

and the early Jewish settlers in central China.

Moreover, a common bond was created by suffering during the war. The Chinese who were resisting Japan with great endurance shared a strong sympathy for the Jews who were deprived of their homes by Germany.

I told my audience of the Jews in Shanghai, who were deeply involved in the Chinese resistance, such as Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld and Hans Shippe. Some of them even gave their lives. Chinese people should remember them, too.

Mann also joined the Chinese people's cause and stayed in China until 1966. "Had it not been for Mao's Cultural Revolution [which came into full swing in 1966]," he said. "I would have always lived in China, I loved it." . . .

Some of the Shanghai Jews brought their children for a lesson in history. These included six brothers and sisters who had been brought up in the city ...

Austrian officials said the conference had two aims — to promote bilateral relations with China and to educate the younger generation about Nazi atrocities. History must be remembered so that its tragedies will not recur. In the conference room, I saw tears in young listeners' eyes.

Gerd Kaminski, professor of Sinology and chairman of the Austria-China Friendship Association, was one of the reporters. He believed the meeting had achieved both its goals and proposed to hold an exhibition of Dr. Rosenfeld's life in Shanghai next year to mark the 25th anniversary of the two countries' establishment of diplomatic ties.

On June 1, three days after the conference ended, the Austrian parliament set up a 500 million schilling (about US\$50 million) foundation to compensate war victims, mostly Jewish.

My friends from the conference applauded this news. "Finally," they said. "Austria is ready to do what Germany has been doing for 40 years." I felt happy for them. Yet I could not help noting that Japan still does not want even to think of doing anything similar.

**PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE**

Michael Pollak, comp. *The Jews of Dynastic China: A Critical Bibliography*. Hebrew Union College Press, in association with The Sino-Judaic Institute. (A continuation of the Loewenthal bibliographies.) \$24.95, members \$20. With the item below, 2 vols., \$30.

Michael Pollak, ed. *The Sino-Judaic Bibliographies of Rudolf Loewenthal*. Hebrew Union College Press, in association with The Sino-Judaic Institute, 1988. 208 pp. \$20, members \$16.

*Sino-Judaica: Occasional Papers of the Sino-Judaic Institute*. Vol. 1 (1991). \$15 (\$9 to members) plus \$2 postage/handling.

Frank J. Shulman, comp. *Directory of Individuals Interested in the Jews and the Jewish Communities of East, Southeast and South Asia*. Carrollton, GA, 1993. \$10, \$15 foreign (incl. postage).

*Points East: A Publication of the Sino-Judaic Institute*. Published three times a year. Back issues, \$5 each, \$15/year, plus \$2 postage and handling.

Wang Yisha, *Zhongguo Youtai Chungiu* (Annals of the Chinese Jews), in Chinese. Hardcover, \$5, soft cover \$2, plus \$2 postage/handling.

Xu Xin et al., comp. Chinese version of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, \$30, plus \$10 postage and handling. Nanjing, forthcoming.

Michael Pollak, *Mandarins, Jews and Missionaries*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980. Paper, \$7.50, plus \$2 postage/handling.

*The Chinese Jews of Kaifeng*, slide set with cassette. 30 minutes. \$50 (members \$45).

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

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**POINTS EAST**

A publication of The Sino-Judaic Institute

VOL. 10, NO. 1

MARCH, 1996

**SHANGHAI: THE PERSISTENCE OF INTEREST**

[Editor's note: W. Michael Blumenthal, Secretary of the Treasury under President Carter and former refugee in Shanghai during WWII, was invited to participate in the May 1995 Salzburg Conference. Due to prior commitments he was unable to attend but sent in a paper extracts of which we are now publishing, with his permission.

The news of the Salzburg meetings and the fact that they are taking place at all, is in itself cause for reflection. It raised - in my mind, at least - a question which I have asked myself on numerous occasions in recent times. To wit, what is the explanation for the astonishing rise in interest in the Shanghai story? Why is it not slipping from our memories, particularly now that most of us are aging and many have already disappeared? What is it that seems to hold, or to have revived, the fascination of historians and others in what was, after all, a decidedly small side-show of the holocaust years, a relatively benign accident of history played out in the Far East, which allowed some 17 or 18 thousand Jewish refugees from Hitler's horrors to survive?

I say "astonishing," because the renaissance of interest in the Shanghai refugee community is really quite extraordinary. The first reunion of Shanghai survivors, to the best of my recollection, did not occur till 1979 in Oakland, California, and at that point only one or maybe two books on the subject had appeared. Since then, over the last ten years, there have been several more reunions, half a dozen books have been written or are in preparation, groups of ex-Shanghai refugees have been organized, television programs have been prepared, a museum has risen in Hongkew itself, and much more. So the question of why all this interest and attention at this time is, it seems to me appropriate . . .

For scholars - almost exclusively those who were not themselves firsthand participants in our Hongkew lives, but who are now the *ex post facto* observers and interpreters - it is perhaps, above all, an interesting and important story to research and retell because it is so odd and improbable a tale. Interesting, because of its peculiar setting; important because it involved a mixed and motley group of holocaust survivors . . . in an obscure corner of the world. In this context, it is also a relevant footnote to Jewish and holocaust history, a very small part of it, not a chapter but at most a page in the sad, awful book of horrors - the death and destruction of millions of Jews at mid-century. For those interested in religious history, there is, of course,

(continued on page 3)

**REPORT ON A VISIT TO CHINA**

by Albert E. Dien

I spent much of October and November, 1995, in China, during which time I had opportunities to gather information which may be of interest to members of the Sino-Judaic Institute.

KAIFENG Oct. 17-18

While I was in Kaifeng as leader of a tour group, I met with old friends Liu Wenqing, formerly manager of the Dongjing Hotel, and now general manager of the Kaifeng branch of the China International Travel Service, and Zhang Tabin, of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Kaifeng Municipal Government. They were joined by Liang Ping'an, Vice General Manager of the Kaifeng branch of the CITS. There was an elaborate lunch which included deep fried scorpions! An evening session included Zhang Xingwang, a young descendant of the Kaifeng Jews who is growing a full beard (at the suggestion of a rabbi, perhaps of Rabbi Tokayer?). Wang Yisha, the Kaifeng scholar, who was supposed to come, did not appear. I met him for a moment the next day when he appeared at the hotel just as we were to leave for the train station. The topic of the evening session was that the city government had approved the building of a facsimile of the synagogue on the original site, which meant that the present-day hospital would be moved to another location. All of this would involve raising some \$2,000,000. There was some urgency in this because Wang Yisha, the moving force in obtaining the permission, was elderly and might not live too much longer and, secondly, the city government could be depended upon to withdraw its permission at any time — this was a window of opportunity. My suggestion to the group was that it would be difficult to raise money for such a building if it had no connection with the community of Jewish descendants, that at the least, it might constitute a community center of some sort, carefully not serving any religious purpose. Their response was that this was impossible.

During this stay in Kaifeng our group visited the Kaifeng Museum. On entering the museum, I presented Shao Boqi, the present director, with a

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**From the editor:**

This issue marks the beginning of volume ten of Points East. That's ten years worth of material on Jewish connections with the "Far East". Who would have thought we would have had so much to say on the subject? And still we continue to find new topics about which to write.

Over the years, what began as an American Jewish interest has broadened with the involvement of interested individuals around the world. We have witnessed a flowering of interest in Judaica of all sorts among Chinese scholars, a growing sophistication in expression and a burgeoning of contacts. All in all it has been a wondrous thing to behold.

With our tenth volume, new directions are underway with Points East. At the recent Sino-Judaic Institute Board meeting, we agreed on the following:

1. That each issue would have a "table of contents" highlighting major articles or sections.

2. That each issue would request written material from readers by informing you of the deadline for the next issue.

3. That an index for all ten volumes be created and offered for sale. *and best of all,*

4. That Wendy Abraham will share the burden of editing this newsletter.

In the course of the coming year we hope that some of you will focus on retrospective pieces which chart developments in Sino-Judaic, Indo-Judaic, and Nippo-Judaic relationships as part of our tenth anniversary celebrations.

**Anson Laytner**

**[Send us your articles, letters, reviews, etc. The next deadline is May 31st, 1996.]**

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**SJI members interested in receiving a copy of the annual financial report should send a self-addressed envelope to:**  
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**"ISRAEL TODAY" PHOTO EXHIBITION IN SHANGHAI**

*by Deng Xinyu*

"Israel Today" photo exhibition was held from December 20-24, 1995 in Zhu Qizhan Art Gallery in Shanghai. It was the first photo exhibition about contemporary Israel in Shanghai and was jointly sponsored by the Israeli Consulate General at Shanghai and the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS). More than 200 distinguished guests including vice mayor of Shanghai joined in the opening ceremony. Mr. Moshe Ram, Israeli Consul General, Dr. Zhang Zhongli, President of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and Prof. Pan Guang, Dean of CJSS, made speeches on the significance of this artistic activity. Many academic researchers, professors, editors, journalists, reporters from TV and radio stations, photographers, artists, writers, students and diplomatic personnel from consulates visited the exhibition.

The exhibition contains 85 photos altogether, showing various scenes of Israel: her people, landscape, social life, customs and so on.

