

中國-猶太學院

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The Sino-Judaic Institute is a non-denominational, non-profit, and non-political organization which was founded in 1985 by an international group of scholars and laypersons with the following goals:

- 1) To promote friendship and understanding between the Chinese and Jewish peoples and to encourage and develop their cooperation in matters of mutual historical and cultural interest.
- 2) To assist the descendants of the ancient Jewish community of the city of Kaifeng, Henan province, in their efforts to preserve and maintain the artifacts and documents they have inherited from their forebears, as well as in their efforts to reconstruct the history of their community.
- 3) To support the establishment and maintenance of a Judaica section in the Kaifeng Municipal Museum.
- 4) To promote and assist the study and research of the history of early Jewish travel in China and in the rise and fall of the various Jewish communities that were established in China over the past millennia.
- 5) To publish general information and scholarly materials dealing with all aspects of the Chinese-Jewish experience.
- 6) To serve as a briefing and information center for those interested in Sino-Judaica, and for travelers to Kaifeng and other centers of Jewish interest in China.
- 7) To cooperate with other groups whose interests lie in Sinitic and Judaic matters.

Membership in the Institute is open and we cordially invite you to join in supporting our endeavor. Our annual dues structure is as follows:

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I wish to become a member of the Sino-Judaic Institute and receive *Points East* three times a year. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____.

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N E W S
L E T T E R

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Points East

中國-猶太學院

A Publication of the Sino-Judaic Institute

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Albert E. Dien

It has been suggested that as President of the Sino-Judaic Institute, I periodically write a short note on what the Institute has been doing and what its plans for the future are. Inevitably, some of what I say will be repeated in other reports included in this issue of *Points East*. I would hope, too, that my remarks will elicit comments from the members and help guide us in our activities.

A meeting of the Board of the Institute was held on December 26, 1996 in Menlo Park, and as is our recently initiated practice, any member who wishes a copy of the treasurer's report may write to me to request one. In general, our new Treasurer, Shelton Erlich, reported that we now show a balance of over \$26,000, a gain of some \$6,000 over last year. However, the membership total has dropped a bit, and we need to increase our efforts to enroll new members. The directory of members, long in the works, has now been typed up and edited, and is about to be printed. Hopefully, you may expect a copy in the mail before too long.

You will have seen since the two issues before this that *Points East* has a new editor. Wendy Abraham has taken over this heavy responsibility, while Anson Laytner, the former editor, will now assume the position of publisher, and so *Points East* will still be printed and distributed from Seattle, where Anson lives.

As editor of our journal, *Sino-Judaica*, I am gathering material for the third volume, which will appear sometime this year. It was with some foresight that the journal has the sub-title, "An Occasional Journal of the Sino-Judaic Institute." We are also planning an index for the first ten volumes of *Points East*, which will facilitate the location of material which has appeared in it over the first ten years of its existence. In all of this, Shelton's wife, Sandy, is play-

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CHINESE JEWS OUTSIDE KAIFENG: FACT OR FICTION?

By Donald Daniel Leslie¹

Introduction

The history of the Kaifeng Jewish community which flourished from the 12th century or earlier until the 19th century is now well documented.² Knowledge about Chinese Jews outside Kaifeng is, on the other hand, vague and lacking in documentary evidence. The main purpose of this short article is to list the claims with a critical analysis of the sources.

This essay is divided into two parts:

1. Early references to Jews in China apart from Kaifeng.
2. Modern references to Chinese Jews other than in Kaifeng.

I will not be dealing with stories of Lost Tribes related to China, nor suggestions of Jews in Northern India and Burma, who may or may not be linked to the Kaifeng Jews.³

1. Early References to Jews in China Apart from Kaifeng

It is unlikely but not impossible that Jews had reached China by the end of the Han (221 C.E.) as claimed by the oral tradition of the Kaifeng Jews and their 1512 stele.⁴ It is, however, highly likely that Jewish travelers if not settlers had reached Changan (Xi'an), capital of the Tang (618-907), by the 7th or 8th century if not earlier, for other foreign religions from Persia, Mazdeism (Zoroastrianism), Nestorian Christianity and Manichaeism, did penetrate to China at this time, building shrines, temples and monasteries all over China, in particular in Changan, Luoyang and Kaifeng.⁵ Mosques and synagogues, on the other hand, are not mentioned.

We have, unfortunately, no references in native Chinese sources to Jews in China in the Tang or Song (960-1279). Arabic sources are more helpful, with a descrip-

tion by Ibn Khurdadhbih, 9th century, of Jewish merchants called Radhanites trading to China. There is, however, no suggestion that any of these traders actually settled in China.⁶ More significant, perhaps, is the statement by Abu-Zaid towards 916 that Jews were among 120,000 foreigners slaughtered in Khanfu (Canton) during the Huang Chao rebellion in 264 A.H. (878 C.E., correct to 879 from Chinese sources.)⁷ We cannot estimate how many of this large (exaggerated) number were Jews.

During the Tang, we have Chinese references for 758 and 760 to Muslim settlers in Guangzhou (Canton) and Yangzhou; and for the Song in Guangzhou, Quanzhou and Hangzhou (and possibly in Changan, Kaifeng and Hainan).⁸ Were there also Jews in these places? We have no confirmation for this early period.

We are on more solid ground for the Mongol Yuan period (1279-1368). Jews (*zhuhu*) are mentioned in the *Yuanshi* and *Yuandianzhang* for 1280, 1320, 1329, 1340, 1354, which refer to the forbidding of ritual slaughter for food and circumcision and marriage to cousins, but do not give any place names. The *Shanju Xinhua* by Yang Yu, 1360, mentions Jewish merchants in the Hangzhou sugar board during the period 1277-1294.⁹

This is confirmed by foreign visitors, Marco Polo and others, who mention Jews in Khanbaliq (Beijing), Zayton (Quanzhou) and Khansa (Hangzhou).¹⁰

Marco Polo mentions Jews as insulting the Christians in Khanbaliq in 1286 under Qubilai. This is completely convincing and is supported by Marignolli who also mentions Jews in Khanbaliq in 1342, and by other sources which describe religious debates in China under the Mongols. Andrew of Perugia, 1326, says that no Jew-

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FROM THE EDITOR

With this issue of *Points East* we welcome in the Year of the Ox with two new columns: one by our President, Prof. Albert E. Dien, and the other on SJI Member News.

Since so many of our members are actively involved in projects directly relating to Jewish interests in China, we thought it would be useful to inform our members of what their colleagues are up to these days. Anyone wishing to contact someone about a project mentioned in this column may write to them c/o the Sino-Judaic Institute, 232 Lexington Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025. All mail will be forwarded.

We would also like to encourage our readers who grew up or lived in Shanghai, Tianjin or Harbin to share their memoirs with *Points East* readers. They may do so by submitting a piece to *Points East* for possible publication in upcoming issues.

The Sino-Judaic Institute is stepping up its efforts regarding donations of artifacts or replicas thereof to the Judaica Wing of the Kaifeng Municipal Museum and to the Ohel Moshe Synagogue Museum in Shanghai. We therefore call on all SJI members and anyone else they may know to help us locate replicas for donation or to contribute funds for this purpose to the Sino-Judaic Institute. These are among the most important projects SJI has committed itself to since its inception in 1985, and the time is now ripe to move forward in this regard.

Finally, anyone wishing to submit anything for future issues of *Points East* is most welcome to do so. Many thanks to those who sent me valuable pieces over these past few months.

Wendy Abraham

Points East

Anson Laytner, Publisher
 ♦
 Wendy Abraham
 Editor

Points East is published by the Sino-Judaic Institute, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization. The opinions and views expressed by the contributors and editor are their own and do not necessarily express the viewpoints and positions of the Sino-Judaic Institute.

Letters to the Editor and articles for *Points East* may be sent to:

Wendy Abraham
 c/o Asian Languages Dept.
 Stanford University
 Stanford, CA 94305
 e-mail: wabraham@leland.stanford.edu

All other correspondence should be sent to:
 Rena Krasno, Public Affairs
 255 S. Rengstorff, #106
 Mountain View, CA 94040

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Deadlines for submitting material to be included in these issues are January 15th, May 15th and September 15th.

FINANCIAL REPORT AVAILABLE

SJI members interested in receiving a copy of the annual financial report should send a self-addressed envelope to: Shelton Ehrlich, Treasurer of the Sino-Judaic Institute, 755 Northampton, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

The Sino-Judaic Institute
 232 Lexington Drive
 Menlo Park, CA 94025
 (415) 323-1769

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SJI MEMBERSHIP

Country	Total
United States	256
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Canada	7
Hong Kong	7
Australia	4
Germany	3
Japan	2
Hungary	1
Indonesia	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	1
Sweden	1
Taiwan	1
TOTAL:	321

JOIN THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE

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Wang Yisha (continued from page 16)

them he didn't dare use the money he got for himself so he invited Shi, Li Gao, Ai, Jin and Zhang, all the older ones to sign their names. After he asked them to sign their names to this agreement, this Westerner took it and said that the Jews sold it to him."

"Did these others agree to it in the end?" I asked.

"I heard that probably they had no money so this Westerner invited them to eat (to get them to agree)."

All of the above parts of my own taped conversations with Shi Zhongyu lend credence to the possibility that all was not as Bishop White had recorded in *Chinese Jews*. Surely Wang Yisha was uncovering such discrepancies in his own interviews with them throughout the years. He simply wanted to set the record straight, from the point of view of the Chinese themselves.

In his letter of May 9, 1988, he wrote to me, "Your letter said that you possess in America a Chinese-Hebrew genealogy of the seven surnames, handwritten, and want to send a copy. This news is too good to be true. According to what I now know, the ancient Chinese Jews all together had ten or eleven works. One of these was the handwritten genealogy. In White's book the aforementioned is published in an abridged version, and in addition it contained numerous obvious mistakes. In order for me to systematically, completely and sequentially study the history of the Chinese Jews, it is necessary for me to study the history of the seven families, so I must therefore study

the handwritten genealogy. If I can do this with your help and that of your friends, and quickly be sent a copy of this, I will be able to sort it all out according to the traditional Chinese method of researching genealogies."

