

AN INDIAN HOLIDAY FEAST*Recipes***Makmura Chicken in Lemon Sauce**

1 chicken, 3 lbs., cut into service pieces, giblets included

loose skin and fat removed

1 garlic clove, chopped fine

1 tsp. minced fresh gingerroot

1 medium-sized onion, chopped fine (about 1/2 cup)

1/4 tsp. ground turmeric

1 tsp. salt, or to taste

1 tbsp. raisins, light or dark

10 almonds, blanched in hot water, skin removed and

halved lengthwise

1-1/4 cups water

2-3 tbsp. lemon juice

Put all ingredients, except lemon juice, in a pan with one-half cup of water. Bring to boil over moderate heat. Cover the pan and cook for 15 minutes.

Uncover the pan, tilt it slightly and *hamiss* the onion into a smooth puree. To do this, stir the small amount of sauce briskly with a wooden spoon.

Pour in the balance of the water, cover the pan and continue to cook for 15 minutes.

Add the lemon juice and cook for about 10 minutes or until the chicken is tender and the sauce has thickened somewhat. Adjust the salt and lemon juice to taste.

Serve warm.

Bhaji Curried Vegetables

1/2 cup thin-sliced onion

2 tbsp. corn or peanut oil

1 tsp. ground gingerroot

1 tsp. ground garlic

1/2 tsp. ground fresh hot chili

1/2 tsp. ground turmeric

1/2 tsp. salt or to taste

2 cardamom pods (optional)

1 lb. small potatoes, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1 cup water

2 cups 1-inch cauliflowerets

1/2 cup chopped ripe tomato

Fry the onion in oil in a large pan over moderate heat for three minutes until it begins to turn brown. Add the gingerroot, garlic, chili, turmeric, salt and cardamom if used. Stir-fry the mixture for three minutes.

Add the potatoes and water and cook over moderate to low heat for 15 minutes to soften potatoes.

Add cauliflowerets and tomato. Stir a bit and let the curry cook over moderate to low heat until all liquid has evaporated and vegetables are soft. This is a dry curry.

Serve warm.

DEGEM SYSTEMS CONDUCTING CAMBODIAN DEAL

reprinted from *The Jerusalem Post* 13 July 1994

Degem Systems is negotiating a deal with the Cambodian Army and the country's Education Ministry to train former guerrilla fighters in technical and vocational skills. As part of the agreement, the Asian Development Bank will purchase over \$5 million worth of modular units housed in trailers that will provide a base for the project's implementation.

Degem specializes in innovative training technologies for use by the industrial, electronics, telecommunications and educational sectors.

The company also markets a system which helps develop skills for illiterate students, especially those from rural and remote areas. The mobile unit system has been similarly used in Angola to train demobilized soldiers.

"If a country does not give them [guerrillas] these skills, there is the threat of internal strife, crime and the potential development of a local mafia which could endanger the country," Degem Technological systems Division President Daniel Delrahim said.

UN officials in Cambodia are also considering to buy the system.

A joint Degem-Berlitz venture will develop a Khmer-English version of Degem's language training program that will be used by Cambodian field personnel.

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**POINTS EAST**

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"THE UNLIKELY LIBERATORS" MISSION TO JAPAN

by Pam Rotner Sakamoto

In the summer of 1940, a brave Japanese diplomat, Consul Chiune Sugihara, ignored government instructions and issued over two thousand transit visas to desperate Jews in Lithuania seeking to flee Europe. Fortunately, a whole family could use a single transit visa, enabling many more to escape. The refugees made their way to Japan via the Soviet Union and ultimately survived the war in Shanghai or their destination countries.

Several years later in May 1945, the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion, a division of the Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, liberated the Dachau concentration camps and over five thousand Jews on the Dachau death march. At the time, many of the soldiers' families were interned back home in the United States.

"The Unlikely Liberators" mission recently celebrated the courage of both Sugihara and the Japanese-American veterans with a pilgrimage to Japan. I was privileged to participate in their program of events. Consider my observations a series of snapshots intended to capture some of the activities and people involved.

Initial Surprise

I first heard about the trip in June as a result of a mailing to those listed in the directory of individuals interested in the Jews and Asia. As a Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy Ph.D. student researching the policy of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards the Jews during World War II, I hoped that the tour would prove stimulating for my work. The timing was perfect since I was in the midst of a move from Toronto to Tokyo.

I was immediately intrigued by the diversity of groups - Japanese-American veterans from the European theater, Japanese-American military intelligence veterans who had served in the Pacific and were credited with shortening the war, Sugihara visa recipients and Dachau survivors. Were the links between the groups strong enough to constitute a cohesive whole with an underlying theme or was this a hopelessly hybrid tour of connections forced by good intentions?

I called to inquire and spoke with Allen Meyer who had worked as a Japanese linguist in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Allen put me in touch with Harry Fukuhara, a military intelligence specialist and career officer who was one of the primary organizers of the event.

In mid-August, a few days after moving to Tokyo, I met with Harry Fukuhara. His commitment and competence were obvious. Since I had been involved in a Sugihara tribute dinner sponsored by the Canadian Jewish Congress and the National Association of Japanese Canadians in Toronto in 1993, I knew that a cool head, steady hand and language skills were necessary. Harry possesses all three. I was convinced that the dedication of the organizers would make the "mission" a success.

The "mission" was more meaningful than I expected. Veterans and survivors experienced flashbacks and expressed memories that had been repressed for years. The press was aggressive, but it lent excitement to the atmosphere.

Yet, I struggled with writing this report. I had easily prepared a one page article for a journal in my hometown, but when I tried to compose a detailed account, I

SHANGHAI ASHKENAZI JEWS' HEROIC EFFORTS TO SAVE EUROPEAN REFUGEES DURING WORLD WAR II

by Rena Krasno

During the Japanese occupation of Shanghai, which became complete after Pearl Harbor, the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association made every effort to help some 20,000 European refugees who had escaped the Holocaust.

After the arrest and prolonged torture of Boris Topas, President of the Shanghai Ashkenazi J.C.A., by the Japanese Gendarmerie (Kempetai) and his resulting lifelong physical and mental disability, Mr. Boris Radomishlesky was elected President. He was to serve courageously and loyally during this highly dangerous time for Shanghai Jews, defenseless against the Imperial Authorities.

On February 18, 1943, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Army in the Shanghai Area, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Shanghai Area, published a 'Proclamation Concerning Restriction of Residence and Business of Stateless Refugees'. This resulted in the segregation of all European Jews who had arrived in Shanghai after 1937 within a district of Shanghai seriously damaged during the Sino-Japanese conflict.

The Japanese official in complete control of the Bureau of Stateless Refugees was the much feared Tsutomu Kubota.

Shortly after noon, on July 17, 1945, the U.S. Airforce bombed the Hongkew Ghetto. Their apparent military objective was a Japanese Naval Station which directed warships.

(continued on page 3)

(continued on page 4)

From the editor:

Every time I think that we have pretty much exhausted the possibilities for new and interesting material on Jewish life in Asia, I receive articles to revive my hopes to the contrary.

Consider this issue: Two exclusive articles, one on a unique "mission" to Japan that brought together survivors of Dachau and their Japanese-American liberators, those saved by Sugihara and members of his family, and the Tokyo Jewish community and Japanese officials; the other on Ashkenazi Jewish rescue efforts in Shanghai during the War. Or these: two articles on the Far East from Orthodox perspectives. Or these: two versions of a trip to Kaifeng by members of the Hong Kong Jewish community.

Still, prior to every issue, I get publication anxiety. Will we have enough material to publish a decent issue? Will we make it to volume ten next year? You can help keep me in good emotional health. SEND ME YOUR ARTICLES, YOUR MEMOIRS, YOUR BOOK REVIEWS. Thanks.

Anson Laytner

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IN THE FIELD**• SUGIHARA'S LIST FOUND**

American historian Hillel Levine, of Boston University, found a 31 page Japanese government document dating from 1940 which list the 1,944 Jews issued visas by Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara from his consulate base in Lithuania. Levine found the documents after a month-long search in the Japanese Foreign Ministry archives in Tokyo.

• YIDDISH BOOKS IN CHINA

The Yiddish Book Center has recently established library collections of Yiddish literature at two major universities in China (in Shanghai and Nanjing), marking the first time that Yiddish books have entered that country since World War Two. Despite the official welcome, actually shipping books into the country reportedly has not been easy.

• MAO'S TRANSLATOR DIES

Sol Adler, 85, the U.S. Treasury Department's representative to China during World War II and a translator of the works of Mao Zedong, died of cancer August 4 in Beijing.

Mr. Adler, who was born in Britain, was living in China when he went to work for the Treasury Department. When he was recalled to the States in 1947, he fell victim to the anti-communist crusade, but eventually was cleared.

He returned to China in 1962 at the invitation of the Chinese government and became a fellow at the Institute of World Economics, an adviser to the Chinese government, and a translator of Mao's works.