**IN THE FIELD****• TORAH SCROLLS OF THE CHINESE JEWS TO BE REPUBLISHED**

Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, will issue an enlarged and updated edition of Pollak's book, The Torah Scrolls of the Chinese Jews, which it published originally in 1975 and is now out of print. This new edition will, however, not appear as a printed book, but rather in digital form on the Internet, and will be available without charge to anyone who wants to download it.

Bridwell is also planning to photograph the entire Kaifeng Torah scroll it owns, and Michael Pollak is to write marginal notes pointing out and explaining the significance of many of the variant readings the Torah contains. (These variant readings consist entirely of misspellings and/or unconventional soferic stylistic arrangements of the text, but the wording is absolutely the same as that used in Torah scrolls throughout the world.)

No decision has yet been made as to whether Bridwell will add the digital facsimiles of the Torah skins to the revised edition of the book as an appendix or issue these facsimiles as a separate book, again over the Internet. Michael Pollak will keep us posted.

**• FROM SWEDEN TO KAIFENG**

Hakan Danielsson writes that he and "our man in Sweden", Theodor Katz, are planning to lead a trip to China in late October 1996 for Jews from Nordic countries. The itinerary includes Beijing, Kaifeng, Shanghai and Hong Kong. For more information, contact Hakan Danielsson, Hammarkroken 154, S-424 36 Angered, Sweden, fax (46) 31 30 42 47 or e-mail to haakan@algonet.se

**• A TASTE OF CHINESE KOSHER IN LONDON**

If you happen to be in London, England and the desire for a taste of Chinese Kosher hits you, be sure to check out Norman Han's Kaifeng Kosher Oriental Restaurant, 51 Church Road, Hendon, London NW4 4DU; tel: 0181 203 7888; fax: 0181 203 8263.

**• MEANWHILE IN LAS VEGAS**

Old China Hands are planning their 1996 Reunion (their fourth) for September 4-8, 1996 at the MGM Grand

Lydia Fruchs, who arrived earlier, stayed in Japan longer, working with the refugee committee to process the applications. While there she immersed herself in the culture, traveling and learning to live on sushi. It was an interlude she still remembers fondly.

But it was a short-lived idyll. Japan, too, was preparing for war and anxious to have the refugees leave.

In September 1941, under pressure from the Germans, the Japanese ordered the closing of the Polish Embassy there. The refugees who had been unable to get a visa were ordered to go to Shanghai, where most of them spent the remainder of the war.

Through connections at the embassy, Lydia Golston was able to get a visa to Canada. In October she, too, left for Canada. It was the last ship to leave Japan before the outbreak of war in the Pacific.

The ship arrived in Vancouver on Nov. 1, 1941, a month and six days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

**An obligation to help people**

Hiroki Sugihara never asked his father about the war. Once, during an interview, his father was asked why it was that he helped the Jews, and he simply said: The people needed help.

"He had a feeling that helping people was one of his obligations," Sugihara said. "He said we couldn't leave those people there, and after we left he felt that we could have saved more. He knew quite well what would happen to the Jews. He was using a lot of underground information from the Polish, and he knew what they were facing."

Sugihara is 59 now, and lives part of the year in San Francisco and the rest in Tokyo. Like his father, he settled into an importing career.

"I think the family is very proud now of what he did," Hiroki Sugihara said in a telephone interview recently. "I think it's the right thing, although it was very hard. I'm close to his age now, and I understand how hard it must have been. He had to think about the family, the future, his career. It must have been a big sacrifice. But I think he did the right thing."

Sugihara has now put his work on hold to focus on two traveling exhibits

about his father. The first exhibit opened in January at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and is currently in Seattle. A smaller exhibit has been shown in other cities. He has self-published a book about his father, and there is also the possibility of a documentary and a feature film.

"People didn't know too much about this story," he said. "In the way of the Japanese mind and spirit, you don't go out and brag about your family. You have to stay humble."

But intense interest has left it for Sugihara to tell his father's story. The curiosity has been fueled in part by "Schindler's List," the book and film about the man credited with saving the most number of Jews from the Holocaust. Sugihara, who is believed to have saved from 6,000 to 10,000 people, is second only to him.

Around the world, according to some estimates, the Sugihara survivors, their children and grandchildren are believed to number about 40,000. **Together in Vancouver**

It was in Vancouver, as part of the community of Polish Jews displaced by the war, that Lydia and Stefan Golston met, fell in love, and were married in December 1943.

After the war they gradually learned the fate of family members who were left behind. All of Stefan's family, except for a brother, perished. His teenage son, Karol, was forced to dig his own grave. His mother was shot by the Germans and her body left on the pavement. His younger brother was blown up in a building dynamited by the Nazis during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Lydia Golston said her parents were blackmailed and then betrayed to the Germans; her mother took poison and died. Her father was sent to Auschwitz, where she assumed he died.

After his arrival Stefan Golston was hired by Boeing, which then had operations in Canada, and in 1959 the couple moved to the Seattle area.

About a year ago, Lydia Golston stumbled on a late-night television segment about a Japanese man who had saved thousands of Jews during the war. Golston listened intently. The more she heard, the more the story began to intersect with places and periods of her own past.

The story, she soon realized, was their own. It was only then that she learned the name of her benefactor.

**ANOTHER VIEW ON "FLIGHT TO SHANGHAI"**

*by Pan Guang*

excerpted from Window,  
 11 Aug. 1995

A conference — called Flight to Shanghai — was held last May in Salzburg during the commemoration of the end of the war in Europe. Victory over Japan took place in August 1945, and is not officially marked in Asia until this month.

It was hard not to notice that in Europe, except at the conference, there was little mention of China's sufferings in the war. Half a century has gone by, and many of the younger generation in Europe have no idea China was one of the victorious allies.

This made our meeting all the more significant. From 1933 to 1941, Shanghai accommodated many Jewish refugees, most of them from Germany, Austria and elsewhere in central Europe. "Oskar Schindler saved 1,000 Jews. Shanghai saved 30,000," noted Wilhelm Mann, now a Berliner, who came to Shanghai in 1939.

The conference was unquestionably an historical phenomenon. Organizers of the meeting, originally planned for 50 people, received about 200 applications. There were 14 reporters from seven countries: Austria, the U.S., Israel, China, Germany, France and Britain. I was the only Chinese present, and presented my report, Central European Jewish Communities in Wartorn Shanghai.

Unlike the other VE Day commemoration activities, which at best only lightly touched upon resistance in the war's eastern theatre, our meeting's focus was on the humanitarian and moral role played by the Chinese people in accepting displaced European Jews.

Each speaker noted that as most European states (including Switzerland) refused to grant entry to Jewish refugees, Shanghai became one of their main destinations. This was partly because Shanghai was the only large city in the world which did not require a visa. But it was also because China had never been an antisemitic society, as shown by the bond between the Chinese

Sugihara defied his government's orders and began issuing the visas on July 31, 1940. He also arranged with the Dutch Consulate to give travelers a stated destination, in this case the Dutch Curacao, and with the Russian Consulate, to give the refugees permission to travel through the U.S.S.R.

On Aug. 2 Sugihara was told by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to close the Kaunas office and leave Lithuania. But for about another month he continued to issue the visas, signing them himself and writing as many as 300 visas a day — usually more than a month's work for a consul. His wife helped him register the visas, and at the end of the day she massaged his hands.

When some of the visa seekers panicked and climbed the fence to get into the compound, he calmed them down and promised that as long as there was a single person left, he wouldn't abandon them.

Sugihara closed the consulate on Aug. 28 and then moved to the Hotel Metropolis. When he ran out of official forms, he used other papers in the hope that the makeshift forms wouldn't be challenged. According to some reports, even to his last moments in Kaunas, as his family prepared to leave on a train bound for Berlin on Sept. 1, Sugihara continued to issue the visas, throwing them out of the train.

#### **"A lot of anxiety"**

Lydia Golston, now 76, still remembers the long lines, which stretched around the block, and the wait to get through the doors of the consulate.

"It was a lot of anxiety," she said. "We did not know what would happen if we didn't get them. This was a ray of hope, and it was the only way to get out. No other countries would give us a visa."

Lydia Golston doesn't know if she ever met Sugihara, and she's not sure if it was he who actually processed her paperwork.

Stefan Golston was perhaps among the last to receive a visa. In his written account of his war years, he recalled the threat of danger faced by those who sought the visas.

"Nobody could leave the U.S.S.R. without an exit permit, and everybody knew that applying for an exit permit entailed risk of persecution," he wrote, "On top of that, rumors circulated that the secret police was taking pictures of anybody entering the Japanese Consulate."

Golston learned of a man traveling from Vilnius to Kaunas to obtain visas for others and hired him to have the visa stamped in his passport. When the man returned to Vilnius, he told Golston that the consulate had already permanently closed, but that he had gone to the house of the consulate secretary and gotten the stamp.

The decision to leave Lithuania was a difficult one for other reasons. In Vilnius, Golston had rebuilt a life, established a career and was closer to his family in Warsaw.

Also, the Russian government had offered citizenship to all foreigners. Those who declined would be declared enemies of the people.

"If my request for an exit permit was rejected, I would miss the deadline for citizenship and would become an outcast, probably landing in Siberia," Golston recalled in his memoirs.

In the end he chose to leave, quickly selling his possessions. In March, Stefan left Lithuania. Three months later, Hitler took Vilnius.