The Sino-Judaic Institute later was able to send a copy of this genealogy to Kaifeng. In 1992, during the proceedings of a conference on the Jewish Diasporas in China at Harvard University, a paper submitted by Wang Yisha was read by Nanjing University Prof. Xu Xin, which noted that he had been collecting oral histories of the Jewish descendants for the past twenty years. Not until that time did anyone, including myself, realize the precious material he had quietly been gathering all these years, combining his academic research with personal discussions with the Jewish descendants themselves.

I will never understand what possessed a man with no personal historical connection to the Jewish people himself, to devote the better part of his life to the study and careful recording of details of their daily lives in the latter part of the twentieth century. In his last letter to me, just a month before he died, he was eager to know how the translation of his book was coming along, and asked that I write the Preface to it. When this project is complete, I will be sure to mention that only through Wang Yisha's dedicated work in the last part of the twentieth-century do we have in our possession such valuable information about the Chinese Jewish descendants in the twentieth-century ever before gathered first-hand.

Wendy Abraham

SJI Member News

(continued from page 15)

pieces of diaries and reproductions of documents. Prof. Hochstadt would be interested in hearing from anyone who would like to contribute to such a volume, and may be reached c/o The Sino-Judaic Institute. The next issue of *Points East* will feature an article on The Jews of Shanghai by Prof. Hochstadt.

SJI member **Chiara Betta**, of the London School of African and Oriental Studies, will be presenting a paper at the International Conference on Foreign Communities in East Asia to be held this March in Lyons, France, on the Sephardi Jewish Community of Shanghai, 1845-1931.

SJI member **Marcia Ristaino** of the Library of Congress, will also present a paper at the Conference on Foreign Communities in East Asia on the White Russian Community of Shanghai, 1930-1952.

SJI SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

Planning a fundraising event? Organizing a meeting or celebration? If your Jewish educational, religious or cultural group has a need for a speaker on a truly unique subject, contact the Sino-Judaic Institute. Possible lecture topics include:

- The Chinese Jews of Kaifeng
- The Jews of Shanghai
- Jewish Life in Harbin and Tianjin
- Sino-Israeli Relations

A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Sino-Judaic Institute.

For more information, contact:
 SJI President, Prof. Al Dien
 (415) 323-1769
 232 Lexington Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025
 e-mail: aldien@leland.stanford.edu.

WANG YISHA IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep sadness that I report the news of the passing of Wang Yisha, retired curator of the Kaifeng Municipal Museum and indefatigable researcher of the Chinese Jewish descendants in Kaifeng for over a quarter century. Prior to his succumbing to cancer on December 2, 1996 in the city of Kaifeng, I had the honor of corresponding with him for over a decade, even though I met him only once, in August of 1985, through the introduction of the Chinese Jewish descendant Shi Zhongyu.

This is as much a testimony to Shi Zhongyu, and the entire older generation of Chinese Jewish descendants, as it is about Wang Yisha himself, for through his persistent efforts to research and record their histories, he left records and detailed information of them in the 20th century not gathered since the Canadian Bishop William Charles White, who lived with them for twenty-five years in the early part of this century, and whose book, *Chinese Jews*, published in 1942, was the first major work on the subject.

In the days preceding my meeting with Wang Yisha I had spent each day in Kaifeng speaking with as many Chinese Jewish descendants as I could find, and recording their stories on tape for posterity. The night before I met Wang Yisha, Shi Zhongyu had told me to come to his home early the next morning for a surprise. He had been regaling me with stories all week, and I had been returning frequently to him throughout my stay in Kaifeng to report on the latest finds and to compare notes about what the other descendants had told me of their lives.

So when he told me to return for a surprise, I had no idea he meant that I should return around 7 a.m., rather than the 10 a.m. I finally arrived at his home. By then, he took me outside and pointed to all sorts of beautifully colored wreaths of flowers and ribbons hanging on the front door of his next door neighbor's house. He asked if I knew what they were for, and I told him I assumed it was for a wedding or some other happy occasion. He let out a peal of laughter, and quickly brought me up to snuff about the funeral practice there of laying gaily colored wreaths outside the home of the deceased. He said I had unfortunately missed the entire funeral procession, which had occurred around 7 in the morning.

Then came the real surprise. He grabbed his daughter's bicycle, nervously inquired over his shoulder at the last minute if I knew how to ride one, hopped on his own and led the way to some predetermined mystery location. Finally we arrived at a concrete structure, which turned out to be an apartment building rather than a factory, and parked our bicycles outside. Shi Zhongyu motioned me with his hands in an excited way, and said that I would now be meeting a man who was working with him on researching his ancestors, the respected scholar, Wang Yisha.

We were ushered into an inner room by a female family member who opened the front door, and when we entered the "inner sanctum" I knew immediately it was the dwelling of a scholar. Books aligned all four walls, papers were strewn about on the simple desk, with little else in the room save a few hard chairs and a sofa. We all had tea, and I got the cue from Shi Zhongyu that it was all right to ask a few questions at that point. It was then that Wang Yisha first spoke of his extreme interest in the genealogies of the Chinese Jews, and in particular in translating Bishop White's book into Chinese, so that the Chinese could have access to it.

Three years later, after mailing him one of the few copies left of Bishop White's *Chinese Jews*, he told me in a letter about the book he had recently written, entitled *The Annals of the Chinese Jews*, written in three volumes, as Bishop White's book had originally been. One of these was called *Objections to White's Chinese Jews*, and he took great pains to mention that he found one hundred and twenty-three particular errors or misleading statements in White's book.

Indeed, in one of my own conversations with Shi Zhongyu unrelated to our visit to Wang Yisha, Shi mentioned the event billed by Bishop White as a reunion of the many members of the Seven Surnames, Eight Families, as the Chinese Jews have been known throughout the generations, only with a different emphasis than that of a reunion. In the words of Shi Zhongyu, he said of the may 1919 event: "I heard my aunt talk of it. At that time she spoke of Westerners ...These old Westerners invited my aunt, my father's brother's wife and my older sister (to eat). It's unfortunate that my aunt and father's brother's wife have both died. But my older sister is still living...You probably heard of "White" (pronounced in Chinese as "Hui Liguang")? This White compiled a book. If I remember correctly...on the left side of page 130...there was a photo of a kind of long bench. On the left side were three men. On the right side were three women. On page 130 if you look at this photo, on the right side you will see my aunt, my father's brother's wife and my older sister...The first time I saw this it was a shock!...All of a sudden I saw my aunt, my father's brother's wife and my sister!"

"So Bishop White himself took this picture," I asked.

"Yes. He took the picture. My aunt, she said this old Westerner invited her to eat once. While they were eating, at that time she heard it was a conference of Jews (in other words, perhaps none of them knew beforehand the purpose of the meeting)...When they went, the synagogue was no longer a building. It was just a piece of land. There was no longer any structure on the earth, but it still had Jewish relics. Zhao Pingyu's second uncle sold these things. Even though he sold

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Whereabouts of More Kaifeng Artifacts

In June of 1988, Volume 3, No. 2, in *Points East*, an article appears under the heading "The Artifacts of the Kaifeng Jews: Where are They?" In the following issue of *Points East*, Michael Pollak, in a letter to the editor, made an important addition, and Donald Leslie, in the same issue made an important correction.

The artifacts article stated, "The Jews of Manipur and Mizoram, for example, have left behind no Jewish artifacts or literature. We have only their oral tradition, which like all oral traditions, must be assessed objectively." Not so with the Kaifeng Jews. They have left us stelae, prayer books, Haggadahs and Torahs. They have been contacted by missionaries of the past who visited their synagogue. The evidence that a colony of Jews lived in Kaifeng is overwhelming.

I now have in my possession a paper entitled, "Objects in the Far Eastern Collections of the Royal Ontario Museum Associated with the Former Kaifeng Synagogue." Inasmuch as some readers of *Points East* would like to be kept abreast of the whereabouts of these artifacts, I quote from the paper directly, including the legends, should anyone visit the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

"Gray stone bowl, relief decoration of figures amongst vines and lotus on the exterior. 926.21.252 H.34. 1 cm D. 57.7 cm. Bishop White collection."

"Gray stone bowl, relief decoration of two layers of lotus leaves on the exterior. 926.21.7. H24.6 cm D. 48.3 cm. Gift of Bishop White."

"Stone drain mouth, relief decoration of figures amongst vines and lotus flowers on exterior and a band of lotus leaves encircling the centre of the interior. 926.21.47 H20.3 cm D. 39.4 cm. Gift of Bishop White."

"Black slate chime stone, inscribed on one face. 925.26.203 L.34 cm W. 30.1 cm. Bishop White collection."

"Torah case, wood covered with cloth and lacquered red with traces of gilding.

931118.1 H. 77.5 cm. Gift of Bishop W.C. White."

"Stone stele, replica of 1489/1512 stele. 926.21.9 H.160 cm W. 81.3 cm."

"Rubblings of the original 1489/1512 stele. 920.23.1 A and B H.160 cm. W. 81.3 cm. Gift of Bishop White."

"Three leaves from the Book of Genesis in Hebrew on Chinese paper. 931.18.3 a-c 17.8 x 19.1 cm. Gift of Bishop White."

"Leaf from a New Year's prayer in Hebrew on Chinese paper. 931.18.3d 27.9 x 12.7 cm."

"Booklet containing 30th section of the Law of Leviticus chapters xi and xx. Chinese paper woodblock printed in Shanghai, Hebrew text. Imprint page and cover of later date 931.18.3f. Gift of Bishop White."

We hope that the above will add more data on the subject.

Leo Gabow
Founding President, Sino-Judaic Institute

From The President's Desk

(continued from page 1)

ing an important supporting role in typing, editing and overseeing the production of the Directory and the Index.

