialists who enthusiastically study the history and culture of the Jews, as well as other relevant persons. Coming under the category of a popular academic organization, its aim is systematically, thoroughly and intensively to study, uncover and put in order the history and cultural heritage of the ancient Jews of China and the Israelite religion, to rescue, restore and protect the cultural relics of the ancient Jews of China, and thus to expand Kaifeng City's interaction with foreign culture and economics as well as the friendly relations with Jewish organizations

against the Conspiracy to Betray the Country, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 30 November 1952, p. 1. This group of assassins donned the garb of physicians, scientists, and professors and appeared to be intellectuals of high calibre. Yet because of their reactionary, bourgeois and Zionist thinking [you-tai lu-guo-zhu-yi si-xiang] and their hostile feelings towards the working people, they degenerated into murderers"; editorial, An Important Victory of Soviet State Security Work, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 16 January 1953, p. 1. See also Judaism, Zionism, and Anti-Semitism, *Guo-ji wen-ti yi-cong* (Translations on International Problems 2 (February 1953): 92-99, The Zionist Organization Is the Espionage Organ of American Imperialism, *Zheng-qu chi-jiu he-ping, zheng-qu ren-min min-zhu!* (For Lasting Peace, For People's Democracy) 8 (1953); Yang Xuechun, Israel under the Rule of Narrow-minded Nationalism, *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 9 (25 February 1953): 19-20.

20. On Zionism, *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 1 (1 January 1953): 30.
21. Yang Xuechun, 'Israel Under the Rule,' p. 20.
22. Zhou Enlai, *Zheng-fu gong-zuo bao-gao*, p. 33.
23. Shichor, *The Middle East*, p. 218, n. 74.
24. For Israeli considerations on the China issue, see Michael Brecher, *Israel, the Korean War and China: Images, Decisions and Consequences*, Jerusalem 1974.
25. Mohamed Abdel Khalek Hassouna (Muhammad 'Abd al-Khaliq Hassuna), *The First Asian-African Conference Held at Bandung, Indonesia*, Cairo 1955, p. 22.
26. David Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement, Ideology and Foreign Policy in the Third World*, Jerusalem 1973, p. 52.
27. Editorial, Welcome the Convention of the Asian-African Conference, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 5 January 1955, p. 1.
28. *Shi-jie zhi-shi shou-ce* 1955, p. 451.
29. Zhong Lin, The National Liberation Movement of the Middle and Near Eastern Countries, *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 3 (5 February 1955): 14.
30. *Shi-jie zhi-shi shou-ce* 1955, p. 451.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 448.
32. *Ibid.*
33. See, for example, Li Bing, *Recognize Our World*, p. 34.
34. 'Middle East' and 'Near East', *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 23 (December 1951): 9.
35. *Shi-jie zhi-shi shou-ce* 1955, p. 448.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 451.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 860.
38. XINHUA, 10 April 1955.
39. XINHUA, 8 April 1955.
40. Ahmad al-Shuqayri, *From Zenith to Defeat*, Beirut 1971, p. 218.
41. *China and the Asian-African Conference* (Documents), Peking 1955, p. 15.
42. Hassouna, *The First Asian-African Conference*, p. 94. See also 'Chou Backs Arabs on Israel Dispute,' *New York Times*, 21 April 1955.
43. Hassouna, *The First Asian-African Conference*, p. 119; George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955*, Ithaca 1956, p. 16; G. H. Jansen, *Zionism, Israel and Asian Nationalism*, Beirut 1971, p. 258.
44. *China and The Asian-African Conference*, p. 30. Chinese text in The Asian-African Conference Successfully Concluded, Premier Zhou Enlai's Speech at the Closing of the Conference, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 25 April 1955, p. 1.
45. According to *Dawn* (Pakistan), 25 April 1955.
46. As claimed, for example, by Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, p. 67.
47. David Hacohen, *Yoman Burma* (Burmese Diary), Tel Aviv 1963, pp. 479-480.
48. Shichor, *The Middle East*, p. 226, n. 78.
49. *Ren-min ri-bao*, 25 April 1955.
50. Pei Min, The Palestine Problem, *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 10 (20 May 1955), pp. 32-33.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Zui Ji, A New American Scheme to Interfere in Middle and Near Eastern Affairs, *Ren-min ri-bao*,

20 September 1955, p. 4

53. Observer's Opinion, America Should Not Interfere in the Palestine Situation, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 1 October 1955, p. 4. Similar views appeared throughout the Chinese press over the period October-December 1955.

54. Observer's Opinion, Safeguard Near Eastern Peace, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 25 April 1958, p. 4.

55. For Peace and Security in the Near East, *Guang-ming ri-bao*, 21 April 1956, p. 4.

56. Statement by PRC representative to the United Nations, XINHUA, 4 December 1981.

57. Sun Yingkang, 'Saudi Arabia in Middle East Area,' XINHUA, 29 December 1981.

## CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

(continued from page 3)

with Mair that two other short symbols might also possibly be shortened variants of this (Burrows, Figure I, nos. 2, 3).

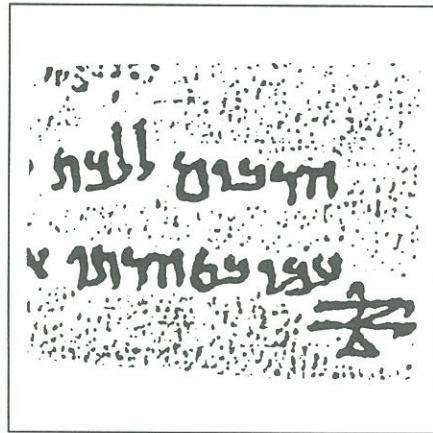


Plate VII, line 2

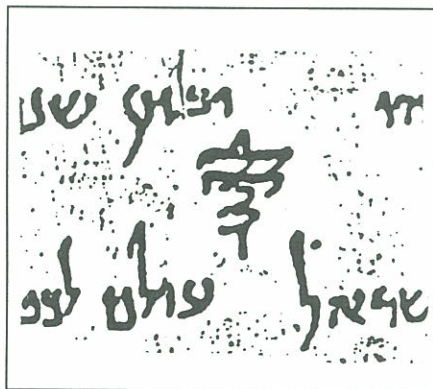


Plate IX, line 3

To sum up: One cannot reject out of hand the possibility that these "characters" which according to some scholars resemble the Chinese character *ti* are indeed the Chinese character *ti*. Nevertheless, it would be foolhardy at this stage to claim these as true Chinese characters.

### 2. How, When and Why did they appear in the Scrolls?

Though verification will need a pro-

per microscopic scientific analysis, it is highly probable that some or most of these signs, including our key ones, were added in the margins to the manuscripts, when first written or more likely later. That is to say that Altman's use of them to argue that the Scrolls are not authentic has little significance. One might argue, however, (always on the assumption that we really do have Chinese characters), that someone added in the margins non-Hebrew writings. Why? Perhaps as a signature, or for a kind of punctuation. However, why use Chinese? Why this particular character? I have no answer and can only express my amazement. Whilst admitting that the "character *ti*" does look Chinese, one has to admit also that its appearance even in the margin of the Dead Sea scrolls is weird (incredible?).

When could such Chinese characters have been known to anyone who also had contact with the Scrolls? I agree with Professor Mair that it is highly unlikely for any period prior to 100 C.E. He argues from the calligraphy, and suggests a date nearer the 8th or 9th century (assuming that we are concerned with Chinese characters). I would argue from the fact that, though there was some exchange of ambassadorial missions between China and Parthia c. 100 B.C.E., and a Chinese envoy Kan Ying actually reached as far as Mesopotamia in 97 C.E., there is no hint in western sources of any knowledge of the Chinese language or writing until perhaps a thousand years later (Marco Polo, incidentally, does not mention Chinese characters). The only speculation we might consider is that some Jewish envoy or resident of Parthia (friendly to the Jews compared with the Romans) returned home after meeting Chinese envoys. This is countered by the fact that there is no Talmudic reference to China.

Altman suggests a Nestorian hand in the matter. This can hardly date from earlier than the 7th century. We must reject in any case Altman's attempt to query the date of the Scrolls on these grounds. However, one must admit the possibility (perhaps only a small possibility) that someone had added the "characters" much later than the scrolls were originally written.

## CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS?

by Donald Daniel Leslie

### Introduction—

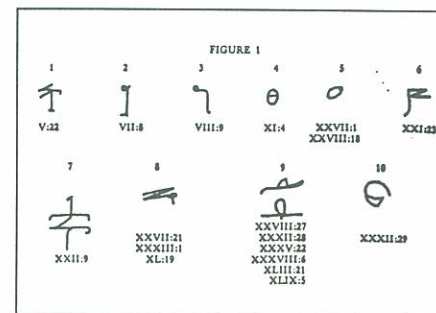
In two Dead Sea scrolls from Qumran, those published by Burrows in 1950, 1951<sup>1</sup>, are found a number of signs, mostly in the margins, several of which have been taken by Altman in 1991 as Chinese characters. The aim of this short article is to attempt to decide:

1. Whether any of these signs are really Chinese characters.
2. If so, how, when and why they were written.
3. What significance this has or may have for Chinese-western intercourse, and for the dating of the Dead Sea scrolls.

### 1. Are there Chinese characters in the Scrolls?

When I first heard<sup>2</sup> that Chinese characters appeared on the Dead Sea scrolls, I tended to reject it as a hoax. This was unfair, for though the original suggestion seems to have come from Altman in 1991, these symbols were already published in 1950, 1951, by Burrows, who writes:<sup>3</sup>

"Scattered through the Isaiah scroll are interesting marginal markings (see figure 1), probably inserted at a later time, perhaps to mark off sections used for reading by the sect which owned the manuscripts."



Altman quotes Victor Mair, Professor of Chinese at the University of Pennsylvania: "When I opened the envelope, it seemed immediately obvious that the symbols were either stylized forms of or rather clumsy attempts to write the Chinese character *ti*. This character means "God, divine king, deceased king, emperor".

I have examined these "characters", and sought the opinion of Chinese and other sinologists. As I understand it, some, including Professor Mair, feel that there is a striking similarity to one Chinese character in particular, but are not prepared to stake their reputations on this.<sup>4</sup> Others reject with varying degrees of certainty that these are Chinese at all. My own only semi-expert view is that some of the identities suggested for symbols in the Isaiah scroll by Mair should be rejected or at least discounted, but that the<sup>5</sup> key "character" might just possibly be an attempt to write or copy the Chinese character *ti*. If it is, I would agree with Mair that the writing is clumsy and must have been by someone not well acquainted with Chinese. However, not one of the Chinese scholars I have asked has suggested this particular character (though some non-Chinese sinologists do).

Altman, citing Mair, stresses the meaning "God" for this character, and in his April 1st article managed to photocopy the Hebrew word *El* "God or god" alongside the *ti* character. This, whether a deliberate or accidental error, was totally unjustified, for the *El* actually comes from "Isra-el" in the neighbouring page. Altman has also somehow wiped out the letter *shin* which does appear in his December photocopy. I would add to this that, in my opinion, this character *ti* standing alone does not often mean "God", its basic meaning being "Emperor". It does occur as "God" in very early texts, and also in 19th century missionary translations, far less if at all in the period we are concerned with, though possibly combined with other characters. It does not, so I believe, occur in the Nestorian writings. The speculations of Altman that this marginal "character" is linked to messianic passages in the Hebrew text are to be rejected.

The "character *ti*" (I will call it this) occurs once in the Isaiah Scroll (Burrows, vol. I, Plate XXII, line 9, and see also Plate V, line 22), and twice in the "Manual of Discipline" (Burrows, vol. II, 2, Plate VII, line 25 (overlooked by Burrows), Plate IX, line 3, and see also Plate V, line 1). I am in agreement

(continued on page 14)

## THE CHALLENGES OF JEWISH LIFE IN EAST ASIA

by Wendy Wolfe Fine

I am a Jewish communal professional and have always been interested in Jewish life outside of North America. This past fall I had the opportunity to learn about several Jewish communities in East Asia. My three and a half week trip with my husband and son included visiting Tokyo, Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Taipei. Although I had been a professional in the North American Jewish community, I was unfamiliar with Jewish life in these cities. I was surprised to find well-organized, small Jewish communities in each. In Tokyo, we participated in Friday evening services, followed by a Shabbat dinner with delicious chalahs baked in the Jewish community center. In Singapore, we went to Shabbat morning services at the Maghain Aboth Synagogue, after which we had spicy curried beef over rice for Shabbat lunch. We ate dinner at the weekly Sunday barbecue at Hong Kong's Jewish Recreation Club, which included fish in black bean sauce and fried rice. In Bangkok, we met with Jack Djemal, a native of the city, whose father was a co-founder and former president of the Jewish Association of Thailand. In Taiwan, I spoke with Fiona Chitayat, an eighteen-year resident of the Jewish community there. From talking to the members and professionals of these communities, I discovered many similarities to the North American communities with which I am familiar: they all have voluntary leadership boards, most have Hebrew schools, and some conduct United Israel Appeal campaigns. I also learned about the many challenges which face these communities as they try to provide for the Jewish needs of their members. The sizes of these communities vary. The largest is the Jewish community of Hong Kong. From a variety of sources I estimate the respective

sizes of the Jewish communities we visited to be as follows: Hong Kong, 300-400 families (excluding Jews who are not members of the Jewish Recreation Club/Ohel Leah Synagogue); Tokyo, 150 families; Singapore, 500 Jews; Bangkok, 200-300 Jews; and Taipei, 20-30 families.

Perhaps one of the most notable characteristics of these communities is that they all have very transient memberships. Historically, Iraqi, Syrian, Eastern European Jews, and others made their way to East Asian countries and founded synagogues in accordance with their Sephardi or Ashkenazi traditions. (Taiwan, however, does not have longstanding Jewish roots.) The permanent residents of the communities we visited are mostly either founding members or descendants of the founders. However, a large segment of each is temporary. Expatriates work for two to three years as engineers, architects, and business people, and come from Europe, the United States, Israel, Australia, and other countries. Some are Israeli members of the diplomatic corps. Students come to study Asian languages. Others come to teach English. Some come for short, periodic business trips and use the community services. While 150 Jewish families reside in Tokyo, Rabbi Silberschein, the rabbi of the Jewish community there, says that up to 2,000 Jews may be in Tokyo on business, studying, and touring at any one time. The result is an ever-changing makeup. Community membership options in Hong Kong reflect this transience. At the Jewish Recreation Club/Ohel Leah Synagogue, members pay monthly dues as opposed to yearly dues and membership categories accommodate the transient nature of the community. "Overseas Membership" is for those people who travel on a regular basis to Hong Kong, "Absent Membership" is for those who will be absent from Hong Kong for a continuous period over six months, and "Non-Active Membership" is for those who have been transferred out of Hong Kong, but wish to hold on to their membership in case they return permanently or for a visit. Even very

short-term visitors, like we were, fall into the category of "Temporary Membership."

This transience has different effects on the community. For example, according to the rabbi in Tokyo, if members are active and willing, they can become board members or even president in less than a year. However, the community lacks stability in that change can be a very long process and board members can be difficult to find. Echoing this sentiment, Rabbi Lapian of the Ohel Leah Synagogue in Hong Kong feels this lack of permanency affects the energy of the community. In Bangkok, the number of participants in Friday and Saturday services at the Even Chen Synagogue depends on the transient members of the community. As many as 50 out of 70 participants can be visitors. Before Passover and the High Holidays, transient members, and even affluent permanent residents of the community, make an exodus for Israel and other places. According to Jack Djemal, who travels with his family to Israel for Jewish holidays, Bangkok is not the place to be during these times of year.

Today the communities are comprised of both Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews, including members of all denominations of Judaism, in addition to unaffiliated Jews. Catering to this diversity is a community challenge. With the exception of Hong Kong which has Lubavitch and Reform groups which meet outside of the Jewish Recreation Club/Ohel Leah Synagogue, the synagogue, community center and rabbi/spiritual leader in each of these communities must serve all segments of the community. Rabbi Silberschein was chosen to be the rabbi in Tokyo on the assumption that an Israeli-American, Conservative rabbi could unite the different groups of the community. While a large contingency is Sephardi, the Ashkenazi traditions and format of prayer are practiced at the Tokyo synagogue. The seating in the synagogue is unique: participants have the option of separate male and female seating or mixed seating. In Taiwan, membership of the Jewish community is half Ashkenazi and half Sephardi. Services are always run Sephardi style

because the leaders are Sephardi. The philosophy of the Jewish community of Taiwan is to avoid anything which may be controversial; it tries to find a path that doesn't offend anybody. So, at community events, members do not question whether both partners in a married couple are Jewish. However, if the mother of a newborn boy is not Jewish, then the *brit milah* cannot take place in the synagogue. In Singapore, the local members are of Sephardi origin and services follow the Sephardi Orthodox traditions. The synagogue and permanent residents, however, are very accepting of the diverse religious backgrounds of the transient segment of the community.