To buy the train ticket across Siberia, Fruchs sold a diamond ring that had belonged to her great-grandmother. But Golston, who didn't have the money, took a more perilous route out of the Soviet Union, where all travel was closely monitored by the government. Eventually he reached Vladivostok, the exit point for those bound for Japan.

"All I wanted was to get out. Out in the free world," he said. "Japan was where fate would be decided. The visa was a formality, but those formalities can finish your life."

#### **A reassignment**

After leaving Kaunas, Sugihara and his family went on to Prague, and in March 1941 he became consul general in Konigsberg (now Kaliningrad). The following year he was reassigned to Bucharest, Romania.

In July 1945, he and his family were held in a Russian prisoner-of-

war camp after Germany and Japan had lost the war.

When he finally returned to Japan, Sugihara was fired by the Foreign Ministry. The family maintains that Sugihara later learned that he was dismissed because of his insubordination in Lithuania. The Japanese government said that he was let go as part of a larger staff reduction, although his son, Hiroki, said the government later issued an oblique apology after his death.

For the next decade Sugihara supported his family with teaching and translating jobs before settling into a career with a Japanese importing company with business in Russia.

After the war there was an effort among those he helped, the Sugihara survivors, to locate him. But the Foreign Ministry was never very helpful, and Sugihara was often out of the country on business, said his son.

But one of the survivors later became an Israeli diplomat, and when he was stationed in Japan he sought out and eventually found Sugihara. In 1969 Sugihara received a medal from the Israeli government, which also gave his youngest son a scholarship to study in Israel.

In 1984, the Israel Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority awarded Sugihara the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" in recognition of his actions during the war. A park in Israel was named after him. He was too frail then to attend the ceremonies, and his wife came instead. He died in Japan on July 31, 1986.

#### **An uncertain future**

Once in Japan, the Jewish refugees desperately sought to gain admittance to other countries. The tension of travel had momentarily eased and the Germans were further away, but their future remained clouded.

Stefan Golston remembers arriving in Japan at cherry blossom time and being enchanted by the beauty of the country. Like most of the refugees, he eventually made his way to Kobe, where he received assistance from the refugee committee.

Eventually he was among the engineers who received a visa from Canada, and in May he boarded a ship in Yokohama and set sail for Vancouver.

• **Hotel.** Many interesting events and sessions are planned, including meetings by former city, school and camp. For more information, contact the Reunion Office at 5750 Briarcliff Road, Los Angeles, CA 90068; tel: (213) 460-4336; fax: (213) 460-4685.

#### • **SEARCHING FOR PEOPLE**

Information is sought about the following people who lived in Shanghai: 1) Karl Rosenberg, born 9-1904. From Vienna. Lived in Shanghai from late 1930's until his death in 1943. He may have worked as an architect. 1940 address was 958 Bubbling Well Road. Married Syma in 1940.

Hanns and Emmy Rosenberg. Hanns was Karl's older brother. Worked as an architect and did not leave Shanghai until 1950.

Anyone with information should contact: Robert Lowy, 6305 Stardust, El Paso, TX 79912.

2) Relatives of Maximilian or Marion Herbst, late of Vienna, then of Shanghai, please contact: Ms. Tess Johnston, PSC 461, Box 200 (Shanghai) FPO AP 96521-0002

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#### **FROM OUR READERS:**

December 27, 1995

To the Editor,

... about your remarks on "the power of words to incite to murder". When issues as gut-wrenching as war and peace and the survival of the state of Israel are at stake, it is to be expected — and accepted — that political positions will be argued with vehemence, with heat, with passion. A vibrant democracy like Israel has never been afraid of verbal violence. What is inadmissible in a democracy, — and unbearably painful when perpetrated by Jews against Jews — is assassination. Like you, I was pained and shocked at the news of the assassination of Izhak Rabin, but I strongly object to the extension of guilt by association, implicit in your words, to those who criticize the so-called "peace process". More than half of the Israelis, as well as numerous loyal Jews in the Galuth, voice opposition to, or at least reservations about a policy so evocative of Neville Chamberlain's "peace in our times" and pushed with such reckless unconcern for their feelings.

The Sino-Judaic Institute is an academic society, not a political organization: its function is to bring together scholars whose interests straddle Sinology and Judaism. In my opinion you have abused your editorial privilege by introducing a politically divisive issue that is uncalled for in this publication.

Rene Goldman

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## **SHANGHAI: THE PERSISTENCE OF INTEREST**

(continued from page 1)

the added element of the miraculous survival of an entire Yeshiva and their odyssey from Lithuania via Kobe to the Shanghai ghetto and eventually to the United States.

Primarily, I suspect, these writers and historians and their output of books will make a contribution as record keepers and storytellers, and that in itself is certainly a good thing. But it is unlikely that these studies will provide much insight, in a deeper sense, of what transpired. For them, and the reading public, it is and should be, primarily a good tale story to tell.

The recent - and rising - interest on the part of our Chinese friends, both scholars and officials in Shanghai and especially in Hongkew, is also surprising, though certainly gratifying. I must admit that I, for one, would not have expected it - the little museum on ex-Ward Road with all its memorabilia, the scholarly interest by Professor Pan Guang and his associates, not to speak of the warmth and generous hospitality shown to so many of those of us who have made the return pilgrimage to "that place."

I have heard it said that one reason for their interest in us is pride - pride that it was the Chinese people who, under the most trying circumstances, were our "hosts," who gave us a place of refuge when no one else in the world would. If that is the motivation, there is indeed some justification for it. Times were tough for the Chinese people also; they too were suffering a lot. Some of us made good friends from among them and valued their kindness across the gulf of two alien cultures, thrown together, as we were, by virtue of an accident of history. Many of us are grateful for their friendship and value our exposure to their rich culture, their tolerance to our presence in the midst of a difficult time.

Yet, in all honesty, this factor - in the interest of historical and factual accuracy - should not be overstressed out of some spirit of laudable nostalgic goodwill. The fact is that our

presence in their midst, the permission for us to be there, was not due to any positive act. No Chinese government made a decision to let us in, no one voted to open Shanghai's doors to us. Our presence was simply due to the fact that in the Shanghai of 1938-40, no one effectively was in charge - or at least not enough in charge until later in 1940 - when most of us were already there and when the doors finally closed.

I hasten to add that I in no way mean to criticize our Chinese friends, nor is my observation to be construed as a lack of gratitude for tolerating our little place of refuge in their midst. We all know what the circumstances were at the time - for them and for us. Shanghai and a good part of China was not entirely theirs, they too were an occupied people in the hands of outside forces. And, of course, that we were tolerated by them and in individual instances even made to feel welcome is also undeniably true, worthy of note and deserving of our gratitude.

I suspect, however, that the current high level of interest in China regarding the Jews of Hongkew has yet other reasons - and perfectly understandable ones. For one thing, the Jewish ghetto in Hongkew is also a poignant illustration of the madness that prevailed in their own country under the Japanese occupation. The disorders of war and civil strife in the period 1937-48 brings home to their young people the contrast in conditions between then and now that they are once again sovereign in their own land. Furthermore, it is also, perhaps, a way of expressing their emotional kinship to oppression - ours and theirs together all at the same time. Finally, for the city administrators, it serves as a means of recording an interesting chapter in Shanghai's history itself. We were foreigners in their midst, but we did also contribute something to the life and development of their city. Our doctors, engineers, merchants, musicians and many others interacted with them in many ways, and positively contributed to Shanghai life during a trying period.

At this point, it is perhaps worth

noting that though the scope and extent of interest in the Shanghai story in recent years has been surprising, it is in another sense equally surprising that such interest has not, by any means, been universal. Specifically, to the best of my knowledge, it has not been extended to any official interest or concern or support, moral or otherwise, from the three governments whose countries played a special and direct role in the fact that the story exists at all.

As far as I know, Japanese interest appears to be almost totally non-existent and there has been little or no scholarly activity or official notice of it at all in Japan. Certainly rich and revealing material should be available in Japanese archives and from a Japanese perspective, and actually, not all of it is likely to reflect poorly on Japan. The fact is, that the Japanese government in an official sense has ignored this sideshow of their occupation of Shanghai and perhaps not surprisingly so, since unlike the Germans, the Japanese have been generally quite reluctant to confront most elements of their unhappy wartime history. Japan's role in the late war has not been a favorite subject of discussion or reflection in their own country, often to the critical regret of outside observers. Moreover, Japanese responsibility for the so-called "Designated Area" and the capricious and sometimes cruel administration of it by its officials is hardly a glorious story to retell. Yet it is once again, only a small footnote to the general story of the war years from 1937 to 1945.

Still, the events leading up to their decision to confine the stateless European refugees in a ghetto-like area in Shanghai should require some reflection by the Japanese. In particular, it would be important if they were to open up their archives so that scholars such as those gathered in Salzburg might have access to these data and complete the record of what happened. If that were done, it might well develop that the history of Japanese involvement in this matter is not totally devoid of positive elements. After all, even within the otherwise illegal

context of their actions, some amongst the Japanese are reputed to have had grave doubts as to the wisdom of it all and to have been engaged in a painful debate over the pros and cons - albeit a debate of which we, as refugees, were not aware. Individual Japanese, both public and private, did show considerable courage in resisting the worst injustices and when all is said and done, so did official Japanese policy by not acceding to the murderous proposals on how to deal with us, as they appear to have been put forward by Nazi emissaries at a certain point during the war.