• PhD AWARDED

SJI member Maisie Meyer writes from London that she was awarded a PhD for her dissertation on the Sephardic Jewish community of Shanghai. An abstract of her paper appears in the Book Nook of this issue. Congratulations Maisie — and please send us some articles.

• PICTURE BOOK ON SHANGHAI JEWS PLANNED

Prof. Pan Guang writes from Shanghai that he will be serving as editor-in-chief of an exciting new project: a pictorial memoir of the Jewish

community in Shanghai, to be published by the Shanghai Pictorial Publishing House. He expects that the book will appeal to former residents, their descendants, Chinese friends, and students of the period everywhere. For more information, or to send pictures and personal memoirs (you may want to make duplicates), contact Prof. Pan c/o The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai, 622-7 Huai Hai Road (M), Suite 355, Shanghai 200020, China, tel: 86-21-3271170, ext. 2352, fax: 86-21-3751446.

FROM OUR READERS:

September 29, 1994

To the Editor,

In Xu Bu-zeng's informative piece on Jewish cultural life in wartime Shanghai (Points East 9.2:8-10), he states that the last Jewish refugee reportedly died in 1981. This may be incorrect.

I lived in Shanghai from 1985 to 1987. During this time I made the acquaintance of an elderly Jewish woman living in the vicinity of Fudan University in the Jiangwan district. She told me that her family had fled from Germany to Shanghai, and that after the war her surviving relatives resettled in Argentina. She chose to stay in Shanghai.

At the time of our meeting I was rather ignorant regarding her significance as possibly the last surviving member of a once thriving community; I don't even remember her name.

Perhaps some of your readers may have more information on this subject.

*Yours truly,
Daniel Silverman*

Department of Linguistics, UCLA

August 26, 1994

To the Editor:

Information is being sought on Regina Oyena, also known as Regina Goldberg, who lived in Shanghai in the 1920's and 30's. Her husband, Max, was a businessman who owned the Wilshire Hotel in Shanghai on the wharf. Anyone with information should contact Michael Levy, 320 W. Tyler Ave., Eau Claire, WI, 75401 or Mildred (Adler) Goldin, 1700 E. 56th St., #2406, Chicago, 60637.

Beverly Friend, Ph.D.

respect for the individual in the West, whereas in China they have built up the supremacy of society," Marshall said. "The individual doesn't count."

He argues that, in China itself, that approach eventually created a fossilized state and such modern upheavals as the Cultural Revolution, while the Western concept led to a vibrant civilization. Now, Marshall believes Western influence is ebbing in Asia and that China's will spread, reinforcing Singapore's authoritarian view.

He described the lashing of American teen-ager Michael Fay for spray-painting cars as "grossly excessive" punishment, but does not expect the government to soften its politics or laws.

Marshall intends to crusade as long as he is able. Although formally retired, he consults at an international law firm and keeps up with politics and current events by having somebody read to him each night.

"I was asked last night: 'David, why do you do it? Why do you endanger yourself? You are 86, you've done your job, just retire with dignity,'" he said.

"Am I a masochist? I don't think so. I think it is very necessary that there should be a light, some light, a different light, no matter how small, in a gathering darkness."

A RABBI ON THE BURMA ROAD

by Marcia Kay
excerpted from Jerusalem Post
1 May 1994

It isn't often a rabbi can boast about helping establish eight synagogues in one geographical area. Or about being one of the founding rabbis of what is now known as United Synagogue Youth. And how many clergy, not to mention rabbis, can tell you about the hot, dusty and mostly unbearable Burma Road, a piece of man-built highway which would its way through China, India and Burma.

Gordon has been an active rabbi since 1940, when he graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary, receiving awards for Hebrew litera-

ture, public speaking and cantorial music. He also earned a bachelor of arts degree from City College of New York and a master's degree from Columbia University in economics.

In 1942, however, his brother-in-law was killed in an Army Air Corp plane over Germany. "I felt I needed to carry on for him," Gordon said. From 1942 to 1945, Gordon was a chaplain in the Army Air Corps. But he wanted to serve overseas, preferably in Europe, where his brother-in-law had served. Instead, he was sent to the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations.

Instead of sitting in a headquarters, far behind the lines, Gordon felt it was his duty to be with the troops and listen to their concerns. "You don't serve as a chaplain sitting in the chapel," he said. "You must see soldiers, which is why I wanted to serve at the front."

Gordon served time with the famous Flying Tigers under the command of Gen. Claire Chennault before he volunteered to be the chaplain accompanying soldiers on the newly completed Burma Road. Gordon was surprised when he realized he was the only chaplain to volunteer for the assignment.

The Burma Road was 1,000 miles through the mountains of China and Burma and served as a supply line for the Allied Forces in Southeast Asia. Gordon and his driver maneuvered their jeep through miles of the road while under sniper attack. They were able to send notes back through the lines, alerting soldiers and higher headquarters to the dangers.

"We made it halfway before we were strafed," Gordon said. His assistant was killed.

For his service "beyond the call of duty" he was awarded the Bronze Star plus three decorations. Gordon also received the Chinese Medal of Honor, which was awarded to him by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and Channault in Peking.

While in southeast Asia, Gordon became involved in the transport of 1,000 children from Germany to China. From China, the children were put on a boat commanded by the Haganah and taken to Israel.

AN INDIAN HOLIDAY FEAST

by Marcia Kay
excerpted from Washington Jewish Week, 25 August 1994

With the aroma of honey cake, chicken soup and *tzimmes*, you know Rosh Hashanah is close at hand.

But this year at the home of Kenneth Robbins, guests will be treated to an extraordinary dining and holiday experience. Robbins, a collector of Jewish artifacts from India, is playing host to Copeland Marks, well-known chef, cookbook author and world traveler.

Copeland Marks' love of foreign cuisine took him to the streets of Calcutta, India. Besides collecting recipes and cooking in native kitchens, Marks there met "members of the dwindling Baghdad Jewish community."

The Baghdad Jewish community in Calcutta was established in the 18th century when, Marks said, "they invented a new cuisine and incorporated it with a collection of spices and seasonings."

At its height, the Jewish community in Calcutta numbered between 6,000 and 7,000.

There are three key Jewish communities in India, each with its own distinctive cuisine. In addition to Calcutta, Marks has explored the kitchens of Bene Israel of the Bombay District and the Cochin Jews of south India.

Learning about different foods and flavors took Marks to native kitchens where he "cooked with the people." He also prepared dishes with Indian women in London, where there is a large Indian community, and in Israel.

Indian cooking, Marks said, is a "cuisine adventure." It is not what most people think of as Indian cooking with hot chili spices, like Korean food.

Instead, these dishes contain an "inventive arrangement of herbs and spices." Marks said the cuisine has been "influenced by kashrut." Preparing authentic dishes necessitates different herbs, onion, ginger, garlic and tumeric for color. Marks also uses curry, a blend of traditional Indian spices.

Robbins' Rosh Hashanah guests will be treated to, among other dishes, Chicken and Beets Curry, Sweet and Sour; Vegetable Ghaji, a vegetarian curry; and Mukmura, chicken in a lemon sauce with almonds and raisins.

ethnic restaurants: potato flakes, brown rice vinegar, dried mushrooms, dried and fresh tofu.

For Japanese restaurants there is the pre-sliced marinated ginger that accompanies sushi; for Chinese restaurants, fortune cookies.

An entire shelf is devoted to varieties of soy sauce. An entire aisle is taken up by different kinds of rice noodles. There is a row of sacks of variously shaped rice noodles, from the stringy thin variety to fettucini-size, and what is known as rice paper - a sheet of noodle that the Vietnamese wrap around meatballs or shrimp, to create something resembling a blintz.

The Kalifs get their merchandise from a variety of importers, most of whom bring the products in through Europe. Sometimes, Alon said, their supplies of a product are inconsistent, because a product has trouble getting by the Ministry of Health.

Needless to say, between the squid and the shrimp paste, there is little in the store for the strictly kosher consumer, aside from the toiletries and a single aisle of Israeli products. To drive home the point, a small live shrimp is printed in the corner of the store's business card.

Alon freely admits that he has never tasted many of the items in the store, and hardly knows what some of them are used for. He doesn't come right out and say that he can hardly believe people actually eat these products, but the implication is clear from the expression on his face when he points to a NIS 200 can of abalone.

"And for a special holiday they celebrate in the Philippines, we bring in special eggs, eggs that have a partially grown embryo inside. They eat them in soup," says Alon. Then he wrinkles his nose.

For less adventurous gourmets, the "West" in the title of the store represents the European delicacies that the store carries: foie gras, truffles and chestnut puree.

The store also carries cosmetics, including special hair dyes and cocoa-butter creams commonly used in Thailand and the Philippines. But beauty doesn't come cheap: a bottle of the cocoa-butter cream costs NIS 65.

Oded has big plans for the future of the store. His ultimate dream is to open a Thai restaurant above the

store, "a people's restaurant, not a fancy one."

For now, expansion means bringing in products from more countries. There is now an Indian shelf featuring curries and masala and additional South American and Indonesian products are on the way.

The store already carries hibachis for Japanese cooking, but Oded wants to bring in more housewares.