We received a request from Prof. Xiao Xian, of Yunnan University, requesting a subvention to enable him to publish a book which he has written, the Chinese title of which translates as *The Jews, A People of Mystery*. The Table of Contents indicates that it is a history of the Jewish people through the ages, with due attention to modern times as well. Prof. Xiao is an eminent scholar who participated in the publication of the Chinese version of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, and has also published a translation of Theodor Herzl's *The Jewish State*. With the assistance of a grant from the Josephson Charitable Fund, we were able to respond in a positive fashion to Prof. Xiao's request. Earlier, a grant had been made to Fan Yuchen to publish a translation into Chinese of Chaim Herzog's *Heroes of Israel*, and Mr. Fan has recently notified us that the book has been published.

The Board also voted to support a proposal by Prof. Xu Xin, of Nanjing University, to

organize a summer workshop on Jewish history and culture for teachers of world history at universities in China, so that these teachers can include such material within the curriculum of their courses. Prof. Xu's proposal is being considered for most of its costs by a major foundation; we have provided a positive recommendation to that foundation and if the decision is positive, we will assume a smaller share of the costs.

For the coming year, the Board has decided that the time is ripe to move ahead on our plan to refurbish the exhibit on the Kaifeng Jewish community in the Municipal Museum of Kaifeng. At present, the large room on the fourth floor is almost bare, except for the stone stelae which had originally stood outside the synagogue. The museum itself had been all but closed since a robbery some years ago, but the government has now allocated money to install security measures and to reopen the lower three floors. Rena Krasno, on a recent visit to Israel, opened discussions with the Beth Hatefutsoth, the Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, to supply copies of the materials which had circulated in their Kaifeng exhibit some years ago, and which we would install in that fourth floor gallery, along with a video, slide set, handouts, etc. There is much planning ahead of us, as well as fundraising to ensure that the project is a successful one. You will no doubt be hearing more about this.

DONATIONS OF ARTIFACTS REQUESTED FOR THE OHEL MOSHE SYNAGOGUE

The Sino-Judaic Institute is actively seeking donations of artifacts from the original Ohel Moshe Synagogue in Shanghai, or anything connected to worship there. This synagogue is the only one left standing in Shanghai, and has been turned into a museum. In an attempt to help build up the current exhibit, we urge anyone who lived in Shanghai to donate whatever they might have that would be appropriate. If you are interested in making a donation, please contact SJI President, Prof. Albert E. Dien, 232 Lexington Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Phone (415) 323-1769, e-mail: aldien@leland.stanford.edu.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO ON JEWS IN ASIA

Summit Productions announces the release of "Reconnecting East and West: Judaism and Eastern Religions," a five-part educational video series that illustrates how lessons from Judaism's past, combined with insights gained today from other religions, can help ensure Judaism's future survival.

The five tapes are:

- 1) *Maharajas, Mughals and Mystics: Two Thousand Years of Jewish Experience in India.* (An examination of the mechanisms that enabled Jews to flourish in India for two millennia.)
- 2) *Mandarins, Sinew-Pluckers and Ancestors: Jewish Experience in China.* A look at the relationship between the Jews of China and their Confucian neighbors, and a critical analysis of why the Chinese Jews eventually lost their Jewish identity and were fully absorbed into Chinese culture.
- 3) *The "Jewish Secret" and the Dalai Lama.* A first-hand account of an historic meeting between the Dalai Lama, the Nobel Prize-winning spiritual leader of the exiled Tibetan people, and eight Jewish scholars and rabbis.
- 4) *Jews and Gurus: A Contemporary Challenge: An analysis of why younger Jews are increasingly forsaking their heritage for what they perceive to be the more fertile spiritual soils of Buddhism and Hinduism.* and
- 5) *Dialoguing the Future: Reconnecting East and West.* An insightful, hopeful view of the positive synergies to be derived from dialogue between Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and Confucians.

For information or materials requests, please contact Luke Melton at 1-800-446-3177; Fax 813-531-8721; e-mail to: "lukesummit@AOL.com".

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, 1993. (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, members \$9. Vol. 2 (1995) \$20, members \$15.

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

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

Wang Yisha. *Zhongguo Youtai Chunqiu* (Annals of the Chinese Jews), in Chinese. Hardcover, \$5, soft cover \$2.

Xu Xin et al., comp. *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Chinese version). SJI does not carry the Encyclopedia Judaica in Chinese. Requests for this should be made directly to: Prof. Xu Xin, c/o English Dept., Nanjing University, 22 Hankou Rd., Nanjing, PRC 210008.

The Chinese Jews of Kaifeng, slide set with cassette. (30 minutes) \$75, members \$60.

Please note: For each item, unless otherwise stated, there is a charge of \$2 for postage and handling, domestic, and \$5 for overseas mailing.

CHINA MEMOIRS REQUESTED

SJI members who lived in China before and during World War II are cordially invited to share their written memoirs with us at *Points East*. Please send all memoirs to: Dr. Wendy Abraham, c/o Asian Languages Dept., Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305, or send an e-mail to: wabraham@leland.stanford.edu.

SJI MEMBER NEWS

SJI President **Al Dien** has just submitted a manuscript, "Six Dynasties Civilization," to the Yale University Press, for inclusion in their Early Chinese Civilization Series. The book represents sixteen years of work, and deals with the period of 220 to 618 A.D. He is now working on four articles: 1) a study of the Chinese examination system in the fifth century based on a document dated 408 which was uncovered in Turfan, Xinjiang (this is to be included in a volume resulting from a conference "Dialogue with the Ancients," held last year at the Western Washington University); 2) a study of some archaeological materials from Turfan, resulting from a conference held at Turfan last summer, as a part of the Silk Road project, funded by the Luce Foundation; 3) a study of Chinese armor, for inclusion in a volume on Asian armor, being edited by Prof. Gina Barnes of Durham University, England; and 4) an article for *Archaeology Magazine*, surveying Chinese archaeological activity over the last fifty years.

The preface of a book which he edited, *State and Society in Early Medieval China* (Hong Kong University Press and Stanford University Press, 1990), was translated into Chinese and published in *Wei Jin nanbeichao Sui Tang shi ziliao* 14 (1996), a publication of Wuhan University. An article, "Chinese Beliefs in the Afterworld," published in *The Quest for Eternity* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1997) is to be translated into Danish and included in the catalogue of an exhibit at the Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek, Denmark. He will be giving a lecture on February 8 as part of a symposium connected with the exhibition "Seeking Immortality: Chinese Tomb Sculpture from the Schloss Collection," at the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, Santa Ana, CA. He will also chair a panel, "The Transformation of Binary Opposites in Ritual and Narrative Space," at the meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in Chicago on March 15, 1997.

Prof. Dien will also be leading and/or lecturing to three tours in China: Stanford Alumni Suitcase Seminar on China, May 5-19, the Young Presidents Organization, Hong Kong tour of the Silk Road, Xinjiang, May 19-26, and Ancient Capitals of China, for Archaeological Tours of New York, Oct. 13-Nov. 2. He will also lead a tour of Central Asia (including Samarkand,

Bukhara, and Merv), also for Archaeological Tours on Sept. 15-Oct. 3. Finally, there is the possibility of a conference being held at Kucha, Xinjiang, sometime in August.

SJI Founding President **Leo Gabow** initiated a proposal to establish a temporary exhibit on the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng on the West Coast, and from there to donate the exhibit in its entirety to the Judaica Wing of the Kaifeng Municipal Museum. He is presently Chair of the committee which will oversee this.

SJI Vice President **Michael Pollak** reports that he is updating his 1975 book, *The Torah Scrolls of the Chinese Jews*. The new edition is scheduled to be published over the Internet in mid-1997 by the original publishers, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University. He is also preparing a review of Howard Sachar's recent book on the Sephardi Jews for the *Congress Monthly*, and working up a syllabus for a Joys of Jewish Learning Course on the Chinese Jews and the world around them. In addition to all this, he is preparing a paper for the upcoming Monumenta Serica Conference in Germany this Fall on "the peregrinations and present whereabouts of the manuscripts and other relics of the Kaifeng synagogue."

SJI Chairman **Arthur H. Rosen** gave two lectures on Jewish communities in China this past December at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. He will be leading an SJI tour to China in the Spring of 1998.

SJI Public Affairs person **Rena Krasno** recently returned from Israel where she held preliminary talks with representatives of the Beth Hatefutsoth, the Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, concerning an exhibition for the Judaica Wing of the Kaifeng Municipal Museum. She just completed a children's book, *Kneeling Carabao and Dancing Giants*, to be published by Pacific View Press of Berkeley this Spring, which deals with the history, legends and folklore of the Philippines. This follows her memoir, *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai*, also by Pacific View Press. She participated in a documentary entitled "Shanghai Exile," by German filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger, which was nominated for the International Berlin Film Festival. She attended the Fes-

tival as its guest from February 14-22, 1997.

Rabbi Anson Laytner, Publisher of *Points East*, and Director of the Multifaith AIDS Project in Seattle, which secures housing for low income people disabled by AIDS, has recently published an article entitled "Christianity and Judaism: Old History, New Beginnings," in the Spring '96 issue of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, published by Temple University.

SJI Board member and *Points East* Editor **Dr. Wendy Abraham** is working on a translation of the late Wang Yisha's book, *Zhongguo youtai chunqiu* ("The Annals of the Chinese Jews"), and is preparing a paper on the Kaifeng Jewish descendants for the upcoming Monumenta Serica conference in Germany this Fall. She gave a talk with slides on the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng in February in Oakland, California. She is also organizing Jewish Historical Tours to China, slated for September 2-17 and October 28-November 12, 1997.

SJI Board member **Prof. Donald Daniel Leslie** is preparing a paper for the Monumenta Serica conference in Germany on the assimilation and survival of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng, and continues his indefatigable research on both Islam and Judaism in China.

SJI Board member **Nigel Thomas** is preparing a feature article for the next issue of *Points East* on his area of expertise, the Rhadanites and the Jews.