This lack of Japanese interest and recognition of the events in Hongkew is a pity. It is a missed opportunity, one - I hasten to add - not too late to remedy . . .

What is left then, is to reflect on the growing interest about the Hongkew Jews from the perspective of those of us who were there, the survivors who are still alive, who now think back on the years spent in China under trying special conditions. Our interest is, of course, the easiest to understand. It is a part of our history and our destiny. We owe our survival to it. For those of us who are still alive, it is a period which will forever remain deeply etched in our minds. Though perhaps in the early years after our departure from Shanghai some of us tried to forget it, at this point most find it irresistible to cast their minds back to that period, to review it and to try to derive some meaning from what we experienced there. We are, in a way, better able to do so with the passage of the years and with the additional knowledge - if not wisdom - that has come from living our lives in different places under different circumstances.

Shanghai was a tough place for most of us. Many of us, indeed virtually all of us, were there unwillingly. We were grateful to be alive but we wanted, above all, to get away - to get away to another place - to go somewhere where we could begin a new life and turn our backs on everything that had happened in Germany and in the course of our headlong flight.

We can now say, with the perspective of time, that Shanghai and Hongkew had its positive elements

along with the hardships; its benefits alongside the sacrifices, worries and human costs. It taught us many things; not only the struggles of our parents, the meaning of family, community and shared experience, but also the frailty of human relationships. We learned there how people act under pressure, how adversity can bring out the worst and the best in human beings. For some of us, it gave insight into who we were as people and also as Jews. For many, it crystallized our thinking, our sense of self, our self-reliance, the fleeting nature of fame and fortune, and it focused our minds on the essential equality of human beings, and taught us - or should have - to be tolerant of different cultures and different races.

We tell our children this story of Hongkew, over and over again. For us, Shanghai was a searing experience which shaped us and gave our subsequent lives particular meaning. That, in all its dimensions, is a most human and important story - and it still needs to be fully told. The time is right for that to be done.

## REPORT ON A VISIT TO CHINA

(continued from page 1)

copy of the Memorial Book which is kept in the Hebrew Union College Library in Cincinnati, Li Kexiu, a scholar and former director of the museum was also in attendance. Since the theft a year ago of the collection of Sung ceramics, the pride of the museum, and its eventual recovery, the museum has delayed reinstalling that collection until better security measure are available. The result is that the first three stories of the museum resemble more a warehouse, including much furniture from some furniture factory, I suppose; it all makes for a dreary experience. The fourth floor room, where the stelae of the synagogue are kept, was bare as usual. Members of my tour group measured the room, a rather large one with many windows and outside balconies, to facilitate future installation of materials. The museum officials are quite receptive to the idea of receiving materials to display in that fourth floor gallery. SHANGHAI Oct. 25-Nov. 10

I first was invited to Prof. Pan Guang's Center for Jewish Studies, at the Shanghai branch of the Institute of Social Sciences, where Evelyn Pike-Rubin, a Shanghai survivor, gave a report on her book about growing up in Shanghai. This gave me an opportunity to meet again Profs. Gong Fanzheng and Xu Buzeng, as well as Joan Goodman

## DEFIANCE & DELIVERANCE

by Ferdinand M. deLeon  
reprinted from The Seattle Times  
22 Oct. 1995

In war, there are a million ways to die.

More than half a century ago, Lydia Fruchs and her future husband, Stefan Golston, lost nearly all their family members in the Second World War, some in the Warsaw Ghetto, others in concentration camps.

The Golstons, both Polish Jews, were among the fortunate few. Through good timing and luck, they managed to avoid being at the wrong place at the wrong time, and even more difficult, to be at the right place at the right time.

Their separate escapes from Poland after it was carved up by the Germans and the Russians were peril-filled odysseys.

But at a crucial moment in their escape they got the luckiest break of all from a man they never met — and, until recently, never knew existed.

That man, Chiune Sugihara, was the Japanese consul in Lithuania early in the war. Along with his wife, Yukiko, he is now being credited with having rescued thousands of Jews during the war.

The Golstons, who eventually settled in Medina (near Seattle), were among them.

### A remarkable story

How a consul for Imperial Japan came to save more than 6,000 Jews, defying his government and risking his family's safety, is a remarkable story that has only recently come to light.

Chiune "Sempo" Sugihara was born on the first day of this century to a samurai family. Against his father's wishes, Sugihara studied to be a linguist, specializing in Russian.

He entered the Foreign Ministry and was sent to the Japanese Language Institute in Harbin, China, where he soon became the ministry's best Russian speaker and a rising star in the diplomatic ranks.

In the early 1930s, he served in Japanese-controlled Manchuria, but

resigned his post over the government's policy there and the cruel treatment of the Chinese. He returned to Japan and married Yukiko.

He re-entered government service and served as a Russian interpreter in 1936. The following year he was posted to the diplomatic office in Helsinki, Finland.

In July 1939, Sugihara was sent to Kaunas, Lithuania, as consul general. But his primary mission was to gather intelligence for Japan on Germany and Russian activities in the region, and the increasing threat of war.

It was in Kaunas that Sugihara, for about a month, was to play a crucial role in the fate of thousands of Polish Jews trapped in Lithuania.

### War intrudes

War entered the Golstons' lives on Sept. 1, 1939, the day that Germany attacked Poland. At the time, Stefan Golston was a divorced engineer living in Warsaw. Lydia Fruchs, in another part of Poland, was a 20-year-old economics student, eager to return to her studies in France. Fruchs lived in the southeastern part of what was then Poland, in Lwow, a town now in Ukraine.

Although the Poles had expected war, the swiftness of Germany's advance caught them by surprise, and by the sixth day the Germans had virtually surrounded Warsaw. All able-bodied men were ordered to join regrouping Polish forces, and on Sept. 6 Golston left the city.

Most of his family, including his mother, son, his former wife, two aunts, and a younger brother remained, a decision that later haunted Golston.

"I am old enough that I remember the First World War," said Golston, now 91. "In 1917, when the Germans took Warsaw from the Russians, the civilians weren't killed and the population didn't suffer. I was joining the forces; I couldn't take my child with me and at that time we thought he was safe with his mother."

Along with another brother and a friend, Golston walked east but found the Polish army in disarray and fleeing the Russians, who were invading Poland from the east. Golston decided to go to Lwow, which they reached in mid-October, and from there he hoped to go to Lithuania, a free country, and

eventually bring his family out of Poland.

Lydia Fruchs, the only daughter of an attorney, was home on vacation when the war arrived in Lwow. After the Russian takeover of the city, life settled into some semblance of normalcy.

But Lydia was also eager to get out and return to France and join a boyfriend. She, too, headed for Lithuania, and in December 1939, she sneaked across the border. Her father and mother chose to stay behind.

In Lithuania, both of them settled into lives as refugees in Vilnius. Fruchs worked as a secretary for a Lithuanian attorney; Golston worked as an engineer in a technical trade school in Vilnius.

Both circulated in the refugee communities, and through the grapevine they began to hear rumors of exit visas.

### Lithuania invaded

On June 15, 1940, the Soviets invaded Lithuania, and Polish Jews could leave that country through the Soviet Union if they could get exit visas. But one month later the Soviets ordered foreign embassies to leave Kaunas.

Sugihara requested an extension and the Soviets granted one. He was the only foreign consul left except for a Dutch representative acting as a consul. On July 27, 1940, Jewish refugees from Poland Germany began appearing at the consulate requesting Japanese visas.

The next day Sugihara asked the Japanese government for permission to issue 20-day transit visas. He repeated his request for permission, and his request was denied.

At the same time, rumors that the precious visas might be available from the Japanese Consulate had spread quickly in the Jewish refugee community, and soon long lines were forming each morning.

"I was so moved by this scene because of my own children and my infant son," Sugihara's wife, Yukiko, would later say, "I was so moved that I was unable to nurse my youngest son."

After discussing the situation with his wife and other family members,

**BOOK NOOK** (continued)

escape capture by the Nazis.

Discover how this heroic, charismatic, and talented man continually chose to make decisions in his life by listening to his higher level consciousness and recognizing his love for his fellow man, rather than to allow himself to be swayed by other individuals and outside forces.

Available through: Edu-Comm. Plus, 236 West Portal Avenue #249, San Francisco, CA 94127

2) Also available:

Visas For Life: The Remarkable Story of Chiune & Yukiko Sugihara and the Rescues of Thousands of Jews. \$18 (plus 43 shipping & handling) 64 pages and 50 photos from the photographic exhibit by the Holocaust Oral History Project.

Available through: Holocaust Oral History Project, P.O. Box 77603, San Francisco, CA 94107

**FOR THE CHILDREN**

reprinted from *Hadassah Magazine*, Dec. 1995, by Gloria Goldreich

- **MYSTERY OF THE KAIFENG SCROLL.** by Harriet K. Feder. Lerner Publications, 142 pp. \$17.50

In the tradition of Nancy Drew, Vivi Hartman journeys to Turkey to visit her archeologist mother and is plunged into a mystery that involves an ancient Torah scroll, a tentative friendship with Shari, an Arab girl, and a confrontation with Palestinian terrorism. It is up to Vivi to save her mother's life and in the process to gain an understanding of the peace process.

The author acknowledges a debt to the Palestinian Sari Nusseibah and to writer Mark Heller, thus politicizing a novel for young adults that is already overly didactic.