The communities have to make a major effort to sustain Jewish traditions since resources are not always available. In Taiwan, families have brought in *mohalim* from the United States to perform ritual circumcisions. Others have used a medical doctor from Indonesia working as a missionary for the Adventist Hospital who felt he was doing a good deed by helping the community. Presently, the *mohel* from the Philippines is flown to Bangkok to perform ritual circumcisions. Unlike communities such as Hong Kong and Singapore, the Jewish community of Bangkok does not have a Jewish cemetery. According to Jack Djemal, the Thai government has banned the establishment of new cemeteries. In addition to Jews, Christians bury their deceased. However, the bulk of the people of Thailand follow Buddhism and practice cremation. Some Jews have been buried in a Protestant cemetery, whereas others have been cremated.

Maintaining kashrut involves significant effort and sometimes compromise. In Tokyo, the Jewish community brings in glatt kosher meat and poultry from Denver twice a year. According to the rabbi, the Japanese charge a customs tax and insist that the meat be used only in the Jewish community center or sold to coreligionists, not for commercial use. The center provides members with other kosher products like wine and matzah for Jewish holidays. In Taiwan, the Jewish community center has a milk kitchen. A meat kitchen

presence in the area.<sup>52</sup> In fact, they said, it was the Americans who had created and deepened the antagonisms between the Arab and Israeli peoples:

Throughout history Israelis and Arabs got along peacefully from generation to generation. Today they can certainly get along peacefully. Between them are no life-and-death contradictions that cannot be reconciled. Today's problem of the Palestine dispute is the outcome of long-term imperialist incitement.... We are convinced that, if only foreign intervention disappeared, the parties concerned could undoubtedly conduct negotiations and settle the Palestine problem peacefully on the basis of equality.<sup>53</sup>

In April 1956, exactly one year after the Bandung Conference, the Chinese took advantage of a Soviet statement on the Middle East situation to firmly restate their position:

The deterioration of the Arab-Israeli conflict is at present one of the most dangerous factors in the Near East situation. All the peace-loving people everywhere hope that the Arab-Israeli dispute can be peacefully settled and soon... In order to reach a stable and peaceful settlement of the Palestine problem, and to safeguard Near Eastern peace, the countries concerned should conduct negotiations in accordance with the United Nations principles and the wishes of the various Near Eastern countries... It is therefore necessary to avoid military conflict. All who are concerned about Near Eastern peace are convinced that if efforts will be exerted along these ways, then it will be possible to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Palestine problem.<sup>54</sup>

Such a settlement should be reached 'with respect for and in line with the national interest standpoint of both the Arab and the Israeli sides'<sup>55</sup> (emphasis added). . . .

Beginning in mid-1956, however, this situation changed. In May Egypt became the first Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC, and was quickly followed by Syria and Yemen. Later that year, and especially from early 1957, Chinese foreign policy became more radical in anticipation of an American-led 'imperialist' offensive. Disagreements over the interpretation of this offensive, and particularly over the proper means to handle it, widened the Sino-Soviet breach. Disillusionment with the Soviet 'model' both at home and abroad, together with the breakthrough in Sino-Arab relations, could not but erode China's hitherto even-handed attitude toward the Middle East conflict. . . .

It was the October 1956 Suez War, much more than the Bandung Conference, that triggered China's hostile attitude towards Israel. For it convinced the Chinese that far from being helplessly manipulated by 'Western imperialism,' Israel was in fact volunteering to serve imperialist interests in the Middle East. Though more critical about Israel, the Chinese still did not entirely embrace the Arab arguments on the Palestine problem. One reason for this was the deterioration of Sino-Arab relations in the late 1950s and early 1960s; another was China's preoccupation with the African awakening. It should also be noted that the Arab governments, who were to some extent responsible for the Palestine problem, preferred to keep it within bounds.

By the mid-1960s the situation had changed. The domestic turmoil of the Chinese Cultural Revolution led, among other things, to a militant and ideology-loaded foreign policy. Internationally, this fervor was fanned by China's sense of isolation following its final split with the Soviets. Consequently, the Chinese intensified relations with Third World governments and particularly with revolutionary organizations and national liberation movements. Such a movement was just emerging in the Middle East: the Palestine Liberation Organization. It immediately won Chinese recognition and support. All these developments contributed to the radicalization of China's stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict. . . .

Even while leaning heavily towards the Palestinians, China never accepted their radical aims, as expressed in the Palestinian Charter. Although they have been calling (since 1979) for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the Chinese have at the same time made it clear that 'all countries in the Middle East region enjoy the right to independence and existence.'<sup>56</sup> with Israel definitely included. In their eyes a comprehensive and realistic peace plan should not only uphold the legitimate rights and interests of the Palestinians and the Arabs, but also take 'into consideration the legitimate rights and interests of the Jewish people and the existence of the Israeli entity.'<sup>57</sup> . . .

## NOTES

1. Xiao Yu (Li Weihang), The Near East Chessboard, *Jie-fang ri-bao* (Liberation Daily), 23 May 1941.
2. 'On Contradiction' (August 1937), *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 1, Peking 1965, pp. 321-322.
3. For a more-detailed account of these concerns, see Yitzhak Schichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy 1949-1977*, New York 1979, pp. 9-11 and p. 213, nn. 1-5.
4. Qiao Mu (Qiao Guanhua), The World Situation following the American-Soviet Exchange of Notes, *Qun-zhong* (The Masses) 24 (24 June 1948): 9.
5. Idem, The World Situation and the Danger of War, *Qun-zhong* 16 (29 April 1948): 12.
6. Anglo-American Conspiracy to Liquidate Israel's Independence, Israel Rejects the 'Federation' Plan, *Ren-min ri-bao* (People's Daily), 14 July 1948, p. 2. See also Anglo-American 'Gentleman's Agreement' — A Conspiracy to Liquidate the State of Israel, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 25 June 1948, p. 2.
7. Disregarding Israel's Peaceful Aspirations, Arab Troops Violate the Ceasefire, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 23 June 1948, p. 2.
8. The Great Palestine War Erupts Again, the Israeli Army Scores One Victory after Another in Self-Defense, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 17 July 1948, p. 2.
9. Arab People Oppose the Palestine Aggression, Rally Together to Hold Demonstrations against the War, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 26 September 1948, p. 2.
10. *Ren-min ri-bao*, 18 January 1949, p. 3.
11. After Its Failure to Prop Up an Aggressive War, British Imperialism Still Schemes Armed Intervention in Israel, *ibid.*
12. Moreover, like the Soviets the Chinese believed that the July 1952 coup in Egypt 'had taken place under American imperialist engineering.' Egypt's 'Coup d'Etat', *Shi-jie zhi-shi* (World Knowledge) 31 (9 August 1952): 10; Naguib's Back-Stage Manager, *Shi-jie zhi-shi* 45 (5 November 1952): 13.
13. See, for example, Li Bing, Recognize Our World, Peking 1952, pp. 6-7.
14. See, for example, The Communist Party of Palestine Exposes the Anglo-American Instigation Plot, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 29 March 1948, p. 3; The Israeli Communist Party Opposes the Anglo-American Compromise, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 16 August 1948, p. 2; Chairman Mao Cables Greetings to the Congress of the Israeli Communist Party, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 4 November 1949, p. 1. See also People's China 12 (16 June 1952): 37; *Xin-hua yue-bao* (New China Monthly) 6 (1952): 218.
15. Israel, Afghanistan, and Finland Decided to Establish Foreign Relations with Our Country, *Ren-min ri-bao*, 17 January 1950, p. 1. See also XINHUA (New China News Agency), Daily News Release, no. 259, 17 January 1950, p. 68; People's China 3 (1 February 1950): 19; *Xin-hua yue-bao* 4 (February 1950): 1080; Diary of Major Events, in *Ren-min Shou-ce* 1951 (People's Handbook), Peking 1951, p. 3.
16. 'Eight other countries - Pakistan, Britain, Ceylon, Norway, Israel... have also expressed willingness to establish diplomatic relations with our country'; Zhou Enlai, 'The First Year of People's China,' People's China 8 (16 October 1950): 5. See also idem, *Zheng-fu gong-zuo bao-gao* (Report of the Work of the Government), Peking 1954, p. 33; *Shi-jie zhi-shi shou-ce* 1955 (World Knowledge Handbook), Peking 1955, p. 120.
17. For example, in his speech at the United Nations Security Council on 28 November 1950, PRC representative Wu Xiuquan named Israel among the 16 countries that 'warmly [re-lie] support the effort to admit our country to the United Nations.' Chinese text in *Cong sheng-li dao sheng-li* (From Victory to Victory), Shanghai 1951, p. 83.
18. Editorial in *Guang-ming ri-bao* (Enlightenment Daily), 2 February 1951.
19. 'The anti-state conspiratorial center headed by Slansky was a typical American espionage agency... Members of the center were all Trotskyites, Zionists, Titoites, and bourgeois nationalists,' editorial, Congratulations on the Great Victory of Czechoslovakia