SJI member **Prof. Steve Hochstadt** has been working for the past seven years on a Shanghai Jewish community oral history project. He has interviewed former Shanghaianders in the U.S., Austria and Israel with the goal of preserving their history through the transcription of these interviews for the benefit of other scholars, and eventually to produce two books from this material. One book concerns a historical study of the Jewish exodus from Europe to Shanghai in the context of anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis, and the contemporary history of Shanghai or other destinations of Jewish immigration. The other book focuses on German-speaking refugees in Shanghai, combining interviews, articles by scholars, photographs,

(continued on page 17)

riod of foreign Concessions in Shanghai, the gloom of Japanese occupation and the trauma of Communist takeover. He describes turbulent times all the while maintaining a sense of humor. The book is illustrated with fascinating old photographs taken by the author himself.

After service in the French Foreign Legion, a stint as society photographer, work in the Ford factory (Brazil) and many other adventures, the author finally settled in the U.S. where he returned to his first love, owning and managing an exclusive restaurant in Southern California. The book includes famous "house recipes," such as the incomparable *Sedlo* (Armenian rack of lamb) prepared by his wife.

Those interested in purchasing the book *Kavkaz* should send a check in the amount of \$20.00 to: Yervand Markarian, 357 Burton Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262.

In Search of Sugihara

by Hillel Levine

The way Hillel Levine tells it, he came to write the story of Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese diplomat who supplied visas for some 10,000 Jews trapped in Lithuania between the Nazi and Soviet armies, because of an experience of almost mystical intensity.

Rabbi Levine, a professor Jewish history at Boston University, had heard of Sugihara in 1989 when he went to Japan to teach. In 1993, however, he was invited to the Lithuanian capital to give the inaugural lecture at the University of Vilna's Center for Judaic Studies, a task he found depressing because the city had been so thoroughly emptied of its Jews. On a side trip to Kovno — the site of Sugihara's generosity — he impulsively asked his hosts to take him to the building where the Japanese rescuer had maintained his consulate. It was, he remembers, a nondescript house in an even more dreary section of town.

Nevertheless, recalled Rabbi Levine, "I was transfixed. I couldn't move for several hours. It seemed to me that something very important had happened in this place, something important in the history of morality and conscience."

From that moment, Rabbi Levine told the *Forward* from his home in Brookline, Mass., "I had to find out what made Sugihara tick," a quest that culminated in

his new book, "In Search of Sugihara," published by The Free Press. Sugihara, he said, was an "ordinary" man, "who did not grow up with Jews, did not know anything about them and did not identify with them." Nothing in his education — he trained as a Russian specialist, spoke Russian and German well and had a first wife who came from a prominent, anti-Semitic, White Russian family — augured the future rescuer. Yet this cosmopolitan diplomat and devoted family man stretched the rules of his government, giving out visas to the hungry, exhausted refugees who lined up outside his door, simply "because of his love of life."

Informing Rabbi Levine's search were his backgrounds as a sociologist and a rabbi — he was ordained by the Conservative movement — which manifest themselves in the book's emphases on group relations and morality. The book contains a discussion of what Rabbi Levine calls, playing on a famous phrase of Hannah Arendt's, "the banality of goodness," about mass rescuers who, counter to the stereotype of the altruistic personality, "have elusive motives, no depressive obsessions, no manic enthusiasms, no special indoctrination of any kind."

Rabbi Levine hopes "In Search of Sugihara" will help demonstrate "how Jews, in the face of great disaster, participated in their own rescue, scrounging around for visas, showing great initiative." By giving out visas, Rabbi Levine believes, "Sugihara empowered Jews...gave them the courage to scheme, to connive, to do what was necessary to save their families."

In some cases, those helped by Sugihara and their own scrambling efforts defied the wishes of Jewish religious leaders. Eliezer Portnoy, a dissident yeshiva student, managed to secure visas for more than 300 students from Mir Yeshiva against the wishes of several eminent rabbis, who had issued religious opinions saying that they should stay put and trust in God.

"I really thought that if there had been more Sugiharas, the holocaust could have been stopped," Rabbi Levine said. "These processes infused by anti-Semitism are not inevitable and irreversible. It makes all the questions about what other diplomats were doing, what America was doing — American diplomats in Lithuania didn't give out visas — more salient."

Rabbi Levine also sought to uncover whether Sugihara had high-level approval for his actions, and concluded that he did. He makes the case that Sugihara, who he writes was a top spy sent to Lithuania to report on Soviet and German movements in anticipation of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, may have had the protection of a faction in the Japanese military that saw a certain diplomatic utility in giving Jews safe passage.

Even so, Rabbi Levine argues, Sugihara was a hero whose actions risked the wrath of his own government, the Soviets and the Nazis. He claims to have checked out stories, many of which have appeared in the Japanese press, casting aspersions on Sugihara's motives. "Not one of the refugees I interviewed indicated that he asked for or accepted any favor," said Rabbi Levine, who contrasted Sugihara's behavior with the mixed motives of Oskar Schindler, who before he came to protect "his Jews" stood to profit from Jewish labor.

Rabbi Levine is more guarded when he speaks of Sugihara's legacy for Japan. Japan, he noted, is a country with a "shocking degree of anti-Semitic literature," although he does not detect a popular anti-Semitism there.

Nevertheless, the country has been wary of its hero and after the war tried to suppress the entire story. Israel has honored the diplomat several times, beginning in the 1960s, whereas even now, Rabbi Levine (whose book will be translated into Japanese in March) laments that the Japanese "don't understand that this is a good story that reflects well on them."

THE NORMAN FISHMAN MEMORIAL FUND

The Sino-Judaic Institute has established a fund in honor of its late Treasurer, Norman Fishman, for the purpose of donating Judaica books to individual Chinese scholars and academic institutions in China in his name.

Anyone wishing to donate to this fund may send a check made out to "The Norman Fishman Memorial Fund," and mail it to: Shelton Ehrlich, Treasurer of the Sino-Judaic Institute, 755 Northampton, Palo Alto, California 94303.

NEWS CLIPPINGS

Jewish Continuity in Beijing

By Letty Cottin Pogrebin
Reprinted from *Tikkun Magazine*,
Vol. 10 #6

If you're worried about Jewish continuity, go to Beijing, China, where two young women from the United States have been building Jewish life from scratch. With vigor and inventiveness and against all odds, **Roberta Lipson** and **Elyse Silverberg** are trying to solve the ultimate Chinese puzzle, how to create Jewish community in a place where there are almost no Jews, in a country largely tolerant of different belief systems but unexposed to overt expressions of religious diversity. They are piecing together a meaningful community out of memory and desire, industriousness and commitment, passion and will, which is virtually all they have.

They have no synagogue, no *bimah*, no holy ark, no eternal light, yet in the sixteen years they've lived in Beijing, they have been keeping the holidays in their homes and provided communal celebrations for transients and tourists. Their Jewish community has no president or board of directors, no men's club or sisterhood, but they recently hired a Hebrew teacher to educate their children, they've just begun holding weekly Shabbat services in a rented hall, and they now own a *sefer Torah* (donated by a couple who spent one Rosh Hashana with them). Their prayer books are photocopies and their services much abbreviated, but they welcome the Sabbath Queen with joy and reverence, with the Kiddush and "*L'cha dodai*," as well as with poetry by Hannah Senesh and Marge Piercy and when their children sing "*Shabbat Shalom*," the community becomes a congregation and the meeting room a consecrated space.

The members of this community have no kosher food shops or butchers, but they get packages from abroad and on Friday nights, they often share a Shabbat meal. Last fall, during the Fourth World Conference on Women, I was among the visitors from the Jewish Caucus (there were one-hundred-twenty of us from eleven countries), who shared their sumptuous vegetarian Friday night dinner complete with wine and challah.

Roberta Lipson started it all back in 1980

when, as a single woman working in China and missing her family, she organized a Passover seder and twenty-five Jews showed up, a few residents like herself, but mostly transients hungry for *haroset* and belonging. Intermittently through the years, Roberta has led services for Shabbat and the High Holy Days, combining Reform and Conservative traditions and happily sharing the spotlight with volunteer cantors. Now more stable, the community holds two seders each Passover; in 1995, the first night drew one-hundred-eighty participants, the second night, ninety.

These days, Roberta has another reason to care about Jewish continuity - she is very pregnant with her third child. Involved as she is in motherhood and community organizing, she is also a working professional with an impressive biography. A 1976 Brandeis University graduate with a degree in Chinese history, she subsequently earned a Columbia Business School diploma, and in 1979 came to China in search of a career that would combine both interests. After working briefly for a company that closed, she and Elyse Silverberg, another expatriate, started a firm that represents American, Israeli, and European companies in sales, marketing, and other dealings in China. Not only has the business flourished; the partners have become relatives as well. In 1989, Elyse's cousin, Ted Plafker, a freelance writer, came for a visit, fell in love, and never left. Ted and Roberta were married in 1991.

The Shabbat of my visit, their sons, Jonathan, four, and Daniel, three, are very much in evidence, scampering around with *Kippot* on their blond heads, chattering in Chinese to their nanny and in English to the rest of us without so much as a pause between sentences. (I can't begin to convey the cognitive dissonance one feels hearing Jewish toddlers speak Chinese; suffice it to say the experience is humbling.) Like everyone's favorite camp counselor, Roberta is warmly greeted by arriving friends, among them **Professor and Mrs. Zhao**, an older Chinese couple who have been attending Jewish community events for the last five years. The professor traces his origins to tenth-century Kaifeng, where Jewish traders from India and the Middle East came through on the silk route, intermarried, yet kept their religious customs intact. Kaifeng's Jewish

population peaked in the thirteenth century but by the end of the 1800s, only a handful could be found who still wore *kippot*, lit Shabbat candles, and observed *kashrut*. Today there is no one left. Nevertheless, Jewish tours still make pilgrimages to Kaifeng, Chinese citizens calling themselves Kaifeng Jews descend on the Israeli embassy demanding the right of return to Israel, and Professor and Mrs. Zhao come to services.