- **AND TWELVE CHINESE ACROBATS.** by Jane Yolen. Illustrated by Jean Gralley. Philomel. 64 pp. \$15.95.

Lou is so mischievous his pranks forced his father to send him from his Ukrainian shtetl to a military school—which promptly expels him. Lou vanishes, his mother weeps, his brothers and sisters feel betrayed. But on a happy Shabbat afternoon Lou reappears as the manager of a troupe of 12 Chinese acrobats. Humor and ease are restored, the acrobats stay the winter, go to synagogue and keep the Sabbath, and the children learn from their mother that "Where there's love, there's room." Jean Gralley's fanciful black-and-white drawings re-create shtetl life, replete with Hasidim turning cartwheels and a smiling acrobat trying on a wide-brimmed shtreimel.

and her cameraman, Paul Rosdy, an Austrian, who are doing a film on the Shanghai refugees, Jin Yingzhong, Secretary-general of the Shanghai Judaic Studies Association, and others. Mrs. Pike-Rubin gave a short talk, followed by reports by Ms. Goodman and myself. We also saw a classroom near the Association's office where a Hebrew class in two sections meets every week, taught by someone from the Israeli consulate. The desk in that room had small flags of China and Israel.

Mrs. Pike-Rubin was interested in tracing the grave of her father who had died in Shanghai, which led to a discussion of the Jewish cemeteries. This is of special interest to us at the Sino-Judaic Institute because of the enquiries we receive for help in locating graves from people whose parents or other relatives died in Shanghai. There had been four Jewish cemeteries in all. One cemetery, on what was Columbia Road, at the present intersection of Fanyu Road and Hongqiao Road, is now the site of the Shanghai Precision Machines Repair Workshop. I visited this site and was fortunate in meeting a young man whose father had been a gravestone maker in the past, so he had grown up there and was quite familiar with the area. He showed me the former site of a large cemetery for foreigners down Hongqiao Road, across Fanyu Road from the Jewish cemetery, which is now a wilderness of trees, undergrowth, and piles of earth which have been dumped there. The site is slated for development. Opposite it across Hongqiao Road is a warren of small houses, apparently over the graves of a Chinese cemetery. I saw two gravestones set among other stones in a pathway, one a Chinese, the other of a foreigner who was a Christian, judging from the appearance of a cross, but the details could not be made out. When I asked at the machine repair shop (where the Jewish cemetery had been) if there were any gravestones to be seen, the reply was that there were not. Obviously, there would be no interest in admitting there were, out of fear that the land might be restored to its former owners and the shop forced to move. Property of other religions has been returned, and so this apprehension has some basis.

The bodies in the other three cemeteries, comprising 3000 to 4000 graves, had been moved in 1958 to a new cemetery on the outskirts of Shanghai to free up land for future development. A map had been made to identify each individual grave in its new location. One copy had been deposited in the Shanghai Municipal Archives and another given to the Council of Jewish Affairs in Shanghai, but neither can now be found. During the Cultural Revolution, the new cemetery had been destroyed and the grave stones removed. The area is now a Moslem cemetery. The address, as given to me by Prof. Xu, is the Ji'an cemetery, Weijiajue, out along the Qingpu Highway, near the Hongqiao Airport. My visit to the Ji'an cemetery in the outskirts of Shanghai was likewise not very fruitful. It is a long ride, and there is a gate and a building at the front, with signs identifying it as a Moslem cemetery. I hesitated to enter as there were a number of Moslems there, and stating my purpose might have raised some antagonism. I went to a neighboring office which manages the cemeteries of the area, where I was told that the Jewish cemetery had been destroyed in the Cultural Revolution and no trace remained.

Mr. Jin Yingzhong, who at the meeting at Prof. Pan's Institute seemed to be the most familiar with the matter, made a suggestion to me that if 500 descendants each contributed \$2,000, that the \$1,000,000 thus raised could be used to restore the cemetery. If only 200 such descendants could be located, their contribution would be raised to \$5,000. After returning from my failed mission, I called Mr. Jin to say that if I were to publicize his proposal I would need to have seen the site to be able to describe it to interested persons, and I asked if he would accompany me there to fill out in more detail what he planned. However, he had other appointments, so the matter of the cemetery remains unclarified.

I saw Prof. Pan two more times, once when he invited Ms. Goodman, her cameraman, and me to dinner at an elegant restaurant in the Old City, of authentic Shanghai cuisine. Another evening I visited him at his home

and met his charming wife and child. He was most generous with time, information and access to his library. He had many books about the Shanghai Jewish community, some of which I had never seen before. These include:

Israel Kipen, A Life to Live  
George Reinisch, Shanghai Haven

Francoise Kreisler, L'action culturelle allemande en Chine (Maison des sciences de l'homme, Paris, 1989)

Zorach Warhaftig, Refugee and Survivor: Rescue Efforts during the Holocaust (Jerusalem, 1988 ISBN 965-308-005-9)

Judith Ben-Eliezer Steinmatzky, Shanghai Lost. Jerusalem Regained (1985)

Through Prof. Pan I also learned that the Consul of the Israeli Consulate in Shanghai is Avi Nir, and the address is 7th floor, New Town Mansion, 55 Loushanguan Road, Shanghai 200335, tel. 2098008, FAX 2098010.

I also enjoyed the hospitality of Tess Johnston, Prof. Xu Buzeng and Prof. Yao Yi'en, the latter the translator of stories by Sholem Aleichem. Prof. Xu gave me reprints of many of his articles on various aspects of Jewish life in Shanghai. Prof. Yao is hoping to be able to attend the 80th anniversary observance of Sholem Aleichem's death in New York.

I visited the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue, now a museum, a number of times, and met the curator, Wang Faliang, an elderly retiree, a long time resident of the Hongkew (Hongkou) area who knows a great deal about the former Jewish community there during the war years. He was generous with his time and took me for a tour of the area, including the nearby park where the stone monument and trilingual plaque marking the Jewish community was installed during the reunion meeting last year. The museum consists of the third floor of the former synagogue building, the first floor being partly occupied by a bookstore featuring technical and scientific books, and the second and part of the third by offices of the Bureau of Civilian Defense. A Ms. Zhu Hui of

## THE '96 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF JUDAIC STUDIES TO BE HELD BETWEEN OCTOBER 13-16, 1996, NANJING, CHINA

To exchange views and achievements of scholars in the field of Judaic studies, establish a close tie among those scholars and related institutions, and promote the study of Jewish subjects in China in particular, the Center for Judaic Studies at Nanjing University, Tel Aviv University, and Hebrew Union College are pleased to announce jointly the '96 International Conference of Judaic Studies will be held in Nanjing, China, between October 13 to 16, 1996, cosponsored by the above mentioned institutions.

The overall theme of the conference is Jews in the World, around which the following four topics are selected as its focus:

1. Jewish Achievements throughout History;
2. Judaism and Its Meaning to Non-Jews;
3. Jewish Thought and World civilization; and
4. Judaic Studies as a College Course.

The application form and abstract of the paper (no more than 350 words) should be submitted no later than April 1, 1996. The program committee will then send each applicant a conference program and visa invitation no later than June 1, 1996.

There are some optional activities both before and after the conference available. A tour to and discussion about the formal Shanghai Jewish communities will be conducted between October 11-13. A visit to Kaifeng City, where Chinese Jews used to live, will be organized and much more.

Though the strict kosher meal service is not available, vegetarian food (no egg and no dairy with brand new china, utensils, and pots) will be available, by prepaid reservation, throughout the conference.

The organizers of the conference cordially invite all scholars of Judaica in the world to participate in the conference. Those who are interested should contact Dr. Beverly Friend by e-mail (Friend@oakton.edu) or Prof. Liwei Zhang, School of Foreign studies, Nanjing University, Nanjing 210093 China for further information.

that bureau is somehow involved in looking after the museum. The two rooms of the museum are in good condition, light and airy, but they are rather empty, the contents consisting of a large table and chairs, a bookcase with a few books and many pictures on the walls. Mr. Wang deplors the paucity of his collection and I promised that the Institute will seek to contribute to the display. I will probably be returning to Shanghai in May, and could bring such materials to Mr. Wang at that time.

HONG KONG Nov. 18-24

Unfortunately, Dennis Leventhal was out of town during this time, but I did meet Rabbi Howard Kosovske who was most informative. There are four congregations in Hong Kong: a) Reform, headed by Rabbi Kosovske, which meets on Fridays, 6:30, services at 7:00, followed by dinner, in the auditorium of the Jewish Community Center, One Robinson Place, 70 Robinson Road; b) Orthodox, headed by Rabbi Shmuel Lopin, which meets at the Furama Hotel, Mondays to Fridays, 7:15, Saturdays at 7:00 and 8:00 Sundays; and d) Sephardic, on Connought Road. Further details can be learned at the Jewish Community Center, tel. 2801-5440. The Community Center is said to consist of five stories, and includes two restaurants, a library, a retail store with kosher foods, classrooms, administrative offices and a swimming pool. Dennis Leventhal has informed me that the Center is supplying the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong with dedicated library space along with financing for a professional librarian, computer, library software, etc. However, I found the Center not easily accessible because of security considerations; to see the synagogue, built in 1901-2, I had to surrender my passport and be accompanied by a security person. The rest of the Center was not seen. We cannot recommend an unannounced visit to travellers, despite the sign on the synagogue, "Welcome to all congregants especially overseas visitors. We invite you to

share our Shabbat Kiddush Fellowship." It may be that visits at scheduled worship times are more welcomed; otherwise, one might be well advised to contact one of the rabbis first.