Chinese quite often mention Israel and Palestine as two different countries,<sup>33</sup> the latter (following Soviet usage) probably meaning Palestinian areas outside of Israel (*Ba-le-si-dan chu Yi-si-lie di di-qu*).<sup>34</sup>

As we have already seen, the Chinese never doubted the legality of Israel's statehood and its complete conformity to the United Nations partition resolution.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, they were fully aware that the resolution's provision for an Arab state in Palestine had not been implemented. They laid the blame for this default, however, — and for the resulting plight of the Palestinian refugees — not on Israel alone but also on the Arab governments: "Places inhabited by Palestinian Arabs formed part of what had been occupied by Jordan, Egypt, and Israel."<sup>36</sup> Moreover, in 1955 the Chinese still held that the Arabs were more responsible than Israel for escalating the conflict because it provided them with an outlet for religious emotions and domestic pressure:

In 1948 the Anglo-American imperialists provoked a war between the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine. The Arab League, using 'Holy War' [jihad] as a slogan, called upon all Arabs to participate in the war against the Jews. They attempted to use the war to divert the people's psychological hatred of foreign colonialists and feudalism in their own countries, and as a result to increase taxes and build up modern armies.<sup>37</sup>

This evenhanded stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict was apparently abandoned in early April 1955, on the eve of Bandung. At the Conference of Asian Countries held in New Delhi, the Chinese duly supported a resolution which, among other things stated: "This conference expresses its sympathies for the plight of the Arab refugees and upholds their right to return to Palestine. This conference condemns the aggressive policy of the ruling circles of Israel."<sup>38</sup> But even then Guo Moro, leader of the Chinese delegation, stressed that problems among Middle Eastern countries be settled on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence:<sup>39</sup> mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence. These principles contin-

tinued to govern Chinese attitudes towards the Arab-Israeli conflict during the Bandung Conference, despite Arab attempts to extort a more radical commitment.

Zhou Enlai was constantly besieged at Bandung by the Palestine issue. At least seven speakers raised it publicly during the first two days, and it was brought up at the secret sessions of the Political Committee as well. The topic also emerged in the premier's private conversations with Nasser and particularly with Ahmad Shuqayri (then deputy secretary-general of the Arab League and vice-chairman of the Syrian delegation.)<sup>40</sup> The presence of the former *mufti* of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni (as a member of the Yemeni delegation) only added fuel to the fire. Yet the Arab offensive fell short of its anticipated aims. This was evident from Zhou's response; he did not even mention the Palestine problem in his main speech on 19 April. The official text of his speech did, however, contain a brief and inconsequential statement: "The problem of Arab refugees of Palestine still remains to be solved."<sup>41</sup> On other occasions during the conference Zhou repeated China's basic argument that the Palestine problem, essentially the result of foreign intervention,<sup>42</sup> could not be resolved until these outside elements responsible for the 'Palestine tragedy' left the scene.<sup>43</sup> In his concluding speech he stated: "I would like to declare once again that the Chinese people extend their full sympathy and support ... to the on-going struggle for human rights of the Arab people in Palestine."<sup>44</sup>

It was probably on the basis of these comments that the Mufti allegedly told Zhou Enlai: "I thank you heartily for your defense of the Palestine question which was put forth in your excellent speech at the General Assembly and to the Political Committee." Reportedly, Zhou replied "We support all Arab problems in general and that of Palestine in particular as we do support of the struggle of all enslaved peoples."<sup>45</sup> Arab gratitude, however, could not conceal the fact that China demonstrated restraint and moderation with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Certainly, there was no evidence that the Chinese had gone

overboard in their attempts to condemn Israel and uphold 'Palestinian rights,' or that they urged a more radical resolution of the Palestine issue.<sup>46</sup> On the contrary, according to Yao Zhongming, China's ambassador to Burma who accompanied Zhou Enlai on his way home from Bandung, the Chinese premier had tried to evade this issue and avoided mentioning Israel by name.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, conference dispatches by the New China News Agency omitted such radical Arab remarks as 'Palestine must be returned to the Arabs,'<sup>48</sup> and a *People's Daily* editorial, summing up the conference, reiterated that 'the rights of the Arab people in Palestine should be respected, and the question of Palestine should be peacefully settled according to the principle of the settlement of disputes by the people themselves.'<sup>49</sup>

These rather moderate views were maintained not only during the conference but for at least a year and a half afterwards. Only a month after Bandung, a detailed article again underlined China's distinctive interpretation of the Palestine problem as the result of Anglo-American intervention and competition: "It was precisely in view of this kind of situation that the Asian-African Conference declared its support of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people and, furthermore, of seeking the implementation of the United Nations resolutions in order to reach a peaceful settlement of the Palestine problem"<sup>50</sup> (emphasis added). In keeping with their pre-Bandung attitudes, the Chinese continued to imply that implementation of these resolutions was the duty not only of Israel but of some Arab countries as well 'because the territories which, according to the United Nations partition plan, belonged to the Palestinian Arab state had been occupied by Israel, Jordan, and other countries'<sup>51</sup> (i.e., Egypt, whose role in creating the problem the Chinese now preferred to ignore.)

The Chinese once again dealt extensively with the Palestine issue later in 1955, when they reacted to Dulles' proposed Middle East peace plan. They saw the plan as but another American attempt to take advantage of the Arab-Israeli conflict and thereby restore American prestige and

would be costly for the community in terms of the expense of importing the meat and the staff training that would be required. In Hong Kong, I was very impressed by the extensive food operations at the Jewish Recreation Club because of the planning that is necessarily involved given that all the kosher products must be ordered from abroad and take a couple of months to arrive. As Mildred Houston, the General Manager, pointed out to me, they can't simply run out and buy extra meat if they run short. Two restaurants inside the Club provide glatt kosher pareve and fleishig food for the community: The Sabra Coffee Shop, an informal dining space, and the King David Room, a formal restaurant. The Club can prepare food for groups ranging in size from 25 to 150 people and also provides kosher packaged food for visitors to Hong Kong who cannot come there for meals or for tour groups traveling into China that want to take along their own provisions. In Bangkok, a local member of the community and visitors ritually slaughter chickens and the kashering is done in people's homes. In addition to receiving kosher beef from the United States, the Singapore community has its own shechitah facilities adjacent to the synagogue for the ritual slaughter of chickens. Albert Lelah, a community member, explained that Singapore's Ministry of Environment was concerned about the practice taking place in the middle of the city and the possibility of ants being attracted to the site. When the ministry inspected the site and saw how clean it was, the government relented and allowed the community to continue the practice. Aside from kosher food provided by the organized communities, members rely on local fare like sushi made with kosher Japanese fish, strictly vegetarian Buddhist Chinese cuisine, and vegetarian Indian food.

In all the communities we visited, I learned that intermarriage exists to some degree. In Tokyo, courses on Judaism may have as many as four to five new, mixed couples dropping in each year. Rabbi Lapian of Hong Kong, a charming, old-world, Eastern European rabbi trained in Lithuania, said intermarriage exists in the community especially because of a great

shortage of Jewish women for the Jewish men studying and working there. He has tried to encourage Israeli women to come to Hong Kong to help resolve this problem. Of the eighty people on the mailing list of the Jewish Association of Thailand, not all are Jewish: some may have once been married to Jews, others don't have a maternal Jewish link.