Another important addition: cookbooks to help confused customers deal with difficult questions.

For example: what exactly does one do with dried squid once one finds it?

JEWISH LAWYER IS SINGAPORE'S CRUSADING CONSCIENCE

by Denis D. Gray
reprinted from Jerusalem Post
1 May 1994

In a place where citizens fear to question municipal ordinances, he openly calls powerful elder statesmen Lee Kuan Yew a fascist and Singapore's controlled media "poor prostitutes."

In a strictly run city-state where 1,000 people are flogged every year and 78 were sentenced to hang in 1993 for drug trafficking alone, he says: "I have always felt that brutality is not the answer to crime. It demeans us. It demeans human dignity."

David Marshall is the son of Iraqi Jewish immigrants - his name was anglicized at birth. His eyesight failing at 86 but his mind still razor-sharp, is the toughest critic of a government that has developed political control and social engineering to a fine art.

There are virtually no others like him in Singapore, certainly none with his stature.

"What I have said is true. I don't think they can pin anything on me," Marshall said in an interview, by way of explaining why he has not been silenced like other opposition figures who were "squashed like flies."

The answer more likely lies in his past, his age and his simultaneous praise of Singapore's undeniable successes.

Like Lee, Marshall was a founding father of Singapore. He led the fight against British colonial rule, and as head of a transition government in the mid-1950s, had his first clash with the ambitious young lawyer who became prime minister in 1959.

Lee, who stepped down as premier in 1990 but remains the most formidable figure in Singapore, went on to turn an impoverished, conflict-ridden backwater into a clockwork "economic miracle."

Marshall never had the instincts for political infighting. Instead, he became a star defense lawyer and civil libertarian, "a leonine presence whose brilliance is matched only by his great oratorical power," as one historian wrote.

In 1978, Lee sent Marshall to France as ambassador - in order, some said, to muzzle an outspoken critic. Marshall returned late last year and soon was ridiculing Singapore's cowed journalists and citizens more concerned with their bank accounts than with participation.

But the "conscience" and "maverick" of Singapore, as he has been called, also is a booster.

"I stand in awe, genuine awe, of what they have achieved pragmatically," Marshall told the Associated Press. "It is fantastic. In all sincerity, I keep saying that, although we have pimples on our face, we have an Olympic athlete's body."

"There is no unemployment, there is no homelessness, there is an overflowing rice bowl. There is a government that is totally honest, very able, totally dedicated."

Had Marshall won the political battles of long ago, Singapore would have a more human, relaxed face, he said. But he admits to lacking the Lee government's "extraordinary administrative ability and technological expertise."

"Nor would I have been capable of the powerful control that Lee has exercised," he added, "because I am a democrat. He is at base a fascist." Singapore's greatest defect, he said, is lack of respect for the individual. He attributes this to the Confucian tradition of a society that is nearly 80 percent ethnic Chinese.

"You have built up an ethos of

"THE UNLIKELY LIBERATORS" MISSION TO JAPAN

(continued from page 1)

was faced with so many stories. The tale of the 522nd has received little recognition; Consul Sugihara's heroic deed is already being distorted; the Japanese-American contribution to military intelligence is a dissertation topic in itself. I could not choose one aspect and neglect the others as most general press accounts did. I also believed that Points East readers would appreciate greater depth and accuracy.

A Labor of Love

Preparations first began in May 1993 when Noby Yoshimura, another MIS veteran, first learned about Consul Sugihara's heroism from a Japanese friend and decided that he must do "something" to recognize Sugihara's valor. "Something" developed into an international tour and a photo exhibit. The exhibit would encompass Japanese-American internment; Japanese-American military contributions, including the rescue of Dachau survivors; and the Sugihara family. "Something" had become a "mission" to educate the public and strengthen ties between the Japanese-American and Jewish communities and between Israel, the United States and Japan.

Officially, the trip was organized under the auspices of the Holocaust Oral History Project in San Francisco and the Military Intelligence Service of Northern California, a Japanese-American veterans association. Eric Saul, a former curator at the Presidio's military history museum and a Project volunteer, assembled the exhibit of 160 photographs. Lani Silver, the Holocaust Oral History Project's executive director, contributed expertise gained from interviewing fifteen hundred Holocaust survivors. Lani had also interviewed twenty two Japanese-American veterans who participated in the liberation of Dachau; half recalled being threatened with a court-martial if they talked about it. The code of silence was still in effect.

Noby Yoshimura and Harry Fukuhara enlisted the Military Intelligence Service to publicize the tour and recruited well-placed friends and family in Japan to help arrange the

activities. By capitalizing on their bilingual skills and a wealth of contacts dating from the occupation, Harry and Noby bridged the distance and linguistic gaps. By the time that "The Unlikely Liberators" arrived in Japan, the advance work was complete. Several documentaries had been shown on Japanese television about the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team and its 522nd division. A number of articles in American and Japanese newspapers had appeared, and the American and Israeli embassies were involved.

The Participants

Twenty two veterans of the 442nd and the 522nd arrived in Tokyo in a blaze of photographers' lights. They were joined by one Dachau survivor, Solly Ganor from Israel, and two Sugihara visa recipients, Masha Leon of New York and Jerry Milrod of San Francisco. Fourteen other veterans of the 442nd had already arrived from Hawaii. Each person's story was sobering, yet inspiring, for resilience had triumphed over adversity.

Kiyoshi Okano had volunteered for the army in 1943. At the time that he helped liberate Dachau, his sister's family was interned in California. Although he had been part of brutal battles, he was horrified like never before when he "stumbled on hundreds of prisoners like Solly Ganor on the side of the road in the snow." His memories would remain graphically imprinted.

Solly Ganor's own memories as an inmate at Dachau would haunt him for decades. It was not until he saw an ad in The Jerusalem Post several years ago seeking those liberated by the 522nd that he began to speak about his experiences. The terror is tempered by recollections of the generosity of his liberators whose example helped repair his damaged spirit.

Masha Leon and her mother had several close calls with the Nazis and Soviet soldiers before good fortune and persistence conspired in their favor; they obtained a visa from Consul Sugihara. Then, they literally caught the last plane from Vilnius to Moscow, the last train from Moscow to Vladivostok, the last boat from Vladivostok to Japan and the last ship from Japan to the United States before Pearl Harbor changed everything. Masha brought the ship's menu

with her to Japan and spoke eloquently of the "extraordinary" consul who told his government that "he must do what was right."

After overcoming numerous obstacles, Jerry Milrod finally received a visa from Sugihara. Today, he vividly recalls dancing for joy with other refugees atop blocks of ice on an icebreaker ship as he left the Soviet Union for Japan in December 1940. He survived the war in Shanghai where he met his wife, Lydia. In remarking that "it was quiet for too long, "Jerry was happy to share his experiences." **Solly Ganor and the Japanese**

Solly Ganor personifies the ties that bound the group together, for "his destiny was twice crossed by Japanese people." As a young boy in Kaunas, he had met Consul Sugihara in 1940, taken a liking to him on account of Sugihara's "kind eyes" and invited him to a family Hanukkah celebration, in the way that only children can disregard the differences in background that often proscribe interaction. The Jewish child and Japanese diplomat became friends.

Solly's family did receive transit visas from Consul Sugihara when the political situation became dire and Lithuanian Jews realized that they, too, were in danger. However, the Ganors were unable to use their visas because they had become Soviet citizens with the Soviet occupation of Lithuania; the Soviets would not permit their own nationals to leave the country. Instead, Solly ultimately wound up in Dachau and a straggling member of the death march.

Solly was convinced that he would not survive another day of the march when he looked up from his blanket of snow to see a Japanese face peering at him. Unlike other Dachau survivors who initially believed that the Japanese had replaced their German allies to finish the job, Solly thought of his friend Chiune Sugihara when he saw the Japanese-American soldiers. Today, he is "forever grateful to Chiune Sugihara and the men of the 522nd - they were not only compassionate, but also restored my faith in mankind."

The Jewish Community Center in Tokyo

The Jewish Community Center reception honoring the late Sugihara and the men of the 442nd and 522nd units was filled to capacity with Israeli and American diplomats, press and members of the congregation. One could not miss the irony. Here were hundreds of people paying tribute to Consul Sugihara, who defied his government while representing it, and the Japanese-American soldiers, who fought for their country while classed as enemy aliens. Ambassador Walter Mondale called Sugihara a "hero among heroes" and the Japanese-American internment "one of the most disgraceful pages of American history". John Tsukano, formerly of the 522nd, talked about the "fate" that had led to one persecuted group helping rescue another. A message from Senator Akaka of Hawaii discussed the duty to publicize, teach and correct history.