Rabbi Kosovske was unhappy to hear of my difficulties and said that the problem probably stemmed from an inexperienced staff at the newly opened center. I contacted Rabbi Kosovske by phone, 2524-876 (home: 2517-7967), and sat in on a session of a discussion of the week's Parashat Hashavua which he conducts in the conference room of a congregant's business establishment on Duddell Road. He is quite happy with being in Hong Kong and excited by what it has to offer. He may be reached by mail at United Jewish Congregation, GPO 5259, Hong Kong.

## PEITAHO

by Esther Robbins Hutton

"Peitaho," a name that even today brings a tingle of excitement. It seems like the smell of the sea wafts over me again.

Our family left Tientsin during the steaming summer when unmerciful heat beat down on the sidewalks of the city. We left for our vacation home for three months, along with the entire household and many of our household goods. Our relatives, servants and friends all loved Peitaho, an old seaside resort. It must have been quite a sight to see us board the train, beaming with anticipation and excitement. Besides the usual clothes, we had every conceivable kind of odds and ends that were deemed necessary for our existence. Of course, there were baskets filled with food to sustain us on the trip. Grandmother Fania had spent many hours preparing delicacies for our survival. There were loaves of bread, jellied salads, chopped liver, smoked tongue, fried chicken, pastries, and fruit of all kinds. Juices and drinks were plentiful as well as all the other goodies that we liked. Grandmother would dispense the food from a corner of the train, sitting on a bench and immediately surrounded by us.

It was a two-day train trip to the coast. Along the way, we paralleled the Yellow River, farms, fields, and countless small villages. These were desolate and grimy. The children that we saw from the windows of our train wore ragged clothing and were dirty.

Once we passed the villages, the fields spread endlessly in front of us. Every bit of land, including hills, was terraced. Land was always in short supply and used heavily. People were working the fields everywhere. Many of the workers were women and children, bending as they planted rice grains in water-bogged paddies. Their faces were shielded by the conical hats they wore, but their exposed skin glistened in the sun. They worked from dawn to dusk, stopping occasionally to drink from the water jugs cached nearby. The shacks they lived in were shabby and dilapidated. Their scrawny cattle were tied to stakes. There were men and women staggering under large loads of grass and branches. This was fuel and carefully conserved.

Along the train tracks were a series of small mounds, sometimes decorated with flowers and greens. These were the graves of the dead who were buried in a crouching position in order to conserve precious land for the living.

As the train wound its way through the countryside, we played string and pencil games. If we were bored, we picked on each other and fought. "Enough fighting," Mother would say, "there is a good book - why don't you read it?" When we finally lay down to sleep in the bunks, the clinkety clack, clinkety clack of the rail lulled us to sleep. On and on went the train.

My cousin Alla was with us. She was our favorite cousin and lived with us for long periods of time. She was nine months younger than I and nine months older than Abe. We delighted in creating excitement together and were very mischievous.

"Let's walk down the train cars and see how many women are wearing red," I suggested to the two of them.

"Yes, let's do that," repeated Alla. The three of us walked down the aisles of several train cars and made little lists: how many women there

## THE ALBUM "THE JEWS IN SHANGHAI" published by Shanghai Pictorial House

This beautifully designed and bound album is sure to reveal before you sentiments unforgettable and days to remember.

This album collected over two hundred invaluable pictures engraved with the memory of the past. Many of these have been highly treasured by our Jewish friends. This album will unfold before you the history of development and life of Sephardic Jews and Russian Jews in Shanghai; the unforgettable days when the European Jewish refugees stayed in Shanghai; the sincere friendship built up between the Jewish people and the Shanghai Chinese people.

To Jewish friends who had once lived in Shanghai, to their descendants eager to know the days which their ancestors highly treasured, and to the Chinese and foreign friends who wish to be informed of the eventful days in their span of life in the long process of history, this is a rare album rich in pictures and materials.

Professor Pan Guang, Dean of Centre of Jewish Studies, Shanghai, is the editor-in-chief of this album published by Shanghai Pictorial House in November 1995. The cost is US\$ 30, plus postage US\$10 by seairmail, registered, or US\$ 20 by airmail, registered. Only US dollars accepted. Collective purchase in large number by a group of customers is encouraged. Please send order and bank draft or personal check to Pan Guang, Center of Jewish Studies, Shanghai, 622-7 Huai Hai Road (M) Suite 352 Shanghai 200020, China.

## GOD AND COUNTRY - WESTERN RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE IN OLD CHINA by Tess Johnston and Deke Erh

The third volume of Old China Hand Press architectural series, God and Country—Western Religious Architecture in Old China, has been published. It not only has gorgeous contemporary photos of China's churches and synagogues but also old black and

## BOOK NOOK

white pictures of some of these churches and church-related hospitals and educational institutions.

Interspersed with the photographs are first-person narratives by those closely connected with these buildings. Tess Johnston's archives also yielded listings of all of the Protestant and Catholic missions and missionaries active in China in 1934, which are incorporated at the back of the book. Over the years the editors also has managed to unearth the remains of a few old foreigners' cemeteries, whose pictures they now share with you.

Published in Hong Kong by Old China Hand Press ISBN No. 962-7872-06-7. FORMAT: soft-cover, 9"x12", 130 pages, with a 77-page supplement, and more than 300 color and old black and white photographs. Cost: US\$40.00 + US\$5.00 postage\* by check payable to: Old China Hand Press. Available from: Old China Hand Press, P.O. Box 54750, North Point Post Office, Hong Kong.

## EMIGRANTEN ADRESSBUCH

OCHP received permission to publish a replica of the Emigranten Adressbuch, just in time for the celebrations marking the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. Originally published in Shanghai in November 1939, this small volume contains the names, addresses, previous occupations and countries of origin of the thousands of German and Austrian Jews who had escaped to Shanghai and had registered by that date. Not only a valuable research tool for Jewish scholars but also a fascinating time capsule, it is loaded with advertisements and announcements reflecting refugee life in Shanghai in that last year before World War II.

Replicated and published in Hong Kong by Old China Hand Press, August 1995, ISBN No. 962-7872-05-9. Format: soft-cover, 4"x6", 160 pages, complete with the original advertisements, plus a new introduction and reviews of current books on the Jews of Shanghai.

As OCHP wanted this book to be

a tribute to our Jewish colleagues and to others who found their refuge in Shanghai they produced it *pro bono* and were able to keep the costs low; US\$8.00 postpaid (\$10.00 for airmail). Send your check to Tess Johnston at 1375 Huaihai Zhong Lu, #14B, Shanghai 200031, PRC.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF JEWS IN INDIA

1. Studies of Indian Jewish Identity, edited by Nathan Katz. Available from Ajay Kumar Jain, Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2/6 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110 002, India.
2. English edition of the Exhibition Catalog The Jews in India. Available from Israel Museum Products Ltd., Post Office Box 71117, 91710 Jerusalem, Israel.
3. Ruby of Cochin, by Ruby Daniel. Available from Jewish Publication Society, 1930 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia 19103, U.S.A., 1-800-234-3151.
4. Flowers In The Blood by Gay Courter. Available from Penguin USA P.O. Box 999, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621, U.S.A.

## BOOKS ON SUGIHARA

- 1) Visas For Life by Yukiko Sugihara, translated by Hiroki Sugihara \$26 unsigned, \$36 signed (plus \$3 shipping & handling). Read the first English translated memoirs by his widow, Yukiko Sugihara. Learn about the significant roles which Chiune played before, during and after World War Two. Read about the historical forces and events that occurred during this chapter of our history and how Chiune's decisions made a difference.

You can now read about this extraordinarily unique and humanitarian diplomat who made the decision to go against the orders of his Japanese government, putting his life and that of his family at risk, in order to save the lives of thousands of Jewish refugees by helping them

## KUDOS TO LEO GABOW SJI's Founding President by Rena Krasno

The 10th anniversary of the Sino-Judaic Institute is an opportune time to introduce its Founding President, Leo Gabow, to members who have not had the privilege of meeting him. All who know Gabow, have long admired his zest for life, boundless energy, intelligence and ability both as writer and speaker. His intellectual curiosity and sense of adventure led him to follow varied paths in his life, without ever abandoning his deep responsibility to his family and dedication to Jewish causes.

Leo Gabow started as a chemist, served 4 years in the U.S. Navy, spent 2 years in Papua (New Guinea) where he composed an English-Papuan dictionary. He later settled in Hongkong where he established an import-export firm, Gabow & Co., with branches in Seoul, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

While in Hongkong, Gabow learned about the ancient Jewish colony of Kaifeng, China. It was also rumored that a Kaifeng Torah Scroll had been deposited in the Missionary College of Hongkong. None was ever found.

When Gabow returned to the States, the curiosity which the story of Chinese Jews had aroused in him persisted. He contacted Mike Pollak in Texas and Professor Donald Leslie in Australia who had done research on the subject. Both are now members of the Sino-Judaic Institute Board. Correspondence and discussions among Gabow, Pollak and Leslie led to cooperation and personal friendship. Spurred by his deep interest, Gabow visited Kaifeng on two occasions and met surviving Chinese Jews.