In some of the communities, members experience feelings of isolation living in very foreign host societies. These feelings may be less prevalent in countries with greater Western influence and cultural diversity. For example, Hong Kong is a British colony and Singapore is a multi-cultural nation comprised of Indians, Malaysians, Chinese, and others, with English as its lingua franca. Fiona Chitayat characterized the Taiwan Jewish community as being "less than a minority." She has struggled to provide her children with a sense of belonging to a Jewish community because they come into contact with very few Jews. She has a son in eighth grade who recently had a bar mitzvah at the Kotel. He is the only Jewish child in his class. He couldn't talk to his classmates about reaching such an important milestone in his life because his classmates are ignorant about Jewish life cycle events and Jewish holidays. Her neighbor organized a play group for six to eight children under the age of five at the Jewish community center. Only Jews are allowed to participate because other groups exist for Chinese children and the community wants these Jewish children to have a place where they feel like they belong. In addition, the Hebrew school is informal and the children would probably be behind as compared with children in programs in the United States. However, the community views the program as offering Jewish children an experience in Judaism and an experience with other Jewish children.

Fiona Chitayat told me that the lives of the Israelis in Taiwan are so interwoven with Israel that their friends are either Israelis or other Jews in the community. Whereas in Israel they would not have attended synagogue, in Taipei they participate in services for social contact with other Jews and to be a part of the community. They

## INQUIRY

Mr. Michael Falter, of London, England, is seeking information concerning a family friend, Walter Keller, originally from Frankfurt, who left for Shanghai at the beginning of 1939. Mr. Falter is also interested in information concerning the grave of his grandfather, Paul Lilienfeld, who died in Shanghai in 1942. If anyone has information regarding these two individuals, please contact Mr. Falter c/o *Points East*.

have a strong feeling of tradition from growing up and living in Israel and look to replace this in some way.

The Tokyo Jewish community center, according to the rabbi, has a very special role as a refuge from an overwhelming, not entirely open and inviting host culture. This, according to the rabbi, creates a sense of unity often not found in any other community of Jews from such diverse backgrounds. We certainly felt relieved to experience familiar traditions and customs after spending a day touring Tokyo and feeling very alienated and removed from our surroundings.

Day-to-day challenges in these East Asian Jewish communities, therefore, include working with very transient and diverse constituencies, sustaining traditions with meager resources, and battling community feelings of isolation and alienation. In spite of this, these communities provide social services and a wide range of recreational, cultural, and religious activities for their members. We found the members very welcoming, warm, and hospitable, and strongly urge you to visit the communities if you have the opportunity to travel to East Asia.

(For further information about these communities, I used the following publications as background references: 1) *The Asia-Pacific Survival Guide for the Jewish Traveler*, Asia-Pacific Jewish Association, 1988; 2) *The Jewish Traveler*, Hadassah Magazine's *Guide to the World's Jewish Communities and Sights*, 1987; 3) "Sino-Judaic Studies: Whence and Whither," *Monographs of the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong*, Volume I, 1985, and 4) "Faces of the Jewish Experience in China," *Monographs of the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong*, Volume III, 1990.)

## IN THE FIELD

(continued from page 2)

Chinese Institute in America, co-sponsored with the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, on June 22.

### • CHINESE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF JEWISH LITERATURE FORMED

Prof. Xianzhi Liu, who teaches at Shanghai University, but is a visiting scholar this year at Simon Fraser University, in Canada, wrote to tell us about the **Chinese Society for the Study of Jewish Literature** which, as he says, "is a response to the rapid growth of academic interest in Jewish studies in China, the deep and long-standing friendship between the Chinese and Jewish peoples, and the shared desire for greater mutual understanding among the peoples and nations."

The Society's principal goal is to edit and publish Milestones in Jewish Literature in Chinese translation. This series is co-edited by Prof. Liu and Prof. David Neal Miller, Professor of Judaic Studies at Ohio State University. The editorial board is a distinguished one, including Sarah Blacher Cohen (State University of New York at Albany), Ida Nadel (University of British Columbia, Vancouver), Seth L. Wolitz (University of Texas at Austin), Sanford Pinsker (Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa.) and Xu Chongliang (The Center for Jewish Literary Studies at Jiujiang Teacher College, in Jiujiang, Jiangxi Province, China). Each volume is to contain an extensive introduction by a leading specialist in the field, as well as a scholarly apparatus with a glossary of unfamiliar terms. The first two volumes, I.B. Singer's Shosha and Saul Bellow's Mr. Sammler's Planet will be published at the end of 1992 by Nanjing University Press.

The second undertaking of the Society is to host China's first International Conference on Jewish Literature which will take place in June, 1993, at Jiujiang, China. Jewish writers and scholars of Jewish literature

from all over the world will be invited to participate.

### • SJ MEMBERS FEATURED IN NEW WORKS ON KAIFENG JEWS

— An announcement of forthcoming articles in Monumenta Serica: Journal of Oriental Studies includes one by Prof. Irene Eber, "K'aifeng Jews Revisited: Sinification as Affirmation of Identity." We look forward to reading this!

— Shirley Moskow, a free-lance writer who lives in Lexington, Ma. has written an article on the Kaifeng Jews for Discovery, the Cathay Pacific inflight magazine. A number of members of SJI helped her with sources. Rabbi Stampfer is mentioned prominently.

— A short time ago, Mr. Weiyan Meng, who lives in New York and writes for a number of Chinese newspapers, came to the Bay Area to interview SJI leaders for an article he was preparing to write. His article about the history of Jews in China, and featuring the Sino-Judaic Institute, appeared prominently in the May 10th issue of the Shijie zhouban (World Journal), seven columns across, and included an address.

— The China Center of the University of Minnesota, is publishing the series of lectures delivered there in conjunction with the Kaifeng exhibit. The title is East Gate of Kaifeng: A Jewish World Inside China. It includes pieces by Michael Pollak, Marilyn Chiat, Gao Wangzhi, Sara Irwin, Liu Chun-jo, Richard Mather, Andrew Plaks, Robert Poor and Morris Rossabi. The volume costs \$16.95 + \$2 for shipping and may be ordered from: China Center, University of Minnesota, 301 Nolpe Center, West, 315 Pillsbury Drive S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

### • MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

— Mr. Jianying Wang, who lives in San Francisco, on a trip back to Shanghai, met a former fellow-student, Yao Yi'en, who is a member of the Shanghai Municipal Literary and Historical Research Office. He is especially interested in Sholem Aleichem, and has translated some of his stories into Chinese. (How about that, Prof. Eber?) Two of his stories were read over the air in

in February and April of this year, and Mr. Wang brought back a tape of that broadcast for SJI. Mr. Wang says Mr. Yao and his wife, Zhang Zhicheng, would be very happy to be of service to SJI.

— Mr. Liu Yaozhong (English name: Edward Low), a hydraulic engineer, who lives in Alhambra, Calif., sent an article he had published on the Jews of China in the Zhonghua shibao (China Weekly), published in Monterey, CA.

— Ed Zhao, a Chinese Jew of Kaifeng descent now living in Seattle, reports that after many years of searching he has finally linked up with his family in China. His uncle is dead but he has four male cousins, all with the middle name of "Hai." According to Ed, this name is his uncle's adaptation of the traditional Zhao name "Aih" which is considered hard to pronounce. Ed's own father changed "Aih" to "Yie." He also writes that his cousin knows that he is of Jewish descent — when he started shaving he had some red hair in his beard and this set him to wondering.

## HISTORIC CHINESE-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM IN BEIJING

reprinted from various World Jewish Congress Materials

As he introduced himself to the gathering, Zhao Xiangru tenderly touched the yarmulke he was wearing.

"I am a Chinese Jew," he proudly told fellow Jews attending an unprecedented international gathering of Jewish and Chinese scholars.

"This is very important because it is the first meeting like this and I can talk with other Jews."

The first International Colloquium on Chinese and Jewish Culture, held in Beijing between April 6-8 under the joint auspices of the World Jewish Congress and the official China International Culture Exchange Centre, was an extraordinary event.