The Hill of Humanity

A small step towards revising history occurred two days later in the Japanese countryside at the Sugihara memorial park aptly named the Hill of Humanity. As the group, Sugihara's widow Yukiko, more diplomats and more press gathered under the blazing sun, former Vice Prime Minister Gotoda praised Sugihara's love of humanity and extraordinary courage. Gotoda's presence was notable, for he has long been influential in Japanese politics. He was followed by an envoy from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a message from Foreign Minister Kono. The contents were not significant, but the attendance of a ministry bureaucrat was. Fifty plus years after the fact, the ministry still has difficulty honoring one who disobeyed it, for an acknowledgment of Sugihara's deed inevitably highlights a ministry policy that was not intended to be so humanitarian towards the Jews. Moreover, breaking rules does not normally earn positive recognition in Japan.

As the survivors and veterans stood before the crowd, a choir called the Japanese Christian Friends of Israel sang Hebrew songs. Tears flowed amidst smiles. And the cameras clicked.

The Press

From the moment that the group set foot in Japan, the media was ubiquitous. Japanese newspaper journalists, German film crews, American television (CNN) accompanied the group sightseeing at Buddhist temples and a German film crew set up outside a hotel elevator in the hope of catching a chance meeting between Mrs. Sugihara and one of the survivors - which they did! [The Washington Post](#) reporter dismissed one of the organizers' pleas to leave the group alone with the comment that the press is supposed to be a "pest".

Yet, despite their presence at every event, the coverage was largely superficial and marked by errors. Reuters reversed the number of Jews and Japanese-Americans. [Time](#) (October 3, 1994) wrote a fine article about Sugihara with only a cursory mention of the Japanese-Americans. Japanese and foreign newspapers referred to Sugihara as Japan's "Schindler" - an inappropriate label for many reasons.

Still, the trip's organizers were satisfied that the various stories had captured the attention of the press and the public. They hope that the exhibit which is presently touring Japan will attract a large and thoughtful audience. Later, it may be shown in France and the United States. "The Unlikely Liberators" mission may be officially over, but education - one of its original purposes - continues.

SHANGHAI ASHKENAZI JEWS' HEROIC EFFORTS TO SAVE EUROPEAN REFUGEES DURING WORLD WAR II

(continued from page 1)

In spite of great personal danger, 18 representatives of the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Community Association, led by their indomitable President Mr. Boris Radomishelsky (who was later to shorten his name to Radom) signed a petition to Mr. Kubota representing the following Jewish organizations: Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association, Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Central Control Board, Jewish Chamber of Commerce,

Association of Russian Emigrants Jews, Shanghai Jewish Hospital, Shanghai Hebrew Relief Society and Shelter House, Shanghai Jewish Club, Jewish Informational Bureau "HICEM", Ashkenazi Hera Kadisha, 'EastJewCom', Mahazikei Talmud Torah, Society 'Ezra', 'Our Life', Jewish Recreation Club, Brith Trumpeldor Shanghai Branch, The New Zionist Organization, Shanghai Zionist Organization 'Kadimah'.

The letter typed on the letterhead of the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association dated July 23, 1945 (i.e. less than a week after the bombing) stated:

*Mr. T. Kubota
Director General
The Office of the Stateless Refugees Affairs
Present*

Sir,

We, the undersigned representatives of all organizations of the local Ashkenazi Jewish Community, deeply moved by the events of the 17th instant, and greatly concerned with the fate of the refugees residing in the Designated Area, are taking herewith the liberty of approaching you with the following appeal.

The disaster of the 17th inst. which resulted in the death of 31 refugees, and wounding of nearly 300 refugees and which caused irreparable loss to many hundred refugee families whose lodgings were demolished, has brought about amongst them a feeling of utter despondency.

The fact that of all the European population only refugees were affected by the disaster causes them to feel that their stay in the Designated Area singles them out for the most terrible fate.

Although losses are unavoidable during the war, no such feeling would have arisen had they been given freedom to move and to reside elsewhere, and a similar disaster would have had then a different psychological aspect.

The apprehensions of the Jewish refugee population find some justification in the fact that the Designated Area stretches over a former war-torn district. Most of the houses there were hastily and carelessly rebuilt during

IPO music director Zubin Mehta will conduct Strauss's [The Life of a Hero](#), the first time that the IPO has played a work by the formerly proscribed German composer, known to have been a Nazi.

The Strauss is the second concert of the season, which begins with the IPO debut of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* sung by the Prague Philharmonic choir and conducted by Mehta, who returns to lead the orchestra after a year's sabbatical.

The visits to India and China are part of a tour which will also take the orchestra to Japan this November. The China visit is at government request, said IPO general-secretary Avi Shoshani "and the visit to India will include three concerts in Bombay, which is Maestro Mehta's hometown."

• INDIAN PERFORMERS TOUR ISRAEL

A 28-member delegation of Indian performing artists led a four-city, five-concert *Days of India* tour of Israel in March 1994.

The artists are classical musician Narendra Dhar, Kathak dancer Kum Kum Dhar and the Banghra and Gidda folk dancers from the Punjab, led by their choreographer Pushpa Rani.

The performers arrived from Cairo, which also hosted Days of India. Their arrival represents the first official cultural exchange between the two nations, although there have been visits by Indian performers such as that of Ravi Shankar last year.

• SOUTH KOREA'S FIRST AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL

South Korea's first ambassador to Israel presented his credentials to President Ezer Weizman, asserting that North Korea could not be trusted to honor any agreement to stop weapons sales to the Middle East.

Ambassador Dongsoon Park said North Korea has not honored any of the dozens of accords signed with Seoul, and Pyongyang continues to issue threats against its southern neighbor. Park was commenting on media reports earlier this week that Israel, despite a pledge to Washington, had renewed its dialogue with North Korea.

The Foreign Ministry called the reports "baseless."

"We believe this," Park said.

Park said despite the tensions with Pyongyang, his country will continue

efforts to seek conciliation and reunification with the communist north. "There is no other way but to continue the dialogue with the North Koreans," he said. "We cannot meet North Korea's confrontation policy with another confrontation policy."

The ambassador acknowledged a comparison between his government's decision and that of Israel to recognize and negotiate with the PLO. "I really appreciate the government's policy towards the PLO," he said. "There is no other way."

Park's arrival marks the first of a South Korean ambassador to Israel. South Korea, active in the Arab world, has maintained diplomatic relations with Israel since 1962, but refused to send a resident ambassador. Israel finally removed its ambassador from Seoul in 1979.

Israeli and South Korean officials said the potential for trade between the two countries is great. Trade has risen from \$140 million to an annual level of \$275m., divided evenly between Israel and South Korea. Officials said the two countries plan to raise the volume of trade to between \$500 million and \$700 million annually.

About 12,000 South Koreans visited Israel last year, officials said. They added that could rise to up to 50,000 tourists.

A TEL AVIV GROCERY THAT STOCKS SQUID, LOTUS ROOT

*by Allison Kaplan Sommer
reprinted from the
[Jerusalem Post](#), 25 February 1994*

Most of us don't hanker for dried squid. But for Filipino workers in Tel Aviv, discovering the dehydrated delicacy is like finding a taste of home.

Just as word spreads among expatriate Israelis when a quality humorous spot is found, and Americans abroad do their best to locate peanut butter and Heinz ketchup, workers from the Philippines in Israel are quickly learning of a store called "East and West."

The store, tucked away in a corner of Tel Aviv's Carmel Market, specializes in imports from the Far East.

It could easily be mistaken for the commissary of the UN: the faces of

the customers wheeling their shopping carts around the small store are black, white and every shade between.

Lorna, 32, from Manila, lives in Tel Aviv and cares for an elderly woman. "The squid is my favorite thing in the store," she says.

It's easy to find - right next to the dried cuttlefish, sliced dried lotus root and edible seaweed. Lorna puts her squid in her shopping cart alongside more mundane items like coffee, milk and dishwashing liquid, which the store also carries.

Presiding over East and West's array of both exotic delicacies and everyday items are Ezra and Shulamit Kalif, and their sons Oded, 33, and Alon, 23. The family has operated a series of small shops in the Carmel Market for more than 30 years.

The peaceful atmosphere of their two-month-old store on Rehov Yishkon, jazz playing quietly in the background, contrasts sharply with the surrounding rough-and-tumble in the food stalls of the open-air market.

The Kalifs didn't deliberately set out to specialize in imports from the Philippines, Korea, Thailand and Japan. It began when Ezra began taking special requests from the foreign workers who frequented his previous grocery store.

"Whenever they would ask for something, we would take it very seriously and do everything we could to provide it," Ezra says. "Slowly, we brought more and more products. News travels fast by word of mouth in communities of foreigners. They started bringing their friends to the store. Over the years, we won their trust and they have become loyal customers."

In addition to foreign workers from the Far East and Africa, the store has begun attracting a growing number of Israelis.

"There are Israelis who come here who spent time traveling in the Far East, and a lot of people who are interested in cooking and food," said Oded, a Tel Aviv University graduate.

Oded was the driving force in moving the family from a small grocery store that carries some imported products into their current speciality store.

The store supplies staples and specialties to chefs working in local

REPORT ON TEACHING AN ELDERHOSTEL ON THE JEWS OF CHINA

by Beverly Friend, Ph.D.