In December 1984, Gabow received a letter from Professor Louis Schwartz, who was spending an academic year in China as a teacher. Schwartz had also heard of the Jews of Kaifeng and wanted to investigate the matter further. He was referred to Gabow by Israel Epstein, editor of China Reconstructs, who had heard one of Gabow's lectures on Kaifeng. Gabow responded to Schwartz's request for information by

giving him the names and addresses of Jews in Kaifeng as well as a list of important books on the subject.

Like Leo Gabow, Professor Schwartz is a man of great stamina and determination. He located all living Chinese Jews, established close relations with their families, visited their homes and conducted interviews. According to Gabow, "it is no exaggeration to say that his contacts were historic". Schwartz reciprocated Gabow's original kindness by mailing him dozens of tapes, interviews and reports on the situation of Jews in Kaifeng.

Another person who corresponded regularly with Leo Gabow was Marjorie Soroka, an employee of UNRAA. In 1947, she spent several months in Kaifeng, wrote about her experiences with Kaifeng Jews to her family and sent copies to Mike Pollak who later forwarded them to Gabow. These letters added important information to the story of Kaifeng Jews.

As time went on, Leo Gabow's passionate interest in Kaifeng Jews did not abate. In June 1985, together with Schwartz, he called a meeting to discuss all the data that had been accumulated. Professor Al Dien, then Chairman of the Department of Asian Languages at Stanford University (California), arranged to have a room set aside for the meeting at the University. Scholars from the East Coast and the Northwest were also invited. Thus, 10 years ago, the Sino-Judaic Institute was created.

Since that time, the scope of the Institute's work has been extended to include the general subject of Jews in China, relations between Jews and Chinese, translation of Jewish authors into Chinese, student exchange between China and Israel, and other related fields of interest. This work that now attracts world-wide attention is the result of the initiative, dauntless spirit and hard work of a few men, among whom Leo Gabow stands out.

## FIRST ADULT HEBREW CLASS IN SHANGHAI

by Deng Xinyu

The first adult Hebrew class in China began in Shanghai October, 1995, sponsored by the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS), in cooperation with Israeli Consulate General in Shanghai. This language, so far unfamiliar in China, draws interest from a number of natives of Shanghai. It was quite unexpected that the number of the entrants reached as many as 70 people. About 100 persons would join the class if the class time were not in the afternoon (working time). Apart from the scholars and post-graduates engaged in Jewish Studies, among the students are employees of commercial firms, including those having business contact with Israel, tourist guides, accountants, teachers, government officials, even a clergyman. The teacher of the class is Ms. Irit Offman from Israel. Mr. Yu Weidong (Yehuda) from CJSS has become her assistant. It seems there have appeared a kind of vogue for learning Hebrew in Shanghai since the beginning of the class.

The small number of Hebrew-English dictionaries on the shelf of Shanghai Foreign Language Store were suddenly sold out and are still in demand. Prof. Pan Guang, Dean of CJSS said: "This move represents a sign of friendship between Chinese and Jewish peoples and shows the necessity of better understanding of the Jewish civilization expressed by Chinese people. Rarely any people in China know Hebrew nowadays, but it is believed there will be more Chinese people who can read and write this language in the near future."

were who were pregnant, how many men wore pigtailed, how many children there were on the train, etc. Satisfied with our statistics, we returned back to the family group. Sometimes we thought of tricks we could play on family members. Anything that would make time pass more quickly.

If anything went wrong, I, as the eldest child, would be blamed. At first Abe would be delighted to see me in trouble, but shortly, he would plead to help me out. He would raise his blond lashes to exhibit startlingly large blue eyes, which could melt anyone, as a tear would slide down his face. Alla and he would beg to have me forgiven, which I usually was.

Later, when we read The Three Musketeers, we decided to live up to the motto: "One for All, and All for One."

As the train pulled into the small station that was our destination, my joy knew no bounds. "Look, Abe, we're here. We are going to see the ocean soon!"

Alla added, "It will be fun to be at the beach."

"I hear there are small boats we can use," commented Abe with anticipation as we disembarked and the servants loaded our luggage onto several horse-drawn carriages which were roomy, old, and smelled of aged leather. Once we settled down, we wound our way down the path toward the sea. "I bet we will be there in half an hour," said Abe.

"No, it will be sooner - about 20 minutes, I think," I argued. "I'll bet Ira is right." Alla joined in. It was decided that the winner would collect a coin from each of the losers.

We strained our eyes forward to catch the first glimpse of the water, bright blue water framed by verdant foliage. It came shortly into sight. It was incredibly beautiful and soon we heard the roar of the waves. "Peitaho, we're here!" Within a few minutes we pulled up in front of the house.

Abe was winner of the bet and smiled gleefully as we pulled out our coins to pay him off. He was the first to run into the house.

It stood there, unchanged over many years, large and rambling, and easily holding all of us.

We ran through it and saw that everything was the same as the year before. Outside, in the patch of woods, stood the gazebo. It was white and we always used it for our imaginary plays. Sometimes we pretended it was a gruesome cathedral with a hidden dungeon, or a dreamy castle with fair maidens waiting to be rescued. When we sat on the benches inside, the fresh, woody smell of the tress permeated it. "I can think of some plays we can put on here." I said.

"Yes, we can really make a lot of money from our parents that way." Abe added.

The house itself was shaped in a U. It had two kitchens, one in the back of each wing. The servants cooked our meals there and, later, spread their mats and slept near the dying coals. Our rooms were in the center of the house, while a large, screened verandah jutted outward on the side which overlooked the water. The verandah held many old, comfortable chairs and small tables. A large dining room had an enormous table that could seat many people. There was no electricity, so gas lamps were situated all around the room.

In the back stood a water pump which was heavily used. The clear, cold water was refreshing to our faces and hands, but had to be boiled before drinking. Bath water had to be heated and brought into the house in tin tubs.

Pigs, chickens and ducks scrambled all over the courtyard, picking up seeds and tidbits. The servants began airing out our beds, shaking out the Chinese rugs, and cooking. The cook was the virtual master of the entire domain and no one dared disobey him. Only Mother had any say over what he did, and she always tread gently on his pride. "Everything is good, Missy," he would say, if she questioned him.

There was always much to see and explore. We spent our days with other children from the colony, playing games and telling each other stories. We loved to stretch out on the old, comfortable chairs and read when the weather was hot. Other times we raided the garden that lay beyond our back yard. We stole cucumbers and tomatoes, which at home we would not eat.

Because it was forbidden for us to steal, our loot seemed to taste especially good. We never dared bring any back for fear of punishment.

In the early morning, the best part of the day would commence. A succession of coolies with goods to sell would find their way to the back of our abode. They would carry their goods on flat baskets hung from shoulder poles. Everyone would flock to look at their produce, mostly vegetables and fruit.

"Look how pretty the berries are," I commented, "I bet they are sweet." There were berries so red and perfect in small baskets, along with shining tomatoes and green, hard, slender cucumbers, all neatly arranged in baskets. Chickens screamed in the larger square basket, to be examined carefully before being purchased.

Mother like to select her own melons and hail a horse-driven cart. "Whoa, whoa!" she'd shout to the farmer. He would stop and let her climb onto the melon-laden cart, where she would personally select about a dozen of the succulent and juicy fruits. "Thank you, thank you," she would say to the farmer in Russian. He did not understand her, but acknowledged her body language with a smile as she paid him.

Her selections were always the best tasting and everyone complimented her as they ate them. "Truly excellent," my grandmother used to say to her.

After a rainfall, mushrooms would spring up around the tall trees by the gazebo, and we would run to carefully pick them. After filling our baskets, we took them over to the cook who hung them on a string to dry and, later, embellished our dishes with them.

In back of the fields lay a large grassy area that led to an ancient lighthouse. We liked to watch the flashing lights as the beams rotated over the craggy cliffs. On the way back, we would stop to visit the ancient Chinese temple and cemetery. Most of it was covered in shadows and seemed unnaturally quiet. The years had weathered some of the monuments, and heavy moss covered parts of them. Scratched words and symbols were etched into the old stones and

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gave the area an eerie quality. We could easily imagine ghosts hovering over the graves, and told each other terror-filled stories. We would so scare ourselves, that soon we would run with all our might, back to the bright sunshine.

Afternoons were spent on the beach which we reached by climbing down a small winding path from the cliff. The sand was fine, soft and cream in color. The texture was perfect for building sand castles. The beach rambled along for miles in each direction and had few people on it. Soft breezes tempered the hot sun, making this a most pleasant place to be.

Several rocks jutted out near the beach. They were spectacular but held hidden danger. Undercurrents and whirlpools swirled around them and presented certain death to the unwary. Many people were caught and swept to their deaths before they knew what happened.

One year, Mother rescued two Chinese women by alternately pulling them by their hair and swimming them to safety. As Mother staggered out of the water for the second time, the ladies fell on their knees in front of Mother and began to cry. Mother, who did not understand them, waved her hand and walked towards us on the beach.

They followed her, half crying and speaking rapidly in Chinese. Another woman appeared and spoke to mother, "Madam, I can speak both Russian and Chinese and would like to convey the thanks from those ladies you just rescued." Mother smiled pleasantly. "However," the interpreter was not through, "Dear Madam, these ladies are not only thankful to you for saving their lives, but now they belong to you according to our Chinese tradition. You are now the owner of their lives, forever."