In the rest of China, there were about 15,000 Jews as recently as the 1930s, according to Wendy Wolfe Fine of the Hornstein Program at Brandeis University. Most were traders and entrepreneurs from the West, Sephardic Jews from Iraq and India, and refugees of the Russian pogroms and the Bolshevik Revolution. During the Nazi period, 18,000 Ashkenazis from Germany, Austria, and Poland found refuge in China, but nearly all the Jews emigrated after the communists took over in 1949. Roberta estimates that about thirty Jews lived in Beijing in the 1980s. Since January 1992 when Israel and China established diplomatic relations and Israel staffed its embassy, the number has increased to some fifty households.

Elyse Silverberg, a graduate of SUNY Albany, also arrived in 1979 when she came to study at Peking University. The following year, she went back to the States to marry a SUNY classmate, Michael Lee, a Chinese man with whom she returned to Beijing to live. In 1981, Elyse teamed up with Roberta when a Chinese friend told her, "There's another Jewish girl in Beijing; you ought to meet each other," and since then, besides being compatible colleagues, the two have been partners in community-building. Elyse-smart, smiling, and ebullient, maintains the Jewish mailing list, adding names referred to her by embassies, friends, and a thriving word-of-mouth network. Her fax number finds its way to travelers who plan to be in Beijing during Jewish holidays. She and Roberta and their families construct a *succah* together every year. About her husband's attitude toward her Judaism, Elyse says, "Michael is a passive, pleasant bystander." He respects her wish to provide a Jewish education to their son, Ari, who, on October 25, 1996, became the Beijing Jewish community's first bar mitzvah boy.

Hong Kong Synagogue Saved from Demolition

By Jane Moir
from *Hong Kong Standard*, Saturday,
January 4, 1997

The crumbling Ohel Leah Synagogue is once again being spared from demolition after experts guaranteed the 96-year-old temple could be restored. Temple trustee Michael Green said yesterday that after lengthy reports it was agreed the synagogue could be restored and renovated.

Age and decay had left the temple in Robinson Road, Mid-Levels, in a precarious state, and at one point in mid-1995, trustees feared they would have to demolish it and build a modern replica. This sparked outrage among the Jewish community and conservationists, who in 1989 had fought a bitter battle with the trustees and the Government to save the temple from destruction. Plaster had been falling off, the roof needed replacing and parts of the building had sunk by up to 28 centimetres by the time the trustees called in building experts from Britain and Australia. The Hong Kong Government had been asked to get involved in the battle to save the temple but it agreed only to monitor the situation.

Archaeological Society chairman William Meacham hailed the good news. "Finally, they saw the light, they did the right thing. I was clear all along that it could be preserved, no thanks to the Hong Kong Government," he said. The exact cost had yet to be worked out.

Meeting Descendants of Kaifeng's Jews

By Ray Kaplan

Last May, my wife Rebecca and I had the distinct pleasure of representing Kulanu on a fascinating visit to the ancient city of Kaifeng in Central China. We were on an 18-day tour, led by Professor Xu Xin and his wife Kong, covering five cities in China plus Hong Kong. Prof. Xu Xin, who spoke at a Kulanu event last year, is the founder and head of the Judaic Studies Department at Nanjing University.

Kaifeng today has a population of about 700,000. While somewhat provincial, it is a bustling town, and our three-star hotel was adequate. Bicycles and pedestrians far outnumbered the cars on the streets.

Kaifeng is located near the Yellow River, which in past centuries often flooded and on a least one occasion wiped out half the city. It was the capital of China in the 11th century. The emperor [of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644)] bestowed on the Jews seven Chinese family names which are still used today by the living descendants of those early Kaifeng Jews. Their community flourished and grew to number some 5,000 souls. They built a synagogue in 1163 and installed 13 Torahs, which they had brought with them on their long journey. They existed as a vibrant Jewish community until the first half of the 19th century, when the last rabbi died and the synagogue gradually went into disrepair. From then on, Jewish observance went steadily downhill as intermarriage and assimilation took their toll.

We headed for the Kaifeng Museum and climbed five flights of stairs to the exhibit on the Kaifeng Jews. As we entered the one very large room, we were told by the director of the exhibits, Zheng Guangqing that this exhibit contained all that had been saved from the Kaifeng Synagogue when it went into disrepair in the mid-19th century. On exhibit were two of the original three stone steles (engraved pillars), the oldest dating to 1489, and had stood in the courtyard of the synagogue for hundreds of years. The third original stele is missing. These steles tell the history of the Kaifeng Jewish community and describe the building of the original synagogue. Another stele, dating from 1679, tells the story of one Kaifeng family, the Zhao's. On one of the walls were photographic impressions of all three steles made by the Canadian missionary Bishop William Charles White in the early 1900's, when he was living in Kaifeng. Also on display was a huge map of Asia showing the route the Jews took in the 11th century, from the Middle East to Kaifeng, over the Silk Road.

From the museum, we bused to the site of the old synagogue, upon which now stands a Chinese hospital. A street near the synagogue is still called South Teaching Scripture Lane, identified in a street sign in Chinese. Prof. Xu told us that he had made up a plaque with the street name in Hebrew, English and Chinese, but had not yet obtained permission from the local government to erect the plaque on the street.

From the synagogue site, we walked to the house of Mrs. Zhao at 21 South Teaching

Scripture Lane. She is the widow of one of the acknowledged Kaifeng Jews, who died several years ago. (In China, when a woman marries, she takes on the religion of her husband. That is how over the years the Kaifeng Jews got to look more and more Chinese. The descendants today all look very much like their Chinese neighbors.) Mrs. Zhao proudly displayed two large menorahs and several other objects that had been given to her by visitors last year. She also had a mezzuzah on her front doorpost.

That night, we had the unique opportunity to meet, at our hotel, with several of the living descendants of the Kaifeng Jews. Both Xu and our local guide, Liang, acted as interpreters, since none of the descendants speaks English. The people we met with included Zhang Xing Wang, a physical education teacher who told us that his Hebrew name was Moshe; Shi Hong, an elderly man; Shi Ping, the grandniece of Shi Hong, who works in the Kaifeng Bureau of Industry and Commerce, Zhao Liang, the five-year-old son of Shi Ping (I gave him a *dreidel* and showed him how to spin it, getting an enthusiastic response); and Zhang Liao with a female colleague, who worked for the Kaifeng daily newspaper and who said they would report on the visit.

We learned that there are now about 200 families (600 people in all) in Kaifeng claiming to be descendants of the Kaifeng Jews. These families carry the seven family names given by the emperor to the original Kaifeng Jews, and most still keep some of the old customs. For example, many don't eat pork and drain the blood from meat before cooking. Some still remove the sinew from the animal's thigh before cooking. Some of the older people still partially observe some holidays, but not much since the old synagogue was destroyed in about 1850. (The elderly man said that in his youth they observed holidays by having meetings and discussions.) They don't circumcise their sons, nor do they know about bar mitzvah.

Shi Ping said that her father knew quite a bit about his ancestors and their customs, but that he passed away about two years ago. His name was Shi Zhongyu.

We were told that all Jewish descendants in Kaifeng are very proud of themselves, act as good citizens, never get into trouble, and never worship idols. They know that

BOOK NOOK

That's Funny, You Don't Look Buddhist

By Sylvia Boorstein

A significant number of Westerners studying Buddhism are Jews. What is the attraction of Buddhism? How can you be both a faithful Jew and a passionately involved Buddhist? In this landmark book, respected Buddhist teacher Sylvia Boorstein shares how her experience of twenty years of meditative practice deepened and enriched her Judaism. Using her own story — and the same down-to-earth charm and wit that have endeared her to her many students and readers — she shows how mindful meditation can lead to the appreciation of every moment, which imbues religion with renewed meaning. Jews and non-Jews alike will be both inspired and delighted by this presentation of how the wisdom of the Buddha and the practice of mindfulness can enhance Western spiritual life.

Far From Home: Western Architecture in China's Northern Treaty Ports

By Tess Johnston and Deke Erh
Old China Hands Press, P.O. Box 54750,
North Point Post Office, Hong Kong.
\$45.00 plus \$7.00 postage (\$13.00 if airmail).

This is the fourth book in their series based on Western architecture in China. The previous volumes were *A Last Look* about Shanghai, *Near to Heaven*, about summer resorts in China, and *God and Country* about Church-related building, plus a chapter on the Jewish legacy. Covering the old port cities of Harbin, Dalny (Dairen), Tientsin, Tsingtao, Chefoo and Hankow, the book again reflects the high standards this remarkable duo set for themselves at the beginning of their project. Supplementing the superb photographs and the illuminating text are historic pictures, maps, personal narratives of Old China Hands, and a 66-page 1928 listing of European and American business concerns and manufacturers. This volume, like the previous ones, provides an unusual insight into the Western presence in China in the decades before World War II. A fifth volume will cover the southern treaty ports.

Author Georges Spunt Passes Away

By Rena Krasno

On August 18, 1996, Georges Spunt died in San Francisco of leukemia. I had caught glimpses of Georges on various occasions during my youth in Shanghai, but we had never had the occasion to converse. Years later, by chance, I came across his book, *A Place in Time*, in a used bookstore in Tel Aviv. I dashed through it from cover to cover chuckling at his wit, the hilarious accounts of eccentric family members and unusual experiences. Lin Yutang's impression of *A Place in Time* was reprinted on the book's flap: "I thoroughly enjoyed this manuscript, partly because I feel it is incredible, but authentic, but mostly because it is so human. There is no accounting for what we humans do."

When my husband and I moved to California, I heard that Georges had resettled in San Francisco. I phoned him, met him, and a wonderful friendship developed. Georges was a charming *raconteur* and I, too, love to tell stories. We would sit among magnificent antiques in his home, sip sherry from century-old goblets and entertain each other. We were both born in Shanghai in 1923, but our lives had been entirely different. As we reminisced, pieces of the great Shanghai jigsaw puzzle would fall into place — a fact that never failed to delight and surprise us.