Executive Director and Newsletter Editor
China Judaic Studies Association

When 50 bright, articulate senior citizens (46 Jews and four Lutherans) gathered at the Perlstein Center in the Wisconsin Dells June 19-24 for an Elderhostel on the Jews of China, it was one of the highlights of my teaching career.

Certainly the preparation for this class occasioned the most diligent foray I have made into serious research since writing my doctoral dissertation in 1974. The considerations were so different from that of my regular teaching experience.

As a teacher of English and journalism at Oakton Community College, I ordinarily specialize in classes heavily based on student participation. But this Elderhostel demanded nearly 10 hours of content-loaded presentation.

As the center of the presentation on Kaifeng, I chose Albert Dien's wonderful slide set, available from the Sino Judaic Institute. These slides, and information from the accompanying taped lecture proved invaluable, and I wove them with my personal slides, taken during a 1993 exploration of the Jewish Sites in China.

To add impetus to the presentation on Shanghai, I followed the golden suggestion of Oakton Political Science Professor Bill Taylor, one of my most distinguished colleagues, who had said, "Why not interview a Shanghai Survivor?"

And that is what I did. I contacted Chicagoan Martin Moses and arranged for the Audio Visual department of Oakton to set up the taping in their highly-equipped studio. The result, Another Time . . . Another Moses, was so successful that it will soon appear on our local Cable TV station. Copies were donated to the Asher Library at Spertus College of Judaica, and to Nanjing University.

Moses, who has also been taped for the oral history of Holocaust Survivors, became a source of information

on possible films of the Shanghai experience, such as Escape to Shanghai and Escape to the Yellow Sun. When I visited the Asher Library, to view these films, I discovered another pertinent videotape: Jews Along the Yellow River.

From my colleague in the China Judaic Studies Assn., Ken Lubowich, I learned about the work-in-progress of California film producer Ron Levaco, and obtained an 18-minute film clip of his wonderful documentary planned for PBS this Fall: Round Eyes in the Middle Kingdom, devoted to those who stayed on in China, which included wonderful interviews with Israel Epstein and Sidney Rittenberg.

Amazingly, one of the Elderhostel participants had known Levaco's father in Shanghai.

Prior to the conference, the attendees received 14 articles to whet their appetites. Not only did these cover Kaifeng and Shanghai, but several also dealt with Professor Xu and the work he is currently undertaking.

When the students arrived, they were exposed to additional materials: copies of the Chinese Edition of the Encyclopedia Judaica, texts and articles I had used in preparation, and a 3-ring notebook containing back issues of Points East, so that they could personally examine sources. In addition, when they took breaks and walked around the room, they could examine enlargements of slides, and pictures from texts, including the floor plans of the Kaifeng synagogue. Fortunately, these had been created earlier for a Friday night presentation at a Lubavitch Chabad in Skokie where I could not show slides.

Ten hours were not enough. Ten weeks might not have been enough. We overflowed the class time and took extra time during the afternoon break to continue viewing some of the films.

It was a teacher's dream, to face a class thirsty for information, delighted to learn.

It was a scholar's dream to experience the opportunity to engage in fascinating research, investigate new information, and meet face-to-face (and interview) one who had experienced living in a Jewish diaspora in China.

CULTURAL-POLITICAL NOTES

excerpted & reprinted from
The Jerusalem Post

• **THE DALAI LAMA VISITS ISRAEL**
Israeli government officials did not meet with the Dalai Lama XIV Tensin Gyatso during his visit there so as not to jeopardize relations with Beijing, a senior official confirmed during his visit.

And the Dalai Lama's spokesman, apparently showing understanding for Israel's position, said yesterday evening that he had requested well in advance that this be a private pilgrimage.

"His holiness specifically wanted this to be a personal pilgrimage to pay homage at the sites holy to three great religions," said Lodi Gyari, spokesman to the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize laureate. "We wrote to the Israeli government to this effect several years ago. The intention was not to meet with political leaders."

Officially, the Dalai Lama was visiting Israel as guest of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, and addressed its 40th anniversary celebrations in Eilat at a site overlooking Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. He spent four days there.

Like all VIPs, the spiritual leader of 120 million Buddhists opened his stay in Jerusalem with a visit to Yad Vashem, where he laid a wreath. A planned ceremony at the JNF's "peace forest" was canceled at short notice without explanation.

In the afternoon, the title of Honorary Fellow of the Hebrew University was bestowed upon the Dalai Lama "in recognition of his contributions to world peace through non-violent conflict resolution and his fostering of religious and cultural pluralism."

Speaking at the ceremony on the University's Givat Ram campus, the Buddhist leader repeatedly called for peace and reconciliation in the region.

• **IPO TO TOUR INDIA, CHINA & JAPAN**

The first Israel Philharmonic performance of a work by Richard Strauss, the orchestra's first visit to China, a historic visit to India and two concerts by soprano Jessye Norman are among the highlights of the IPS's 1994/95 season.

the recent years and cannot withstand any shock.

According to the opinion of doctors attending the wounded most fatalities were due to the crumbling of the houses and with many houses there now being shattered it is beyond any doubt that further shocks will cause increased fatalities.

In view of the above we believe that now it is most desirable to grant the refugee population in the Designated Area freedom to remove their living quarters to other parts of the city.

We believe that granting of such right will cause no immediate mass exodus from the area as living accommodation is now very scarce.

The granting of freedom to the refugees to move and to reside will nevertheless have a most salutary effect and help to alleviate the painful feelings caused by the recent disaster.

Such an act would be hailed by the refugees and by all the Jews as a most kind, timely and humanitarian action of the Authorities . . ."

This text was followed by the names of 18 Jewish organizations and the signatures of their representatives.

Fortunately, World War II was in its final spasms and would soon be terminated by the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nevertheless, Jews should remember this heroic action taken by Jewish leaders in Shanghai unaware of the forthcoming U.S. atomic attack and fully cognisant of the personal risk they were taking.

EHUD BARAK IN CHINA

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak visited China in July on the first visit ever by an IDF senior officer to China.

Barak, who had previously postponed his visit to China twice, the last time because of the Hebron massacre, was invited by the Chinese Defense Ministry. He is meeting top level defense officials and senior Chinese People's army officers.

Barak is also scheduled to meet the head of COSTIND - the Chinese State Committee on Scientific and Industrial Applications for Defense - a body regarded as the most important of China's defense establishment. Both Prime Minister and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met the head of COSTIND during their visits to China.

FROM HONG KONG TO KAIFENG: TWO ACCOUNTS

FROM HONG KONG TO KAIFENG

by Bob Green

excerpted from The Shofar,
July/August, 1994

(A group of 18 members and friends of The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong recently returned with some new perspectives on community after visiting Kaifeng.)

. . . From Father Matteo Ricci's first encounter with a Chinese Jew in 1605, a succession of missionaries, scholars, travelers and journalists have speculated on when, why, and how Jews came to live in China. If they were not descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, then perhaps they came as silk traders during the Han Dynasty some 2,000 years ago. If not the Han then maybe the Chou, and what did the Chinese terms Xiyu and Tienzhu, referring to their origin, mean after all — India, a place far to the West, the Western Regions, any of several Middle East countries, or Persia in particular? These and many other questions have been debated for centuries by those researching the history of what had come to be called the 'orphan colony' of the Diaspora.

But Mr. Wang Yi Shia, sitting erect on an overstuffed sofa in the lounge of Kaifeng's Dong Jing Hotel and flanked by two friends said to be descendants of the Kaifeng Jews, preached a confident, point by point analysis of how the Kaifeng Jews came to be. The Director Emeritus of Kaifeng Museum and President of Kaifeng Institute for Research on History (of the) Jews, as his calling card would have us know, lectured our assemblage with the authority of an expert who has presented his account to many previous groups of Jewish visitors — how many, although he emphasized the word 'many,' he would or could not say.

On the plane from Hong Kong to Zhengzhou, our first stop on our journey, Rabbi Samuel Joseph had passed out some immensely helpful background material on the old community.

(continued on page 6)

HAUNTED BY THE GHOSTS OF CHINA'S JEWS

by Joyce Barnathan

excerpted from Business Week,
27 June 1994

I have come to Kaifeng with a group of 18 members of the United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong, including its dynamic rabbi, Samuel Joseph. Our group is eager to trace the roots of the oldest and longest-enduring Jewish community in the Middle Kingdom. There are scant relics of the Jewish past, and seeing the end of the line is a haunting experience. "I really got the feeling of ghosts, of a Jewish community that once was here," says Seth Maerowitz, an American banker based in Hong Kong.

Kaifeng officials are trying to market the city as an attraction for Jewish tourists. The authorities even have plans to build a museum based on a model of the old synagogue. "The government is encouraging this museum project to attract tourists and Jewish money, but this is not a revival of Jewish life," says a Western diplomat in Beijing.

On our first night in Kaifeng, we celebrate the Sabbath. We invite Shi Yulian and another man who claims Jewish descent, 34-year-old Jin Guangzhong, to join us for dinner. At our table, Shi sits stonefaced as we light the Sabbath candles. The room echoes with chants of thanks for wine and bread. After we finish, Shi remarks that he has never heard those prayers. At another table, Jin is speechless. Later, he confides to Sharon Fine, a Taiwanese American who recently converted to Judaism, that he was simply too moved to talk.