It was an achievement of almost a decade of intensive work by the WJC in the region. Concerned by the total lack of contact between the Jewish

a bourgeois republic in Palestine in order to take government and rule into their own hands and thereby to exploit and suppress the Jewish working people.... Today the Republic of Israel is established in Palestine but, although nominally dominated by the Zionists, in reality, as everyone knows, the ruling of this nation rests in the hands of the American imperialists.<sup>20</sup>

While carrying on this tirade, however, the Chinese made no attempt to win Arab support, hardly even mentioning the Arab-Israeli conflict. And when they did, they only reiterated their earlier position, blaming it on Western imperialism. 'When the establishment of the Republic of Israel was first announced, England instigated the Arab League states to attack Israel, while America was aiding Israel in secret.'<sup>21</sup>

Severe as it appeared, China's criticism of Israel was not enduring. By late 1953, once Soviet-Israeli relations had improved, the Chinese resumed negotiations with Israeli representatives. If anything, these negotiations further underlined not only the Chinese interest in but also their anticipation of diplomatic links with Israel, expressed publicly and in unqualified terms by Premier Zhou Enlai before the National People's Congress: 'Contacts are being made with a view to establishing normal (*zhengchang*) relations between China... and Israel.'<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Zhou made this statement despite the fact, of which he was undoubtedly aware, that three days earlier Israel had voted in favor of the American proposal to postpone the debate on the China issue in the United Nations.<sup>23</sup>

Zhou's optimism proved unfounded; the Israeli government had no intention of establishing diplomatic relations with the PRC.<sup>24</sup> Although an Israeli (commercial) delegation did visit China in January/February 1955, the Chinese had run out of patience by that time. Thus, while the Sino-Israeli negotiations miscarried, both China and some Arab countries — notably Egypt, Syria, and Yemen — began to reconsider their attitudes towards one another.

Although mutual suspicions and reservations continued to hold, China and the Arabs nevertheless began moving closer in early 1954, reaching their first official meeting ground at Bandung in April 1955. The Bandung

Conference is usually regarded as the watershed in Sino-Arab relations, the source of China's hostility towards Israel and its identification with the Arabs. Both conclusions are oversimplified. First of all, despite Zhou Enlai's extensive and supposedly friendly meetings with distinguished Arab leaders, most of them remained hostile and it took more than a year for the first Arab government to recognize the PRC. In the meantime the Arabs persisted in their traditional voting pattern in the United Nations, declining to support the admission of the PRC. Second, although they undoubtedly became more familiar with the Arab-Palestinian side of the conflict, the Chinese nevertheless maintained their rather impartial attitudes. This is evident from how the Chinese related to the conflict during the Bandung Conference and for some time afterwards.

China became entrapped in the Arab-Israeli imbroglio for the first time in December 1954, when the Colombo powers met at Bogor, Indonesia, to determine prospective participants at the forthcoming Bandung Conference. Oddly enough, China and Israel were played against one another, for China's attendance depended on Israel's absence: the Arab states made it clear that they would not participate if Israel were invited.<sup>25</sup> This ultimatum received strong support by the Pakistanis, who insisted that the PRC be excluded as well. To prevent the disintegration of the conference, a compromise was eventually reached whereby Pakistan accepted Peking's participation while those who had welcomed Israel's participation finally yielded to the Arabs. Theoretically, the Chinese were not entirely satisfied with this compromise: 'We consider that the door of the conference is open to those Asian-African countries that were not invited.'<sup>27</sup> In practice, however, there was very little they could or would have done. From that point on there was no way the Chinese could avoid becoming involved, at least rhetorically, in the Palestine problem.

Such involvement, however, by no means implied that China had adopted the Arab point of view, as was clearly illustrated in the period between the Bogor meeting and the Bandung Con-

ference. Israel's exclusion under Arab intimidation did not affect China's stand that the Arab-Israeli conflict was a secondary contradiction, the principal contradiction originating with the aggressive policies of Britain and the United States: 'In 1948 Anglo-American imperialism plunged Egypt into the Palestine War, determined on weakening the Egyptian national liberation movement.'<sup>28</sup> Alarmed by the growing Egyptian opposition and 'in order to prevent an uprising, British imperialism had recourse to a vicious terrorist method .... [it] induced Egypt to participate in the war against Israel.' But 'war against the Jews still could not divert the Egyptian people from the [real] object of their struggle,<sup>29</sup> i.e., the Western powers. For those powers had not only manufactured the conflict, but had also later exploited the refugee problem to provoke the frequent military clashes which led to an unprecedented deterioration in Arab-Israeli relations.<sup>30</sup>

Since such clashes served the interests of foreign powers, the Chinese repeated their argument that settlement of the conflict, as well as lasting peace in the Middle East, could be reached only through direct negotiations between the parties concerned, on the basis of the United Nations partition plan.<sup>31</sup> Needless to say, China attributed this plan to the Soviets:

The Soviet Union, loyal to the defense of weak and small nations, did not accept the imperialist oppressive policy and proposed to establish in Palestine one Jewish-Arab independent and democratic state; if this plan could not be realized, then two independent and democratic states should be established—one state for the Jewish people and the other for the Arab people. On the basis of the Soviet proposal the United Nations formulated the Palestine partition plan, and on 29 November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed the Palestine partition resolution.<sup>32</sup>

Taken as a distinct Soviet contribution, China frequently presented this resolution as the key to settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. On Chinese maps partition borders have always appeared along with the actual ones, and the names 'Palestine' and 'Israel' have been used side by side. In books, handbooks, and articles the

were faithful reproductions of Soviet views and news agency dispatches, but a few commentaries and editorials were written by the Chinese themselves. In an analysis of the situation in the Middle East, Qiao Guanhua, a veteran observer of international affairs and a proficient commentator later to become China's Foreign Minister, wrote that Anglo-American contradictions 'have now surfaced in the Middle East Palestine problem.' He pointed to the formation of two 'oil blocs' following the British evacuation of Palestine on 15 May 1948: one British, based on Iraq and Transjordan, the other American, based on Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. 'Both (Britain and the United States) employed a variety of means to secure more extensive rights and benefits for their own bloc in Palestine. Under these circumstances, American imperialism is already disliked by the Jewish nation, and England is even more disliked by the Jewish nation, and England is even more disliked by the Arabs' (*Mei-di-guo-zhu-yi jiu wu-ai yu You-tai min-zu, Ying-guo geng wu-ai yu A-la-bo*).<sup>4</sup>

According to this Chinese version, both powers displayed misgivings with regard to Israel. Although masked as a partisan of the Jewish cause, the United States in fact remained ambivalent: 'For a while the United States supported Arab-Jewish partition in Palestine, then it opposed Arab-Jewish partition.'<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the Chinese communists viewed the ceasefire on 11 June 1948 as an Anglo-American conspiracy to 'liquidate Israel's independence' and 'trap Israel into a federation with Jordan while helping the Arabs.'<sup>6</sup> The ceasefire was condemned as beneficial to Arab troops but 'not beneficial to the Israeli self-defense army' (*bu-li yu zi-wei Yi-si-lie jun-dui*).<sup>7</sup> When it collapsed, the Chinese blamed the Arabs for violating it despite Israel's peaceful aspirations' (*Yi-si-lie he-ping yuan-wang*). Such criticism of the Arabs was neither accidental nor exceptional. On several other occasions the Chinese insisted that hostilities had resumed because 'the Arab aggressive armies (*A-la-bo qin-lue jun*) once more launched an all-out assault against Israel.'<sup>8</sup> It is, however, impor-

tant to note that the Chinese placed the blame for this deterioration squarely on the Arab governments, considered stooges of Western imperialism, and by no means on the people. 'The Arab people's mass movement against the Arab League and its aggression in Palestine' was occasionally applauded.<sup>9</sup>

Israel was treated differently. In early 1949 the 'Newspaper Terms Dictionary' (*du-bao ci-dian*) of the People's Daily reminded readers that on 14 May 1948 the Jewish people had formally established (*zheng-wu zu-cheng*) a state, naming it Israel, in accordance with the United Nations resolution.<sup>10</sup> On the same page, the Chinese communists' sympathy towards Israel was further illustrated in a Xinhua (New China) News Agency report:

Instigated by Anglo-American imperialism, Egypt, Transjordan and seven other Arab countries had launched, since mid-May of last year, an aggressive war against the newborn Israel, but suffered an ignominious defeat. The Israeli army and people not only withstood the aggressors. Moreover, since last December they have driven the Egyptian military encroachment of the Negev far away from their national territory (*guo-jing*).<sup>11</sup>

These early Chinese attitudes towards Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict were motivated by several considerations. To begin with, in the late 1940s and early 1950s the Chinese still imitated Moscow's international outlook. On the one hand, they believed that most, if not all, Arab regimes were subservient, voluntarily or otherwise, to Western imperialism.<sup>12</sup> This belief was reinforced by the Arabs' hostile attitude to the PRC, as demonstrated by their votes on the China issue in the United Nations and by their refusal to recognize the Chinese communist government. On the other hand, although aware of Israel's affiliation with Washington, the Chinese did not at that time mention Israel among the 'lackeys of American imperialism.'<sup>13</sup> This exception was justified not only by the existence of Soviet-Israeli diplomatic relations, but also because the Soviet Union was perceived as instrumental in, or even the main contributor to, the creation of the Israeli state. The Chinese may have shared the short-lived Soviet anticipation that Israel would follow the socialist road. Evidently, they also

appreciated the fact that the Palestine (later Israeli) Communist Party was the only legal one in the Middle East.<sup>14</sup>

Last, but not least, the Chinese were greatly encouraged by Israel's decision to recognize the PRC on 9 January 1950 — the seventh non-socialist government in the world to do so. Anxious to upgrade their international standing, the Chinese were carried away into believing that Israel's recognition somehow represented 'a decision to establish foreign relations with our country' (*jue-ding yu wo-guo jian-li wai-jiao guan-xi*).<sup>15</sup> This conviction, reiterated for a number of years afterwards,<sup>16</sup> was undoubtedly fed by occasional exchanges with Israeli diplomats in various capitals, as well as by Israel's pro-PRC votes in the United Nations.<sup>17</sup> Viewed as more than just a positive step in the narrow sense of Sino-Israeli relations, such acts were scored by the Chinese as small victories in the ever-lasting struggle against imperialism, indicative of the gradual weakening of the imperialist grip.

All these considerations, which had governed early Chinese attitude towards Israel and the Arab-Israel conflict, remained in force to the end of 1952.

By the end of 1952 China's implicit friendliness towards Israel had been replaced by explicit antagonism. Contrary to common assumptions, these misgivings had very little to do with Israel's behavior during the Korean War. Painfully aware of the United Nations' majority vote (including Israel's) to condemn China as an aggressor, the Chinese nevertheless excused those governments which had already displayed goodwill towards Peking, arguing that their votes were extracted 'under unprecedented pressure — open threat and covert enticement....'<sup>18</sup> Rather, China's changed attitude was directly related to the deterioration of Soviet-Israeli relations in late 1952 and early 1953. Its reaction to this deterioration was thorough and drastic. For the first time the Chinese condemned not only Israel but Zionism in general!<sup>19</sup> The Zionist movement, they said,

has become the weapon of the Jewish capitalists for propagating bourgeois nationalism — a reactionary doctrine compared to proletarian internationalism... They raised the banner of 'Zionism,' planning to establish

people and what was rapidly emerging as the most vital region on earth, both economically and politically, the current Co-Chairman of the WJC Governing Board, Isi Leibler, began visiting the various capitals of the region on behalf of the WJC in the early 1980s. These contacts resulted in the first two Asian-Jewish Colloquia, in Singapore in 1984 and in Hong Kong three years later.

Over the next few years, Leibler focused his attention on China, visiting Beijing on several occasions. The breakthrough came in October 1991, when Leibler signed an agreement with the official China International Culture Exchange Centre to hold the first ever Chinese-Jewish Colloquium in Beijing, ending 3,000 years of near total absence of intercourse between two of the world's oldest and greatest civilizations.

"It was first and foremost a learning experience," said Prof. Yoram Dinstein, president of Tel Aviv University, who was one of the Jewish participants.

The discussions ranged from the place of learning in Jewish culture and Judaism's encounter with Christianity to Chinese philosophy and religious beliefs in ancient and contemporary China. But culture was not the only subject on the mind of the host country. China's Deputy Premier, Wu Xuegian, expressed satisfaction with the rapid normalization of China's relations with the Jewish people, symbolized by the establishment in January of formal diplomatic ties between China and Israel.

The meeting with Wu took place with full pomp and ceremony in the magnificent imperial meeting hall in Beijing's State Council Compound and took in the whole range of Chinese-Jewish and Chinese-Israeli relations — including Jewish concern over various aspects of Chinese domestic policy in the areas of individual freedom and democracy. WJC Secretary General Israel Singer and former Israeli President Yitzhak Navon participated in the discussion, which was attended also by veteran WJC leaders Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner and Sol Kanee, the Executive Director of the WJC Israel office Dr. Avi Beker, and the former Director General of the

Foreign Ministry Reuven Merhav.

Navon observed that by establishing diplomatic ties with Israel, China "not only won millions of friends wherever Jews are scattered throughout the world, but greatly strengthened its position in the Middle East."

American writer and Jewish scholar Chaim Potok said although Jews in China and abroad share a common heritage, their experiences have been very different.

He said, for example that while many Jews assimilated into Chinese society, Jews elsewhere sought kinship in Jewish communities to counter the hostilities they felt from other people.

"We're curious about them because of the enormity of China, and they're curious about us because we've been scattered all over the world and we've managed to keep it alive," Potok said.

Prof. Zvi Werblowsky of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem observed, "For the very first time, Judaism has spoken for itself, about itself in an unmediated dialogue with an Asian culture."

At its most fundamental level, the fact that 9 of the Jewish world's outstanding thinkers agreed, at relatively short notice, to participate along with 15 eminent Chinese scholars assured the Colloquium's status as a major intellectual event. The proceedings are to be published in both Chinese and English.

Perhaps the most moving testimony to the success of the Colloquium came in the final session, when the senior Chinese participant, Professor Ji Xianlin of Beijing University, announced that the bonds of friendship between the Chinese and Jewish people, forged in Beijing in the course of three packed days of scholarly exchange, would "last forever".

All the participants, Chinese and Jewish alike, agreed on the need to follow up with further contacts, in the form of academic exchanges and another Colloquium, possibly in Israel in two years time. It was agreed that the various possibilities would be examined in the weeks and months ahead.

## TWO GUN AGAIN The Jew Who Saved the Chinese Revolution

by Leo Heiman

reprinted from *The Jewish People's Almanac*, by David C. Gross

*Dr. Moses Schwarzberg, who passed away in Tel Aviv at the age of eighty-three in March 1964, was one of the most colorful figures in recent Jewish history, and an inveterate cloak-and-dagger adventurer to boot. Shortly before his death, Dr. Schwarzberg was offered a fabulous sum in return for his testimony in Peking's border dispute with Moscow. The Soviet Embassy in Tel Aviv also contacted the aged Jewish physician, offering him twice as much as the Chinese did for keeping mum about a promise made by Moscow in 1924 to hand over several Siberian border districts to China.*

In the early 1920s, a young refugee from revolutionary Russia, Moses Schwarzberg, found himself wandering across the frozen land of Manchuria. As a student of medicine at the University of Moscow, he had been active for many years in the left-wing social revolutionary movement, which was outlawed by the Communists after an attempt on Lenin's life in 1918. When social revolutionary activists were being rounded up for execution by Communist secret police squads, Schwarzberg fled east to the town of Samara on the Volga River, where revolutionary leaders proclaimed the short-lived "Russian Democratic Republic" and demanded free elections all over the country.

The rebellion was crushed by the Red Army under the renegade Czarist officer Mikhail Tukhachevski (who was later executed by Stalin on trumped-up charges), and Schwarzberg fled east to Siberia, then ruled by various anti-communist Russian generals, freebooters and bandit leaders.

### CORRECTION

In our last issue, we incorrectly printed a gift subscription. Jan Berris gave one gift subscription to Bob Goldberg and another to Nancy Tucker and Warren Cohen. Sorry.

Refugees were robbed and murdered, women raped, villages razed and crops destroyed in the fighting, which raged for three years.

Schwarzberg hoped to get to some Far Eastern port and board a ship for the United States, where relatives were expecting him in San Francisco. China itself was rent by a bitter and protracted civil war fought between the National Republic of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the powerful warlords who ruled North China and Manchuria.