Georges' father, Jacob Spunt, was the first independent cotton broker in Shanghai, and people often called him the 'Cotton King of China.' Jacob Spunt's fortunes rose and fell, but no matter the circumstances, his family continued living on a high scale hobnobbing with society's *creme de la creme*.

In 1967, Georges' first book *Memoirs & Menus: Confessions of a Culinary Snob*, was published by the Chilton Book Co. of Philadelphia. Georges recounted visits to his Shanghai home of such luminaries as Mischa Elman, Ephraim Zimbalist, Anna Pavlova and Count Galeazzo Ciano who later married Mussolini's daughter and was eventually executed upon the orders of his father-in-law. In this book, Georges also shared treasured recipes with his readers. He had learned to cook Chinese dishes from a regal and stern master chef, Yid-

dish dishes from his grandmother (who claimed, depending on her mood, that she was either Russian or Polish!), Russian dishes from an aunt who sang opera and a czarist officer in exile, Italian, Indian, English and Japanese dishes from other colorful characters.

In 1968 *A Place in Time*, based on biographical facts, was published in the U.S. by G.P. Putnam's Sons, and republished the following year in London by Michael Joseph.

In 1973, T.Y. Crowell published Georges' *The Step by Step Chinese Cookbook*, which was selected as book of the month in May of that year. His last book, *When Nature Speaks*, a biography of Forrest C. Shaklee, was published in 1976.

Unfortunately, all these books are now out of print. Georges told me that he often searched old bookstores for copies of his own books. During his last trip to London he inquired in one of the capital's great bookstores whether they had *A Place in Time*. Georges happily related to me the clerk's response: "Oh, Sir, unfortunately not! It is one of my favorite books and I have my own copy at home. I could never sell that!" When Georges explained that he was the author, the salesman cried: "You must print another edition!" I, too, pressed Georges to do so but he declined, saying that, as I well know, getting a book published is very time consuming.

Georges was delighted when my own book was published in 1992 and, unfortunately for me, did not live to read my forthcoming book due to appear next Spring. He always encouraged me, always told me that my verve 'energized' him and always, always we had such a good time together. I miss you, dear, dear Georges.

"Kavkaz"

By Yervand Markarian

The author, a Russian-Armenian, tells the story of the first 32 years of his life in Shanghai's multi-ethnic community. He was the owner of one of Shanghai's best restaurants, the *Renaissance*. Later, he managed another restaurant, the *Kavkaz*, together with his father-in-law.

Markarian lived through the exciting pe-

CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS

Shanghai Exhibition of Austrian Jew, Dr. Jacob Rosenfeld

By Deng Xinyu

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Austria, the Exhibition "Dr. Jacob Rosenfeld's Life" was held in Shanghai in April, 1996, jointly sponsored by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS) and the Austria Friendship Association with the PRC (AFAC). More than 200 distinguished guests attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition. Among them were the Vice-Mayor of Shanghai, Ms. Xie Lijuan, the Chairman of AFAC and former Vice-President of the Austrian Parliament, Dr. Walter Strutzenberger, the Austrian Minister of the Interior, Dr. Caspar Einem and the Austrian Ambassador to China, Dr. Dietrich Bukowski.

Professor Pan Guang, Dean of the Center of Jewish Studies in Shanghai, presided over the ceremony. Ambassador Bukowski highly praised Dr. Rosenfeld, a Jewish general in the Chinese army. Dr. Rosenfeld came to Shanghai from Vienna under Nazi rule in 1939 to take refuge, then left Shanghai to join the anti-Japanese war in 1941. He served in the ranks of the Chinese army for ten years, obtaining the highest rank of Commander of the Medical Corps as a foreigner. Had he not died of a heart attack abruptly in Tel Aviv in 1951, it was speculated he would have been appointed Vice-Minister of Health of the People's Republic of China.

The Fred and Barbara Kort Conference on Jewish Studies in China

A delegation from Tel Aviv University (TAU), headed by TAU President Prof. Yoram Dinstein, visited China recently as guests of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, under the auspices of the Academic Exchange Seminar in China, sponsored by Fred and Barbara Kort of Los Angeles. The seminar was held in cooperation with the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati, Ohio.

China is rarely thought of as a hub of Jewish culture, but in the 1930s, Shanghai was home to a thriving Jewish community of thirty thousand people. "Jews and the Chinese Experience" was among the topics explored at the "Fred and Barbara Kort Conference on Jewish Studies in China," held in Nanjing. The first assembly of its kind in China, the international symposium was organized jointly by Nanjing University and Tel Aviv University (TAU).

The conference, co-directed by Prof. Aharon Oppenheimer of the Department of Jewish History at TAU, and Prof. Xu Xin, Director of the Center for Judaic Studies at Nanjing University, included lectures presented by Chinese, Israeli and American professors and scholars.

Prof. Pan Guang, of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, presented a paper entitled "Shanghai's Case in the Annals of Jewish Diaspora."

China's relationship with Israel was the subject of Prof. Xu Xin's lecture, entitled

"Israel Through Chinese eyes." Prof. Xu Xin, President of the China-Judaic Studies Association, was the first Chinese scholar to give a public lecture at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, which he did in 1988, before the two countries had established full diplomatic ties.

Other topics discussed included: "The Bible and Exegesis," "The Evolution of Judaism," "Roles of the Jewish and Chinese Diaspora to be Played in the World" and "The Putative Pair: Chinese and Jews in Modern European and Jewish Thought."

Monumenta Serica Conference on Jews of Kaifeng and Shanghai

Sankt Augustin, Germany
September 22-26, 1997

As of this writing, Sino-Judaic Institute Board members Wendy Abraham, Leo Gabow, Rena Krasno, Donald Daniel Leslie and Michael Pollak will be presenting papers at this upcoming conference in Germany.

The conference and a number of activities connected to it is intended to draw attention to the Jewish presence in China, its historical context as well as intercultural and interreligious aspects.

Anyone interested in attending or presenting a paper should contact: Dr. Roman Malek, Institut Monumenta Serica, Arnold-Janssen Strasse 20, D-53754 Sankt Augustin; Phone: 02241/237-431; Fax: 02241/205841; Telex: 889559 steyl d.

Chinese Jews Outside Kaifeng . . .

(continued from page 11)

²⁹ See Pollak, 1993, G-10, pp. 54-56.

³⁰ See D.D. Leslie, letter in Points East 1.2 (April 1986), pp. 2, 7-8; and L. Gabow, in Points East 2.2 (Aug. 1987), pp. 1, 11-13.

³¹ See Samuel Stupa Shih in Orient 5 (Nov. 1954), pp. 29-31. But see also Pollak's detailed interview and analysis, 1983, pp. 267-273, 347-353, 408; and Leslie, 1972, pp. 75-76. Perhaps significantly, he omits Shi as a Kaifeng surname! Is this because his branch of the Shi clan had originated in but left Kaifeng? Shih himself denies this.

³² See Pollak, pp. 351-2. One must wonder if this is a Muslim cemetery, though it can hardly be the one established as early as the Song. Though there was undoubtedly a Jewish community in Hangzhou during the Ming, it is unlikely that it survived into the Qing period.

³³ Jin Xiaojing, "Zhongguo-de Youtairen" (Chinese Jews), Shehui kexue zhanxian (Social Sciences Battlefield), 1981, no. 4, pp. 238-240. See also the far more moderate account by Pan Guangdan, in Shixue 1980, no. 3, pp. 171-186, translated by Feng Shize, "Jews in Ancient China: A Historical Survey," Social Sciences in China, 1981, no. 4, pp. 195-216. Zhu Jiang's suggestion, in Shapiro, of Jews in Yangzhou is not convincing.

other Jews in the world, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, have had some very bad experiences.

Relations with Israel seem to be developing. Zhang said that he visited the Israeli embassy in Beijing three times and that the Israeli commercial counselor came to Kaifeng to visit the community after formal relations were established between Israel and China in 1992. He indicated that soon they will twin with a city in Israel, Kiryat Motzkin (outside of Haifa). This was being promoted by the second Israeli ambassador, who himself visited Kaifeng. A doctor from Shi Hong's family visited Israel for six months and studied medicine while there. He was no longer living in Kaifeng.

We also learned that these descendants meet with Jewish visitors to Kaifeng about three or four times a year. Zhang believes that there are a number of descendants who would be very interested in learning about Jewish history, customs, and holidays, and would be very delighted if a Chinese-speaking teacher would come and spend some time with them.

I had brought from the US some Jewish artifacts, which I presented to our new Chinese friends. These gifts included the dreidel for the young boy, a number of yarmulkes for Zhang, and a translation of the Shema Yisrael prayer in English, Hebrew, and Chinese.

Later that same night, Xu and I went to the apartment of Wang Yisha, the retired curator of the Kaifeng Museum, although not himself a descendant of Jews. According to Xu, his good friend Wang is an eminent scholar and has done considerable research on the Kaifeng Jews. He knows more about the history of the Kaifeng Jews than any other person, according to Xu. He had injured his hip recently. He and his wife and daughter have an unpretentious two-room apartment with a small kitchen and bathroom on the third floor of a walk-up building. He greeted us warmly from his bed. He shared with us some completed manuscripts that represented many interviews that he had conducted with present descendants of the Kaifeng Jews. He plans to publish this material (in Chinese, as was his first book on the Kaifeng Jews). I wished him success in his most noble endeavors.

Recollections of Sugihara's Widow

By Keiko Ihara
Reprinted from the Japan Times Weekly,
December 17, 1994

The prim, soft-spoken widow of Chiune "Senpo" Sugihara recalls the war years.

In 1940, Yukiko resided in Kaunas, Lithuania, with her three children, while her husband was stationed there as "acting consul general."

Mrs. Sugihara explains that her husband was sent to the Baltics on a sensitive mission to collect vital information on the rapidly changing European situation following the German and Soviet partition of Poland. He declined the advice of his superiors at the Foreign ministry to use a pseudonym, recalled Mrs. Sugihara. A new name would have been useless as he was already familiar to the Soviets.