The search for China's Jews takes us to the Kaifeng Museum the next morning. Over the entrance hangs a red sign: "Be a cultural citizen. Display the ancient glory of Kaifeng." Kaifeng was a hotbed of action during the Cultural Revolution, and that legacy apparently lives on: The first floor of the museum hosts two closed exhibits,

(continued on page 7)

FROM HONG KONG TO KAIFENG

(continued from page 5)

From these readings, Mr. Wang's talk, and other sources we learned that the Jews who settled in Kaifeng came most likely from India or the Middle East, possibly Persia, sometime in the Sung Dynasty between 960 and 1126. These early settlers may have been traders, merchant-adventurers, or simply a group of families seeking haven from oppression, war, or famine — the record doesn't say. In 1126, the Sung Dynasty emperor granted permission to build a synagogue.

The history of the community is written in stone, literally — five-foot tall, two-and-a-half foot wide grey limestone slabs, rounded at the top like large commandments with inscriptions in Chinese script lightly incised by chisel. These accounts, dated 1489, 1512, and 1679, summarize in traditional Chinese commemorative style the history of the community and precepts of Judaism. Descendants of the Ching Chen ('Purity and Truth Religion'), as they were known in Kaifeng, could stand in their synagogue's courtyard where the stones were erected and read, among other things, about the construction, repairs, and improvements to the synagogue, its reconstruction following devastation by flood in 1461, and about members who had achieved high positions in the civil service, military and various other professions.

Badly weathered and barely decipherable, the tablets or steles as they are called by historians are safe for now in a dusty room of the Kaifeng Museum, locked away like heirlooms in three glass cases until the growing stream of far distant relatives like us merits their enhancement in a display more worthy, perhaps, of their importance. Safe for now, maybe, since we learned from our guide the next day that thieves had cleaned out the museum's porcelain collection the year before in a middle-of-the-night burglary, the largest theft of its kind in post-1949 China.

As the guard removed the padlocks and pushed back the accordion-style iron door protecting the museum's treasures, voice levels went a decibel down, not quite the conditioned hush reserved for high-ceilinged museum rooms but certainly no irreverent loudmouths here either. The green and white terrazzo floor, covered with gritty dirt, had not been washed in months or years and bore running shoe imprints that looked as old as the steles themselves. Red velvet curtains hung the length of tall, latticed windows, five on each side, that opened onto a balcony skirting the room on all four sides. Never mind that it sloped in places, that a few tiles were cracked or missing, or that some of the window panes were broken. It's remarkable enough in a country this poor, some might have thought, that space is reserved for artifacts of such a small and extinct or nearly extinct minority.

If, on this peaceful Sabbath morning in China, Sharon Fine, a Taiwan-born member of our Congregation, heard Confucian echoes while reading these ancient tablets, they resounded from the efforts of the old Kaifeng community to stress the compatibility of its Judaic principles with Confucian values. The Chinese character for 'Way,' as Sharon pointed out, resonated with traditional Confucian and Taoist overtones. Here it was used to describe the 'Way' of the 'sect which adheres to the Scriptures,' as the Jewish community referred to itself, and to show how it was in harmony with the precepts of Confucianism, the state religion of the time. Both were devoted, for example, to sovereign and parent, both revered their ancestors, and both attached importance to charity, civic responsibility, pursuit of learning, and dignity of labor There's little to see these days on Jiao Jing Hu Hung, 'Lane of the Scripture Teaching Religion' as the Chinese call the street where their Jewish neighbors lived. We stopped there on Saturday afternoon and wandered up and down the labyrinthine alleys of Kaifeng's old Jewish quarter where the synagogue once stood, 'a warren of narrow paths bordered by crumbling grey stone walls.' Yes, there is still a Jewish family living here we were told by a neighbor who pointed

out the house, but no, that family had moved away and died long ago, our informant quickly added when our guide came over and joined the conversation.

While the rest of the group went off to explore a nearby Moslem mosque, Gina Levy and I followed the twisting lane to where it ended — public toilets at the rear of a hospital that now stood on the site of the old synagogue. The only traces of The Temple of Purity and Truth were maybe the inlaid stones that covered the hospital courtyard and these stones, unlike the steles, had nothing to say. Trying to get back to the bus by another route, we found ourselves trapped in the hospital courtyard. Rushing past the rooms of the bed-ridden, there was no time to commiserate, decrepit as the conditions appeared to be. We were 150 years late for the last service.

The first Shabbat service in around 150 years had taken place the night before in a private dining room at our hotel, following dinner hosted by the Kaifeng branch of the China International Travel Service. Our Chinese hosts were 'blown away', as someone in our group put it, when Sharon Fine began the blessing in Hebrew over the Shabbat candles. Sharon had quickly become the most valuable member of our group other than Rabbi Joseph, lending expert assistance at every stop along the way with her translating, interpreting, and organizing skills. Now she was revealing yet another of her amazing abilities, chanting melodies in a language that had not been heard in these parts for many years.

Sitting at Sharon's table was Chin Guang-Jong who, as a Kaifeng resident claiming Jewish descent, had attended the meeting earlier in the afternoon with Want Yi Shia. Although he had barely said a word, Mr. Chin now seemed rather intense in expressing interest in his Jewish heritage and his wish to obtain books to learn more. He had been too moved to say much at the afternoon meeting, he explained to Sharon. He said he wanted to go to Israel but was unable to get permission from the Chinese Government.

Replying to a question at the end

BOOK NOOK

THE SEPHARDI JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SHANGHAI 1845-1939 & THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY by *Maisie Meyer, Ph.D.*

Abstract

From 1845 Baghdadi Jews settled in Shanghai via India and, over a century of existence, their numbers possibly never exceeded eight hundred. During this period they were exposed to great changes in their social, economic and political environment. Traditionalists believed that loyalties to the customs of their Baghdadi forebears, and occasionally even to Judaism itself, were being threatened. In this thesis the actions the Baghdadi Jews in Shanghai took to preserve their Jewish identity is examined, and changes in ethnic identity in Shanghai between 1845-1939 are analysed. Particular attention is paid to: their choice and the significance of the label 'Sephardi'; the religious and communal institutions they established in order to preserve their identity; their contribution to the economic development of the International Settlement; the reasons for their tenacious endeavours to be accepted as British subjects while remaining loyal to their religion; their reluctance to identify with the Zionist movement and their demonstration of solidarity with their co-religionists who sought refuge in Shanghai from Nazi persecution.

Notwithstanding the obstacles encountered in consulting documents preserved in the Shanghai archives, this thesis draws on a wide range of primary material, notably: the Shanghai Police Department Records, Foreign, colonial and India Office Files, the Central Zionist correspondence with Shanghai, American Joint Distribution records, and newspapers printed in China, and in India. Particular use has been made of the *Israel's Messenger*, the first Jewish periodical and the only Sephardi journal to be published in China.

Factual information rather than the opinions of its editor, Nissim Ezra Benjamin Ezra, has been taken into account. Despite a widespread search the communal records have not come to light. Consequently emphasis has been placed on the available documentation and on interviews with people who once lived in the community. These data have been particularly useful in understanding such phenomena as value systems and modes of thought. Of course, memories fade or become coloured over time. Nevertheless, frequently there has been a consensus among informants, or information given by any particular individual has been logically consistent, so that confidence in the data would appear to be justified.

It will be shown that the hopes and beliefs of the founding fathers, as expressed by David Solomon Sassoon - that the traders who left Baghdad to settle in new countries would remain true to the tenets of the Jewish religion and to the traditional observance of Baghdadi Jews in particular - were partially fulfilled. This demonstrates nevertheless the flexibility achieved by so many Jewish communities in the Diaspora, which remained faithful to their essential beliefs and values, and in so doing, assured their survival. It is hoped this addition to the considerable body of literature which documents the history of Jewish communities in the East, will promote an understanding of the economic development and social transformation of the Shanghai Sephardi community, and will also contribute to the history of foreign communities in China and Shanghai.

SEA LINK WITH CHINA INAUGURATED

The first Chinese ship to dock at Haifa port arrived on July 4, 1994, on the maiden voyage of the COSCO Chinese shipping lines. The container ships follow a decision by the Chinese in April that their ships will visit Israeli ports on the container line linking Chinese and Far East ports with Israeli and US ports. Chinese vessels are expected every 10 days.

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For the first time, someone understood! "Yes," I answered, "I am." "I have a friend who is a descendent of the Jews," he said. Immediately, I called to Nir and the Canadian to come back. "We got one!!!"

To make a long story short . . . the old man, who was a retired English teacher, took us to a small street a few miles away where his friend lived. he was nowhere to be found. We waited for an hour outside his small house, where all the local traffic had stopped. All the neighbors came to see the strange looking people who had arrived. Finally, the 80 year-old man came home. Of course, we left him two books, gave him a message from the Rav and wished him goodbye.