"I was walking along the railroad tracks to Hailar station when I came upon the prostrate body of an elderly Chinese, half covered by the drifting snow," Dr. Schwarzberg recollected. "I felt his pulse and saw that he was still alive. There was a small farm near the tracks, inhabited by Russian Cossacks, who used to work on the railroad before the war. I dragged the frozen Chinese to the farm, asked the woman to boil us some tea, and massaged his limbs with snow. He came to after a while, drank the tea and looked at me for a long time without saying anything. I had learned the North Chinese dialect during my travels in Manchuria, and I asked him who he was. To my great surprise, he replied in fluent Russian. He said he was sent by the Soviet People's Commissar (Minister) of Foreign Affairs, Chicherin, with an important message to President Sun Yatsen.

"If you are from Moscow," he said, "you must know me, or at least the place where I used to work—Li's Chinese Laundry on Pereyaslavski Street. I served with the Chinese Regiment in Kiev, until Comrade Chicherin sent me with the message to Dr. Sun Yat-sen. I feel I am dying. I certainly can't go on. And the message must be delivered. Comrade Chicherin gave me five hundred gold rubles to bribe my way across the borders. Here, take the money and the message, and swear on your honor that you will deliver it." He tore the lining of his cotton-padded jacket to extract a thick brown envelope with red wax seals, and a heavy money bag, Schwarzberg remembers. "He pushed both into my hands and closed his eyes. A few minutes later, he was dead. My first

impulse was to grab the money, destroy the message and make a bee-line for Tsingtao, where passage could be bought on ships sailing for the United States. For some reason, perhaps because I was superstitious and feared the old man's curse, I did not destroy the envelope. It took me six weeks to get to Tsingtao. There I learned that the next ship for the United States was not due for another two weeks. I thought I might as well jump to Shanghai and deliver the message to Dr. Sun Yat-sen. After all, a man had died to bring it across the border. I booked passage aboard a small coastal steamer and arrived in Shanghai. The North Chinese warlords were threatening the coastal regions, and the Government of the Chinese National Republic was getting ready to move south to Canton.

"It took me some time to meet Dr. Sun Yat-sen. His bodyguards were on the lookout for enemy agents, and had a nasty habit of shooting first and asking questions later. But one day, while I was waiting for the President to come out of his residence and enter the car, flanked by tough-looking guards who eyed me suspiciously, a huge man with a shaved head and two pistols in his belt crossed the street and approached me. I could see he wasn't a Chinese, but could not have known that he was Jewish—'Two-Gun' Morris Cohen, Sun Yat-sen's chief bodyguard and, later, a famous general with the Chinese Nationalist Army.

"Who the hell are you, and what the hell do you want?" he barked in English. I said I had an urgent message for Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Cohen questioned me in English, but when he learned I was a Jewish refugee from Russia, he switched to Yiddish. *'Dein nummen is Moishe? Mein nummen is oikhel Moishe. Kum arein tsum President.'* ("Your name is Moishe? My name is also Moishe. Come inside to the President.")

"He introduced me to Sun Yat-sen and waited until I handed over the envelope and repeated the story of my encounter with the anonymous Chinese messenger near Hailar. Dr. Sun Yat-sen tore open the heavy seals and extracted three typewritten sheets of poor-quality paper, embossed with the Soviet state insignia, and bearing

Commissar Chicherin's signature. The message was written in Russian, and neither the President nor 'Two-Gun' Cohen knew the language. I was asked to translate from Russian to English, which the Chinese President spoke well.

"Chicherin's first message spoke of the historic friendship between Russia and China, of the revolutionary bonds uniting the Chinese National Republic with the Russian Socialist Republic, the common interests in the struggle against White Russian and North Chinese warlords in Siberia, Mongolia and Manchuria, and the hatred of imperialism and colonialist exploitation. In the name of the Soviet Russian Government, Chicherin suggested a military alliance with China, and proposed joint action against the warlords and guerrilla bands, offering military aid to the Chinese Republican Army.

"The Chinese President then asked me to wait outside, in a big room crowded with officers, administration officials and Kuomintang Nationalist Party big shots, who were curious to learn what were two 'foreign devils' (that's how the Chinese call all foreigners) doing with their Chief of State.

"'Two-Gun' Cohen came out and motioned me to follow him. We went up to his room, he gave me a shot of gin and poked a stubby finger at my midriff. 'Listen, kid, how would you like to stay on as Dr. Sun Yat-sen's confidential secretary? He likes you and wants you as his personal interpreter. This Russian offer is more serious than you think, and someone with a perfect knowledge of the Russian language is needed to conduct all the negotiations and correspondence. What do you say?'

"The alcohol made me drowsy and I must have nodded, for Cohen clapped me on my shoulder, shook my hand and poured another drink. The next day, we boarded a special train for Canton. I spent most of my time in Dr. Sun Yat-sen's private coach, drafting the text of his reply to Chicherin: The Republic of China welcomed the Soviet offer of military aid and political alliance. Because of the fighting which raged across North China and Manchuria, the message was sent by ordinary mail to Cohen's relatives in

The film, Next Year in Jerusalem, a film on the Jews of Cochin, which was reviewed in the last issue of Points East, is available for \$17.50 plus shipping and handling from Cintel Communication, 7 Sriramnagar South Street, Madras-600 018, India. Various formats are available. Please write for full details.

London, with a request to pass it on to the Soviet Legation in Latvia. It arrived in Moscow towards the end of 1922, and Soviet military aid arrived by sea, from Vladivostock to Canton, as of October 1923.

"Two months later, the Soviet-organized and -trained Army of the Republic of China smashed the northern warlords and entered Peking. Another meeting with Ambassador Karakhan took place aboard President Sun Yat-sen's private train at the Peking Railway Station. I was again present as the President's personal interpreter. Karakhan brought with him the draft of the Soviet-Chinese Border Rectification Treaty, as suggested by Moscow. Its main point was that a plebiscite, jointly supervised by Russia and China, would be held in all disputed border area. If the majority of the inhabitants wished to be united with China, the boundary of the district would be changed accordingly. Dr. Sun Yat-sen appeared to be satisfied with the treaty suggestion. He did not realize the Reds were planning to double-cross him before the ink was dry on their signatures.

"But he died of cancer on March 12, 1925, before he had time to sign the preliminary agreement with Moscow. The Soviet 'advisers' moved in to exploit the chaos and fill the vacuum created by Dr. Sun Yat-sen's death. They took over the Whampoa War Academy near Canton, and diverted all modern equipment to pro-Communist units of the Chinese Army. From my friends in the Kuomintang Nationalist Party, I learned that 'Two-Gun' Cohen and I were on Soviet 'liquidation lists.' Moscow regarded us as potential enemies who knew too much about behind-the-scenes deals arranged by the Russians in China.

## EARLY CHINESE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

(continued from page 1)

was inconceivable for the Chinese communists to continue fomenting anti-British feelings in Palestine. Consequently, they shelved Arab-Jewish relations during the war years.

Following the war the Chinese communists revived their pre-1941 international outlook, neatly dividing the world into friends (primarily the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies) and enemies (mainly the United States, Britain, and the West in general) along traditional Leninist lines. This anti-Western outlook determined and modified the Chinese attitude towards the Palestine problem in the following years.

While the Chinese continued to maintain that it was British imperialism which had engineered Arab-Jewish hostilities in Palestine, they now argued that the conflict had been exacerbated by competition between Britain and the United States for influence in the Middle East, and that both nations were thwarting a peace settlement in an attempt to justify their continued presence and interference in the area. Great power competition (i.e., 'contradictions') henceforth became the standard Chinese explanation of why the Arab-Israeli conflict remained unresolved. Also, while conceding that both Jews and Arabs had been exploited and manipulated by 'Anglo-American imperialism,' the Chinese tended to sympathize with the Jews. Finally, the Chinese distinguished between peoples, portrayed as peace-loving and eager for a settlement, and their rulers, who prevented resolution of the conflict in the service of foreign masters. Although this distinction applied primarily to the Arabs, it was later used with regard to Israel as well and has now become part of the standard Chinese stand on the conflict.

Though never in the mainstream of interest, these nuances emerged clearly in Chinese communist organs from late 1947 onwards. Many reports