After breakfast with the family on the morning of July 27, 1940, Sugihara went down to his half-basement office to do routine desk work. Soon, he rushed upstairs and told his wife to look outside the window.

"It was such a surprise," she recalled. "Right in front of the consulate was a crowd of people who were clinging to the iron fence. They looked as if they were about to swarm into our house at any moment . . ."

The servant told Sugihara in Russian that the visitors were all Jews. The Japanese consul invited five "representatives" to come into his office.

The representatives of the Polish Jews were seeking transit visas through the Soviet Union and Japan, the only possible route of escape. Their destination would be any country where Jews could live safely out of the reach of the Nazis. Most hoped to emigrate to the United States, where they had relatives.

If the visa requests were few in number, it was within Sugihara's power to issue them. But there were at least 200 people waiting outside. And he was told that the number of Jews who want to have the visas would greatly increase. He would need official approval from the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo to issue scores of transit visas.

After asking the refugees to return to the consulate the following day, he decided

to send a coded express telegram to Tokyo to obtain permission.

"The answer was 'no,'" explained Mrs. Sugihara. "My husband sent three telegrams in two days explaining the situation in detail and that he could not let the matter go unheeded."

After receiving the final negative reply from Tokyo, Sugihara asked his wife what he should do.

"As a human being, he couldn't close his eyes to their plight," she said.

Meanwhile, Sugihara contacted the Soviet consul general since the Jewish refugees also needed Soviet permission for passage to Japan. The Soviet official was so impressed by Sugihara's command of Russian, recalled Yukiko, that he asked Sugihara at their meeting: "Are you really a Japanese?"

The Soviet diplomat promised cooperation. With safe passage for the refugees, Sugihara rushed back to his office. The Japanese consul started stamping and signing the transit visas on Aug. 1. He kept on issuing the visas day and night, skipping lunch.

There was no time to be wasted. The Soviet government repeatedly requested the closing of the consulate and for Sugihara to leave Lithuania, now officially annexed by Moscow.

Still, Chiune kept on signing more visas. Two weeks passed. Then Sugihara collapsed from exhaustion. Yet his wife encouraged him to continue.

A month later, on Aug. 28, Tokyo ordered him out of Lithuania immediately. He closed the consulate and moved his family to a hotel. But the Jewish refugees just followed him to the hotel, from where he once again issued visas.

On Sept. 1, as Sugihara and his family prepared to board a train bound for Berlin, yet another group of Jews approached them. He stamped and signed the visas from his seat inside the train, until the rail car moved past the end of the platform.

In Berlin, Sugihara received instructions to join the consulate in Prague. Later, he was assigned to Konisberg, and then Bucharest.

At the European war's end, he was in Romania.

After detention in Russia, the Sugihara family returned to Japan in 1947. Despite his premature retirement from the diplomatic service, Sugihara and his wife remained silent about the Lithuanian episode.

"There was nothing extraordinary about it," she said. "It was not something to boast about. We just did a natural thing as human beings."

In 1960, at age 60, Sugihara was appointed head of the Moscow office of a trading firm. He left for Moscow alone and stayed there for 15 years.

On a visit home in 1968, Sugihara received a phone call from the Israeli Embassy. Mr. Nishri, one of the five Jewish representatives in Kaunas, had survived the war and now worked at the Tokyo Embassy. The Israeli produced a small piece of paper. It was the visa Sugihara issued in Lithuania.

"Were it not for this meeting, our experience in Lithuania in 1940 might have never become known to the public," Yukiko said.

Afterward, Sugihara's whereabouts became known to the Jewish community in Japan. Sugihara had never told his three grown-up sons what had happened in Kaunas. Even the oldest son, then a pre-school child, could only vaguely remember the incident.

Mrs. Sugihara is not entirely pleased by the somewhat melodramatic approach used by a major TV network in portraying her late husband. "Actually, my husband did not very much like to be reported on by the media, or talked about by people."

Their youngest son was invited to Israel as an exchange student by the Hebrew University in 1968. The following year, Sugihara visited Israel for the first time. There, he was greeted by Dr. Ephram Warhattig, then religion minister of the Israeli government, who was also one of the five representatives in Kaunas. Sugihara was conferred with an award, and later in 1985 the Israeli government commended him with the Yad Vashem award.

Joseph Shimkin and Sugihara
Reprinted from the *Japan Times Weekly*, December 17, 1994

After helping to save the lives of an estimated 6,000 Jewish refugees from German-occupied Poland, Chiune Sugihara boarded the train to Berlin. His job was done.

Little did he know it then, but his consul's signature and seal were already saving many more lives and continued to even after he left Lithuania — thanks to a sleight of hand by Joseph Shimkin.

In 1940, Shimkin worked for the American Joint Distribution Committee, one of several groups that assisted Jewish refugees to escape from the Nazis.

After Soviet authorities annexed Lithuania, closing every avenue of escape, he took the only recourse — forging the Japanese consulate's official rubber stamp and Sugihara's signature. Besides the ersatz transit visas, Shimkin provided other logistical support and accompanied many refugees on the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, where they boarded ships to Japan.

"But he made the trips all because of his kindness and willingness to take care of other people, in disregard of risks to his own safety," said his widow, Sumiko.

"Joseph actually did not see Mr. Sugihara (in 1940)," she adds. The fact that he had forged the official transit visas caused Shimkin to feel too guilty to ever visit the former Japanese diplomat in Lithuania. Another reason, said the widow, was his fear of being caught. Whenever he accompanied Jewish refugees on the long train journey, Shimkin was tailed by the dreaded GPU, the Soviet secret police that predates the KGB.

Though Shimkin had been residing in Japan for nearly 40 years after the war, she said, "it wasn't until 1985 that he first met Mr. Sugihara." Shimkin, who died in August at age 88, spent most of his postwar years in Tokyo. His coming to this country was no accident. It was the only option available at the time.

After the Soviet authorities clamped down on the Jewish "underground railroad" in Lithuania, Shimkin took one final journey

to Vladivostok, where he caught a steamer to Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture. His American visa was issued by the U.S. Embassy because of his activity with the American Joint Distribution Committee.

On arrival in Japan, however, he was told by Japanese customs officials that his U.S. visa was invalid. The American government had informed them that he might be an espionage agent working for the Nazis, Shimkin later told his wife.

He was deported to Vladivostok. On a second attempt, he came back with a new Japanese visa, en route to Japanese-occupied Shanghai. There, Shimkin ran a trading company in the Jewish district. After the Chinese Communist takeover, he decided to move to Japan in 1955. As he had lost all of his family and relatives in the Holocaust, he had nowhere else to go.

Sumiko recalled her first encounter with Shimkin, who was an in-patient at the hospital where she worked as a medical technician. As a Christian, she had a considerable understanding of Judaism, which led the two to discuss their respective religious faiths. After his recovery, they frequently attended the local synagogue and, in a few years, were married.

Even to his wife, Shimkin rarely talked about his wartime experiences.

When Sugihara received the Yad Vashem Award from the Israeli government in 1985, Shimkin decided to meet the man whose signature he could reproduce by memory.

At the Israeli Embassy in Tokyo, Sugihara and his double, Joseph Shimkin, shook hands.

Hongkou "Sunshine House" Official Opening

Reported by Wu Xi-Rong
As printed in the *Haier Newspaper*, October 25, 1996

After two years' preparation the opening of the Hongkou District's "Sunshine House" and "Sunshine House Association" was announced. Located in the Hongkou District's Workers' Club #1, the "Sunshine House" and the "Sunshine House Association" have come to fruition with the support of the Shanghai Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, the Hongkou District Government, the Hongkou District Trade

Points East

Points East

from Kaifeng Jews. However, some most remarkable claims have been made. Here is the main claim for Jewish communities outside Kaifeng:³³

"As far as I know, except for the close to 200 who are concentrated in communities in Kaifeng, Henan, today, the rest of the Chinese Jews are distributed in a dozen or so cities throughout the country, in the northwest (including Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai and Xinjiang), the southwest (Sichuan and Yunnan), the northeast area and Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces in which Yangzhou (in Jiangsu) has the largest numbers. As for members of my clan [the Jin], they are distributed in eight cities of the motherland, namely Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Chengdu, Kunming, Xi'an, Lanzhou and Luoyang."

Hopefully, these vast claims will be checked one day. It seems likely that the term "Chinese Jews" refers only to descendants of the Kaifeng Jews who have converted to Islam or simply been absorbed into Chinese Confucianism.

Conclusion

One cannot dismiss out of hand the claims made by Shi (Shih), Jin or others of Chinese Jews living in Chinese cities other than Kaifeng. Nevertheless, it is impossible to accept any such claims without confirmation. It is highly unlikely that any communities outside the Kaifeng one had survived into the Qing, except possibly in Beijing, though even this one was almost certainly derived from Kaifeng in any case. Until we have further eyewitness accounts, for Hangzhou and Yangzhou, Ningbo and Xining, Tangchuang or Kunming or elsewhere, we must remain skeptical.

¹ I owe a considerable debt to Michael Pollak who found a number of the references to Chinese Jews outside Kaifeng. For further details, see the bibliographies by Loewenthal, Pollak and myself: *M. Pollak, The Sino-Judaic Bibliographies of Rudolf Loewenthal, Cincinnati/Palo Alto, 1988, and The Jews of Dynastic China: A Critical Bibliography, Cincinnati/Menlo Park, 1993; D.D. Leslie, Jews and Judaism in Traditional China: A Comprehensive Bibliography, forthcoming.*

² See D.D. Leslie, *The Survival of the Chinese Jews, Leiden, 1972; M. Pollak, Mandarins, Jews and Missionaries, Philadelphia, 1980 (2nd edition 1983), J. Dehergne and D.D. Leslie, Juifs de Chine, Rome/Paris, 1980. These works resume and develop the work done by Tobar, Chen Yuan,*

White, Loewenthal and others. Primary sources include steles in Chinese, manuscripts in Hebrew, the Memorial Book in Hebrew and Chinese, letters in Italian, Portuguese, Latin and French by the Jesuit missionaries in China.