The Canadian, Nir, and I were in shock. We felt that something had happened. We didn't know exactly what, but it was powerful. We met a Jew in Kay Fong, China and found our ancestral connection.

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Same as above, videotape. \$75 (members, \$68).

GIFT FROM CHINA

reprinted from *Technical Focus*
American Society for Technion —
Israel Institute of Technology

Daining Fang stands at the very beginning of the Technion-China courtship. He was the first Chinese doctoral student at the Technion, and is far from the last.

The Nanjing-born aeronautics engineer pioneered the pilgrimage of Chinese students to the 300-acre Carmel campus right after Israel established diplomatic relations with China. He is the first Chinese student to complete an engineering doctorate in an Israeli university—even preparing a summary in Hebrew.

Fang—locally known as Dani—not only initiates, but also excels. Working under Prof. Avraham Berkovits, he stands in the top ranks of mechanical engineers that recently finished their doctorates. Fang has maintained

a solid 95 average, thereby securing a full scholarship at the Technion. Colleagues laud his piercing mind and have more than once called him brilliant.

They also call him "crazy", for Fang spends 18 hours a day in the laboratory.

"My friends call my work habits obsessive, but I attribute them to a bit of ambition," smiles the bespectacled Fang, who flops around the lab comfortably in biblical leather sandals. "I've just got to take advantage of the wonderful facilities, you know?" Still, Fang has found time to host two authentic Chinese dinners for his classmates.

The combination was one of chance. After completing a Bachelor's and Master's degree at the Nanjing Institute of Chemical Technology in mechanical engineering, Fang spotted a note on the wall advertising the Technion. The results of further inquiries persuaded him to pursue a doctoral program.

Fluent in Hebrew after attending the campus ulpan, Fang cannot stop singing the praises of Israel's answer to M.I.T.

"The quality of education at the Technion, the high level of teaching and the educators themselves have helped me improve and better myself here," says the affable engineer, 35, who has spent the best part of four years in Haifa. "The exposure from working with a wide range of engineering disciplines—and teaming up with Russian immigrants—could not be had elsewhere."

Culturally, Chinese and Israelis share certain priorities, explains Fang. "Both cultures place great significance on the family and on saving money; but the temperaments are miles apart. The Israelis aren't like Confucius."

Perhaps Daining Fang's unique first name describes the qualities that made his Israeli sojourn such a success. "Dai" means stable; while the second syllable, "ning", stands for peace and quiet.

"I definitely made the right choice in coming to the Technion," says Fang. "I'm very *mapsut* (Hebrew slang for honored or satisfied) to say that I earned my doctorate in mechanical engineering from this fine institution."

of his talk, Mr. Wang, choosing his words carefully, had estimated that there were around 300 or 400 people in Kaifeng today who 'could be said to have Jewish ancestors.' Most have blended entirely into the general population, both physically and psychologically, through assimilation and intermarriage. There are still a few, however, who have some Caucasian features like Shi Yu-Lian, 'Director of [the] Kaifeng Study Association on Jewish History' and 'A Descendant of Chinese Jews', as his name card denotes, also present at the meeting, and Chang Shing-Wan, who some of us felt could easily pass as the brother of Eli Schwartz, one of our members. Like Chin Guang-Jong, Chang, a fitness instructor with a straw hat that he wore at a rakish angle, professed interest in Judaism, bringing a Christian Bible with him on a visit to our hotel with the request that Rabbi Joseph give him a Hebrew name.

As Michael Pollak has observed in his book *Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries*, 'For the better part of a century after the synagogue was dismantled there were always a few individuals in the city — and there may still be some today — from whose hearts and minds the yearning for a return to Judaism was never totally eradicated.' Although all were as Chinese as their neighbors, 'in the innermost recesses of their hearts and minds some few of them may still choose to regard themselves as *bona fide* members of the House of Israel.'

We had come neither as missionaries 'to fan the sparks of Judaism still flickering in the hearts of our lapsed co-religionists,' nor to judge how genuine this interest was. We were simply a small group of people with the common denominator of also being from a Diasporic Jewish community in China, interested in studying and learning from the experiences of those who had preceded us by 800 or 900 years. The challenge, in sorting through the diverse elements of this saga, was to relate it to our own experience and situation as Jews and to make sense of the information we were being given. At times, it seemed contradictory, creative, even suspect. The line I read in a

short story by John Updike shortly after returning, *Cruise*, expressed my confusion perfectly: 'Was Djerba, a sleepy hot island off of the Tunisian coast, distinguished by a functioning synagogue and a disused thirteenth-century Aragonese fort, *really* the land of the Lotus Eaters?'

It was hard to understand, for example, how the Chin family burial plot with its recently erected memorial tablet, out in the middle of a wheat field far from the city, had come to be on the tourist itinerary. The villagers and their children, some shoeless and half-naked, certainly wondered as well as they gathered around while Rabbi Joseph led *kaddish*. It was something he had been looking forward to doing, a way of connecting, perhaps, with the ancient community. 'Can you imagine how many years its been since anyone said *kaddish* here?' he asked me.

Like Kaifeng, Hong Kong is as sophisticated a city as a modern-day Marco Polo would be likely to find, 'a mart for all things precious and expensive,' as he wrote in his travel diary, where 'shops were spread with rare goods from every corner of the country, and restaurants offered sumptuous dishes famed at home and abroad.'

But unlike the Kaifeng Jews who were almost completely cut off from world Jewry and lived in isolation for centuries, our Congregation in Hong Kong is more plugged in by modern means of transportation and communication to what's happening internationally than many small communities in the United States. The fact that we can read Torah and scriptures in our native language, English, unlike the Kaifeng Jews who did not translate them into Chinese, contributes to understanding and the continuity of our community. And unlike Kaifeng Jews who were 'under pressure to adapt to the prevailing ethic as the only path to wealth and status,' we have many options. It is not a case of 'assimilate to survive.'

Was the willingness of the Kaifeng Jewish Community to adapt to Chinese ways 'the seeds of its eventual destruction,' as Pollak asks, 'or the reason that the Community was able to exist in almost total isolation from

the rest of world Jewry as long as it did?' We could argue the question endlessly. And yet how much does it really matter? Wasn't our trip far more valuable as a vehicle for defining ourselves as a Congregation? It seemed, from the moment Rabbi Joseph and myself showed up at the airport wearing Planet Hollywood caps, only to outdone by Seth Friedman with a hat that might have come from Crocodile Dundee, that this trip was about community.

HAUNTED BY THE GHOSTS OF CHINA'S JEWS

(continued from page 5)

one commemorating the 100th birthday of Mao Zedong, the other celebrating China's revolutionary heroes. The second and third floors hold no exhibits. The rooms are filled with wooden chairs, some of them broken. On the fourth floor, we find the sad home of the few artifacts of the ancient Jewish community.

Never mind the dust caked on the floor, the broken window screens, the torn velvet curtains, or the cracked walls. Behind glass are three stone stelae, or tablets, that commemorate the rebuilding of the Kaifeng synagogue in 1489, 1512, and 1679. (A fourth stele dated 1663 is lost.)

From the museum, we head for the Jin family grave site in a nearby village. The actual grave is a large mound of dirt. Next to it stands a stone tablet erected in 1988, listing the names of eight generations of Jins buried there. Was this really a Jewish cemetery? Hard to tell. Out of respect, Rabbi Joseph chants the Jewish prayer for the dead, as dozens of curious villagers stare. "The last line," the Rabbi tells Jin and his brother, Jin Guangyuan, "is very important. It says: 'May He who makes peace in high places, make peace for us and for all people everywhere.'"

Later, we make our way back to the street where the Kaifeng synagogue once stood. Called Teaching

Scriptures Lane, the alley is now home to Muslim families. I approach a middle-aged man with a small child. Nearby sits a toothless old man. I explain why our group has come to Kaifeng, and the younger man volunteers that a Jewish family named Zhao lives on the street, at No. 21, to be exact. But when they see our official guide, the men suddenly change their tune. The younger man and his son dash away. The old man claims the Zhaos have moved and died.

But as we walk down other quaint streets, one person after another confirms that Chinese Jews live on Teaching Scriptures Lane. Why on earth didn't we meet them? After we return to Hong Kong, Rabbi Joseph hears that the Zhaos may be on the outs with some powerful officials in Kaifeng.

We head next for the Chinese Catholic Church where, we've been told, the priest knows a great deal about the local Jews. The Gothic-style building seems European, as do the images of a blond Christ. The priest confirms that there are several Jewish families left, but they don't practice the religion. A few even come to the church. "They sold off all the Jewish relics years ago," he says. "There's nothing left."

What we have come to see is no longer, and some of us leave Kaifeng feeling depressed. "I saw firsthand what assimilation is all about," says Albert Fine, a member of the UJC board. "It can happen to us, and that's scary." But on a positive note, both Jin brothers are hungry to learn of their roots. "I feel something in my heart," says Jin Guangzhong. He asks for books on Jewish religion and history. And even Shi admits to a deep Jewish connection: His nephew is studying medicine in Israel. So maybe the Jews of Kaifeng, few as they are, will hang on a little longer.