Mother, standing there in her skimpy suit, with dripping short hair, was still exhausted from the hard swim. She shook her head. Here indeed was a dilemma. She had not bargained for such an outcome at all. What should she do now?

Never at a loss for words, she smiled sweetly, turning to the interpreter, "Dear

ladies, I am so happy that you are alive. It is an honor to have you for always. I'll treasure your souls always, but you can keep your bodies and go on with your lives as before."

The interpreter turned to the ladies and translated Mother's words. The ladies discussed the matter between themselves and turned towards Mother. "The ladies find your offer to care for their souls acceptable and thank you again for saving their lives." Everyone smiled and bowed to each other and they finally left Mother alone. Mother returned to her lounge chair on the beach and stretched out. It had truly been a day!

There was a strict rule in our family that no child would venture into the water by him or herself. The surf was deadly. Another day, while we were all sitting on the beach and playing in the sand, Mother was visiting with a friend and the two were deep in conversation. She failed to notice that I had gotten up from my "castle" to get more water. I had needed it for the construction and, seeing that everyone was busy, I decided to get some myself.

I had only planned to go to the water's edge to fill my bucket, but suddenly I was sucked in by the powerful undertow. I screamed and began to choke as the water pulled me under. Then I lost consciousness. Mother glanced at the water and saw my sun bonnet bobbing on the wave. She ran, jumped in, and pulled me to safety.

I came to, looking into Mother's frantic face as she pumped my chest. It hurt and I sputtered and coughed. Relief showed on her face as she lifted me up and held me close. "Thank God, thank God, you are alive," she cried, and tears began to flow. "Never, never do that again!" From then on I had a fear of water and for years would not even put my face into it.

Father would come to Peitaho for two weeks of the summer. Sometimes he would come for long weekends, and it was always fun to see him. He would look pale and worn out from the heat and travel, and would return to the city, tanned and relaxed. I always wished he would come more often. "Good-bye, Father," we would tell him as he left, "Come back soon.

We miss you!" He would smile, shake his head and reluctantly leave.

Other members of the family spent time with us in Peitaho. My Uncle Isia was a frequent visitor as well as Aunt Leilia and Auntie Fira. They were fun and loving with us. Occasionally friends would also come for a few days, so we always had lots of company. Mother enjoyed it and our servants always adapted to the number of visitors that came and went.

The summer drifted on pleasantly. Once in a while we were taken on an outing into town. At one end of town there was a miniature golf course. We competed vigorously and enjoyed it immensely.

On Saturday afternoons, we attended old English language films at the small movie house on the main street. There were Chinese subtitles and, although we did not understand either language, we could follow the story line and guess what was going on. We looked forward to those performances as a great treat.

Best of all were the evenings we spent with Grandmother on the verandah. She would settle herself in a comfortable chair and we would gather around her, sitting on old lounge chairs or on the floor. Strands of her hair trailed out of her bun, and her warm brown eyes would be brimming with pleasure. She enjoyed this part of the evening. There were few wrinkles on her forehead and her short round figure was always dressed in pretty pastel dresses. She felt so comfortable and so soft, frequently hugging and kissing us. "Come," she would say to us, "It's story time. Grab a sweater for the chilly night and settle down." We would not need another invitation as we waited for the magic of new stories to begin.

We heard crickets in the dark around us, and sometimes saw the flicker of the fireflies. From where we sat, we could see the moon casting a silver path across the water as we listened raptly to the many wonderful Russian fairy tales she told us. Sometimes we fell asleep and were carried to our rooms where the feather comforters warmed us as we drifted off in deep slumber.

The adults congregated around

the large dining table, softly lit by the gas lamp, playing games and cards. Their laughter and talk echoed in the rooms as they delighted in being together. Sometimes they sang sad gypsy songs. Zetlins were a close family and knew how to enjoy themselves.

These golden days that we spent in Peitaho; the sun, sky, sand and trees; the changing blue of the water remain forever in my heart. In my mind I still see the pounding surf, the moonlight, my grandmother sitting in the semi-darkness of the verandah, my parents and relatives laughing and playing with each other: tossing a beach ball and swimming; the coziness of the feather covers, the love and warmth of being there in the enveloping closeness of the family.

Those days are gone and almost all the people, but they left behind them a memory that lingers over a place we called, "Peitaho."

Years later, when I returned to Peitaho, the old memories filled my being. Yes, there was still the sandy beach, the rock outcropping and the blue ocean, but the houses were fenced in and were now occupied by Chinese Communist Party members but closed to everyone else. The ghosts still hovered over the outer beach area and, as I picked up a small round stone, the years fell away and I was a child once more . . . and I cried.

## A REEVALUATION OF ELDAD HADANI'S TRAVEL ACCOUNTS

by Guy Shaked

Eldad HaDani's account of his travels is dated to the eighth or ninth centuries. It was widely considered an unreliable source, fantastic in its nature.

However, Eldad HaDani's account of his travels includes only one or two tales of a fantastic nature and the rest of his account contains many important facts: names of places and peoples, stories of their costumes and beliefs.

Eldad's account contains many parallels to the travel stories of Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish trav-

eler to the east in the twelfth century, which is considered a more reliable source of information: they both use very similar terms to describe a nation of fire worshipers; they both refer to a Jewish settlement in the mountains which governs itself and has alignment with another desert people with whom they go to war against Persia.

Some of the names of countries Eldad mentions: Armenia, Persia, China are used to this day. However, usually Eldad's applies biblical names of places and peoples in place of their names in the local languages. This custom exists in modern Hebrew as well: France = "Tsarfat", Spain = "Sfarad" and Greece = "Yavan", but it constitutes a problem when one tries to identify places mentioned by Eldad.

Eldad's fantastic story of outwitting a tribe of cannibals who wanted to eat him seems like a typical sailor's tale of an adventure.

The plot of this fantastic story contains the following four elements: A. A treacherous sea throws the hero(/s) to a place where there is danger of death.

B. Another sailor(/s) dies in the same situation.

C. The hero(/s) stays alive by his wits.

D. A figure from outside the plot appears unexpectedly and saves the hero(/s).

In Eldad's story, due to a storm he and his partner (A) are thrown at the shores of east Africa and are captured by a tribe of cannibals; (B) they eat his fat partner, and feed him so he would gain weight. He doesn't eat and hides away the food they give him; until (C) a tribe from afar fights these cannibals and takes him with them as slaves to China, (D), there, a Jewish merchant buys Eldad and sets him free.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, the facts stated in Eldad's story - tribes of cannibals in eastern Africa; trade in slaves captured from the eastern shores of Africa and taken to China; a flourishing trade between East and West; Jewish tradesman reaching China - are supported by many different sources,<sup>2</sup> and have nothing to do with fantasy.

In this reevaluation of Eldad's writings there was an effort to separate the facts from fiction and consider both independently. It seems that this approach to the text revealed Eldad's writings as a reliable

and important source of information and one of the earliest references to Jews in China.

1 In Tudela's accounts we find a similar sailor's tale, only he refers to it as hearsay; it contains the same elements as the tale of Eldad: On the way to China the ship sometimes is caught by strong winds and drifts to a frozen sea and gets stuck there. (A) The sailors die of shortage of food, and many die this way, (B) However, some wrap themselves completely in animal skins which is sewed so water won't enter and then jump into the sea. (C) A big eagle called Grifo grabs the sailor because it mistakes him for cattle. (D) It takes him over land, in order to eat him. The sailor comes out from the animal skin and kills the eagle.

2 A number of sources from the eighth and ninth centuries: (A) Eldad describes himself and a fellow Jew as traders and small ship owners. (B) Ibn Khordadbeh describes that there were many merchants (he calls Radanites) going forth from China to the West and vice versa by sea and land. The Radanites are said to speak Arabic, Persian and Latin. (C) There is an archeological find from Hotan which was written by a Jewish merchant in Persian in Hebrew letters. (D) There is a Hebrew prayer found in Dunhuang. (E) There is information of a live trade in slaves from the eastern shores of Africa to India, Malaya and China from both Chinese and Arab sources.

## SJI MEMBERSHIP

Israel	13
China	12
England	9
Canada	7
Hong Kong	6
Australia	4
Germany	2
Japan	2
France	1
Sweden	1
Indonesia	1
Italy	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	1
Taiwan	1
Hungary	1
	<u>63</u>
USA	<u>266</u>
Total	<u><u>329</u></u>



## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

We recently sent a form to all of our members as the first step in compiling a directory in order to facilitate communication among our members. Over half of our members responded and we are grateful for that cooperation. In order to make the Directory as useful as possible, and to ensure that no one is left out because of oversight, we are including this form for the convenience of those who did not respond to the first mailing. If you have not previously responded, please use this form to indicate your wishes in this matter. **All of those who have not previously responded and do not respond at this time will be listed by name and city only. You of course have the option of not being listed.** The Directory when completed will be distributed only to members of the Institute and will not be available for commercial use.

\_\_\_ I would like to be included in the SJI's first Membership Directory with the information I am supplying below.

\_\_\_ No, I do NOT want to be included. (unlisted member)

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail/Internet address: \_\_\_\_\_

The following information is for inclusion in the Membership Directory and is optional:

Topics of interest to me (related to Sino-Judaica matters): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Regions and countries of particular interest or focus: \_\_\_\_\_

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