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ORTHODOX JEWS ABROAD

I. SOME NOTES ON FAR EASTERN JEWRY

by *Samuel Abrahams*
reprinted from the *Jewish Press*
January 8, 1994

A visitor to Asia in 1994 encounters Jews in virtually every metropolis of that area of the world. Hong Kong Jewry is by far the most organized, observant and inveterate Jewish community in the Far East under the dynamic leadership of Lubavitcher Rabbi Mordecai Avtzon. Bangkok Jewry has been greatly rejuvenated by the recent arrival of Lubavitcher Rabbi Yosef Kantor and Israeli Moshe Elon, the manager of the only kosher restaurant there. Japanese Jewry is making good progress under the direction of Rabbi James Lebeau, but the exuberance and vitality that this writer found in the 1960's is missing. The small Jewish collectivity of Taipei, Taiwan, is under the benevolent management and control of the inimitable Rabbi Dr. Ephraim Einhorn who has accomplished wonders in maintaining a semblance of *Yiddishkeit* in that corner of the Orient.

Bangkok, Thailand, is enjoying an unusual revitalization since the recent arrival of Rabbi Yosef Kantor and his lovely spouse, Nechama. There are two synagogues in Bangkok under the direct spiritual supervision of Rabbi Kantor. A strictly kosher restaurant is located in the Bossotel Inn adjacent to the Even Chen Synagogue in that hotel, a very short distance from the famous Shangri-la Hotel. Moshe Elon of Israel, who recently married a beautiful young lady from Paris and maintains an apartment in the Inn, is the manager of the restaurant under the control of Rabbi Kantor.

Rabbi Kantor, who learned the art of *schechita* (ritual slaughtering of animals), has been written up in journals throughout the world; he made arrangements for 1,000 persons to attend the Passover Seders in the synaoguge building, Beth Elisheva, where he resides with his spouse and young daughter. He travels across town before every Sabbath and holiday to conduct the services at the Even Chen Synagogue. The Beth

Elisheva complex was donated to the community by a wealthy benefactress (Zerner) and it serves the multiple functions of a synagogue, social hall, community center, and the rabbi's abode; it is estimated there are about 150 Jewish families in Greater Bangkok.

Hong Kong Jewry has been stirred to its depths during the past eight years by the dynamism, dedication and singularity of purpose of Rabbi Mordecai Avtzon and also by Rabbi Benzion Lapian of the 1902 Ohel Leah Synagogue at 70 Robinson Road. The Jewish Club under the superb management of Mildred Houston, a non-Jew formerly of Ireland, adheres to the highest standards of *kashrut* under the minutest scrutiny of Rabbi David Zadok of Israel (two great Seders); the guests had the most scrumptious menu ever during their sojourn in Hong Kong during Passover. Rabbi Avtzon and the Lubavitchers rent two rooms in the Hilton Hotel for the purpose of conducting daily and Sabbath services.

The Ohel Leah synagogue is located at the top of the hill and is reached by a moving street escalator but it does not run at convenient times to suit the needs of daily worshippers. There is a day school (Carmel) for young students that goes up to the second grade presently, and a new class will be added annually as the children grow older. About 2500 or so Jews reside in Hong Kong. Rabbi Avtzon invited the entire community to his residence for the final repast on the last days of Passover; his large apartment also serves as the Chabad House of Hong Kong.

Taipei (Taiwan) Jewry would not exist as an entity without the vigorous support, monetary infusion and sense of commitment of Rabbi Ephraim Einhorn who has resided there for 20 years. Rabbi Einhorn, who is a successful businessman as President of the World Patent Nadi Co., maintains an Orthodox synagogue in rented premises at the fabulous Ritz Hotel without seeking any contributions from visitors and daveners. During the Passover season, he organized elaborate Seders in the ballroom of the hotel for the price of \$150 per person but did not charge students

who are studying in Taiwan and cannot possibly afford to pay for the Seders. A man larger than life, he is a special devotee of the finest in hospitality, humanity, and *Yiddishkeit*. The YY Steakhouse on Chungsha Road has an enclosed section for kosher dining and one could have the most delicious meat meals under tight kosher regulations; this writer and his spouse were treated royally by the caring staff and the proprietor of this steakhouse. Though the figures vary, we may be reasonably assured there are about 35 Jewish families permanently residing in Taipei (the Orthodox Abraham family is well known in this city.)

Tokyo Jewry maintains an imposing building at 8-8 Hiroo 3-Chome, Shibuya Ku, containing the synagogue, administrative and dining facilities, sports fields, and the residence of Rabbi James Lebeau and his spouse. The synagogue attempts to placate all segments of Judaism by organizing the seating arrangements according to the person's theological predilections; there is a section for the Orthodox, conservative and reform adherents—but the actual service is conducted along traditional lines with the cantor and reader facing the Ark. There is a minimum of English introduced into the service on Saturday mornings as well as the Friday evening *Maariv* rendition.

The strictly kosher restaurant serves well-prepared, tasty food on Friday evening, Saturday morning after the service and Sunday brunch. The days of glory of the 1960's are over, when the restaurant remained open on a daily basis to serve patrons and visitors who sought kosher food; the chef does provide packages for those who are staying in Tokyo and wish to consume kosher items during their tours and business engagements.

The Israel Embassy in Tokyo arranged an evening program in memory of the fallen soldiers of Israel and all addresses were delivered in Hebrew. Rabbi Lebeau holds classes in such subjects as the Hebrew language, the Jewish perspective on death, the prayer book, and the basic elements of Judaism. It is difficult to determine the exact number of Jews

living in Tokyo sincere there is a great deal of transience and movement, but the best figure would be about 160 families; there are a large number of Israelis working in Tokyo. The rabbi is constantly converting Japanese and other Oriental women into the fold of Judaism. The community is quite active in a variety of Jewish and Zionist endeavors.

II. A JEW IN CHINA

by *Hadar Schick*
reprinted from
The Kabbalah Connection

As I was about to leave on a trip to China, I was told by one of the *Hevre* at the **New York Centre** to tell the **Rav** about my trip. Well, why not, I thought. A few days before my departure, I gained the courage to tell the **Rav** of my voyage. He was interested as to why I had chosen China. Of course, I had no idea. I just chose the furthest place I could think of since the ticket was given to me by El Al Airlines. "Well," said the **Rav**, "if you're going to China, why don't you take a few books to give to the **Jews in Kay Fung**." "Of course," I answered, and went running to get a map to see exactly where I was being sent.

Next, I had to explain to my friend *Nir* why we were going to take a train to a small village in the middle of nowhere. I explained to him that this was an historical site and that we just had to see it. And certainly, all the Jews would welcome us to their homes!

So off we flew, from New York to LA (said "hello" to Batsheva), then on to Tokyo and finally to Beijing, where we were welcomed by a few million Chinese who did not know a word of English. (So *Hebrew* was out of the question!)

Peking was great and weaving through the city on a bicycle was an experience in itself . . . and people say that Israelis don't know how to drive! From Peking, (be ezrat hashem) we boarded a train that was to take us on a 10-hour journey to Kay Fung. Luckily, our compartment had bunk beds so we could rest. As foreigners on the train, we were the "main attraction" of the day, especially when we tried to

learn Chinese. Reciting our morning prayers for *shacharit* on the train was our "grand finale." If people thought we were strange up till then, they now thought we were from the moon.

Arriving at Kay Fung, we were the only passengers to get off the train. From afar, I saw another foreigner. Being a friendly Israeli, I immediately shouted "Hi there!" He was from Canada and did not have any special plans. I told him that we were looking for **Chinese Jews**. "Yes, I read that some lived here in Kay Fung. Can I travel with you?" he asked. "Why, are you Jewish?" I inquired. "No, but I am interested," he admitted. "Well of course, come along!" I replied.

So, we took a taxi to our hotel. The driver tried taking us on a long route, but we were in no mood to be "taken for a ride." Finally, after a short rest and a long shower at the hotel, we began our search for the **lost Jews of China**.

We took a cab, which happened to be a small wooden cart attached to a bicycle. When going up hill, we just got out and pushed. We arrived at the place where the old synagogue was supposed to be. I took it upon my self to draw a Star of David in the dirt. But no one understood.

The closest we came to making our connection was when we were sent to an old mosque. After an hour, my friend was ready to "call it a day" and start looking for a decent place to eat dinner. (Maybe, a Kosher deli!) to tell you the truth, I was just about to give up too, but I said to myself: "Well, the **Rav** sent me all this way and for what? I can't find the synagogue or one Jew?" Then I remembered a "saying" from our morning class from the *Talmud Essert Sfirot* (Ten Luminous Emanations): "If he said he looked and could not find, don't believe him." So, what would I say when I returned . . . **that I looked and could not find?** No one would believe me.

Nir and the Canadian started on their way back to the hotel. But I decided to try again and asked a group of bewildered Chinese if they were Jews. Again, I drew the Star of David. Just then, an old man looked at me and asked in English, "Are you Jewish?" I was shocked.