³ See books and articles (for references, see the bibliographies in note 1) by E. Avichail, V.L. Benjamin, J. Bresler, S.R. Cammann, A.R. Crouch, D. Davies, S. Franks, L. Gabow, D.C. Graham, S.B. Isenberg, N. Katz, T. Parfitt, W. Ruby, Sawngtinlam, H. Shapiro, T. Torrance, S. Weill, Zaitanchhungi, and others, dealing with claims for the Qiang (Qiang Min), Manipuris, Mizo, Shinlung. Zhang Sui, in 1990, made the remarkable claim to have seen Hebrew writings among the Bailan Qiang. See Pollak, 1993, C-25, pp. 37-38. The possibility of Jews living or having lived in Tibet needs further investigation, following on the article by Nathan Katz. David Levy (Wong) claimed to be a 'Sinkiang Jew'. Are there pockets of Jews in this area, or in the Ningxia/Gansu area? There is no real evidence.

⁴ See, e.g., Leslie, 1972, pp. 3-5. China exchanged embassies with Parthia from c. 100 B.C.E., but it is pure speculation to link Jews with this. We should ignore the suggestion in the 1663 stele of a Zhou-time entry. However, the story of Moses is reflected in Chinese sources as early as the 1st century C.E., see D.D. Leslie, "Moses the Bamboo King", *East Asian History* 6 (1993).

⁵ For a detailed analysis of these Persian religions in China and the Chinese sources that mention them, see D.D. Leslie, "Persian Temples in T'ang China," *Monumenta Serica* 35 (1981-3), following on work by Chen Yuan, E. Chavannes, F.S. Drake and others. Persistent suggestions of Jews in Luoyang are based on the erroneous identification by A. Wylie, of Mazdean and Nestorian temples as Jewish; and the erroneous identification by G. Prevost of an inscription in Kharosthi script as Hebrew.

⁶ See, e.g., N. Thomas, "Radhanites, Chinese Jews and the Silk Road of the Steppes," *Sino-Judaica* 1 (1991), citing work by M. Gil, L. Rabinowitz, J.T. Reinaud, etc. Short Hebrew writings dated as from the 8th century have been found in Dandan Uiliq and Dunhuang on the land silk route. But these also do not prove settlement as opposed to visitors. Stories of Jews visiting China are also found in Eldad Ha-Dani, 9th century, and Buzurg, 9th century. It is difficult to treat these seriously.

⁷ The story is repeated in several other Arabic sources including Mas'udi in 943. For references to works by J.T. Reinaud, G. Ferrand, H.S. Levy and others, see Leslie, 1972, pp. 5-9, 166-170.

⁸ See, e.g., D.D. Leslie, *Islam in China, Canberra, 1986. Chinese Muslim sources*

claim Muslim communities in the Tang for several other cities, best ignored. Claims for the Song are more convincing, e.g. in Beijing (Peking) and Ningbo. There are Chinese references to Muslim cemeteries in Guangzhou, Quanzhou and Hangzhou for the Song.

⁹ For references, see Leslie, 1972, pp. 11-16, 201. The mention (Leslie, pp. 14-15, 30) of Nanchang, Jiangxi, is a mistake. Jiangnan is not Jiangxi but South China.

¹⁰ For references, see Leslie, 1972, pp. 15, 170-2.

¹¹ See, e.g., Leslie, 1972, pp. 16-17, 30, 75, 176-7, Pollak, 1980, pp. 65, 110.

¹² See Leslie, 1972, pp. 29-30, 131-2. It is possible that Ningbo was named as Nikpa by the Jewish traveler Benjamin of Tudela, 12th century, see Leslie, pp. 10, 164.

¹³ See R. Simon, 1970, p. 75.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Leslie, 1972, pp. 17, 75.

¹⁵ See Pollak, 1980, p. 369.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Leslie, 1972, pp. 116-7.

¹⁷ See D.D. Leslie, "Persia or Yemen? The Origin of the Kaifeng Jews," pp. 101-111 in *Sino-Iranica, Jerusalem, 1982, edited by Shaul Shaked.*

¹⁸ J. Barrow, see Pollak, 1980, p. 380, 1993, A-14, p. 9.

¹⁹ See Pollak, 1980, p. 385, for a similar unconvincing claim for Hangzhou.

²⁰ Pollak, 1993, G-10, pp. 55-56.

²¹ See Benjamin II, in Leslie, 1972, p. 59, Pollak, 1980, pp. 171-3, 387-8.

²² See D.D. Leslie and M. Pollak, "The Fink/Liebermann visit to the Kaifeng Jews", *Studies in Booklore and Bibliography* 20 (1996). The Fink/Liebermann single visit to Kaifeng in 1864 or 1867 was first published in the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1867.

²³ See Pollak, 1993, C-21, pp. 34-35.

²⁴ See Pollak, 1993, B-02, p. 12, J-03, pp. 72-73.

²⁵ See Pollak, 1980, p. 390.

²⁶ See J.J. Liebermann, 1899; and also M. Adler, 1900. Cf. Pollak, pp. 201-5, 395, Leslie, pp. 75, 196.

²⁷ See, e.g., Joseph Wolff, 1861. Cf. Pollak, 1980, pp. 136, 383.

²⁸ See, e.g., Pollak, 1980, pp. 182, 389-90, 1993, C-10, J-05.

Union and the sponsorship of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has provided modern rehabilitation equipment for handicapped individuals as well as audio-video materials which are valued a RMB 1 million yuan. The "Sunshine House," a window toward the world, is the first community facility in Shanghai providing rehabilitation services to the handicapped. These services will be used to serve seniors, disabled people, and children with mental disabilities.

Those present at the opening ceremony were Xia Shou-an, director of the Shanghai Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, Xue Quan-rong, mayor of the Hongkou District government, Ying Pei-yi, vice secretary of the Hongkou CCP Party Committee, Shi Yao-xing, deputy mayor, Song Mei-hong, chairman of the Hongkou District Trade Union as well as Ms. Henryka Manes and Dr. William Recant, representing the JDC.

United Jewish Congregation (UJC) of Hong Kong Teams with 'the Joint' to Aid Elderly, Handicapped in Shanghai

Reprinted from *The Shofar*, Sept./Oct. 1996

The UJC has committed itself to lending a hand to members of a Shanghai district that once housed some 20,000 Jewish refugees during World War II.

Executive Committee member Benjamin Frankel represented the Congregation at special ceremonies in October in Shanghai marking a new phase in a project launched nearly three years ago by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The project's goals are: 1) to introduce innovative social services for the elderly, 2) provide computer programs to help mentally handicapped children improve motor and cognitive skills, 3) provide wheelchairs and other assistive devices, 4) strengthen community programs in general.

The UJC has offered to provide liaison, financial, and personnel support for the program. Project consultant Henryka Manes will stop in Hong Kong in late October to brief community members on latest developments and how The UJC can best help.

In a recent letter to Shanghai's Vice Mayor,

Zhao Qi Zheng, Ms. Manes emphasized the UJC's role.

"I am . . . happy to inform you that recently the Jewish community of Hong Kong has become our partner in this project. They have already visited the Hongkou program in September and will be back in Shanghai during our visit in October. The Hong Kong Jewish community is made up of very many talented individuals. Both Hongkou and JDC will greatly benefit from the talent and wisdom of our Hong Kong partners."

". . . Today the Jewish people of the United States and Hong Kong, through the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), are in Hongkou to share with our friends our 80 years of experience in programs that improve the lives of vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children with mental disabilities or people with physical disabilities. We are in Shanghai because of our friendship with the Chinese people."

In her letter, Ms. Manes also highlighted achievements of the project to date:

"In December 1995 we took a delegation of six Chinese professionals to Israel for training and work visits to many programs that serve the elderly and children with mental disabilities. We hosted the delegation for three weeks.

The first JDC training program in Shanghai took place in April 1996 when I brought a team of four American and Israeli specialists. We also brought with us a 20-foot container of more than 770 wheelchairs, crutches, canes, and other assistive devices, as well as six computers, three printers and over 20 software programs. In all, JDC invested more than \$120,000 in this project so far.

"Our partners in Hongkou have also invested a great deal of energy, hard work and funds to cover some of the local expenses. For example, when our specialists are in Shanghai, the Hongkou District pays for their hotel, food, local transportation and translators' fees. Our partners are serious and committed and we believe that soon they will become the trainers of other Chinese professionals. It is our hope that the Hongkou District and the city of Shanghai will become leaders in innovative social services and educational programs in China.

'You may know that during World War II, 20,000 Jewish refugees lived in the Hongkou District. And although Hongkou residents at the time were very poor and under foreign occupation, they welcomed the Jewish refugees. During that time many friendships between Chinese and Jewish people developed. JDC was in Shanghai from 1940 to 1952 providing funding and helping establish social services, educational programs and medical care for the Jewish refugees."

Chinese Jews Outside Kaifeng . . .

(continued from page 1)

ish converts were made in Zaitun (Quanzhou). We should note that a large number of Muslim and Christian inscriptions in Chinese and Arabic are extant in Quanzhou, but not a single one in Hebrew. Ibn Battuta, 1346, writes of Jews and a "Jews' Gate" in Khansa (Hangzhou).

We have no direct evidence for other cities, but also not for Kaifeng, though here we can be certain from the native Jewish inscriptions that a synagogue was built in the 12th century, much earlier.

For the Ming (1369-1644) and early Manchu (Qing) period (1644-1911), Chinese sources are almost entirely silent. However, besides Kaifeng, we know that Beijing (according to Goes) and Nanjing (according to Semedo, 1642) and especially Hangzhou (with a synagogue, demolished by c. 1600, according to Ricci, 1605) had Jewish communities as late as the 16th century. Most of these, it is suggested, assimilated to Islam.¹¹ The Jewish inscriptions in Chinese in Kaifeng suggest strongly the possibility of Jewish communities in Ningbo (from where two Torah scrolls were obtained, c. 1457-1465) and in Yangzhou (for one Torah scroll came from there in 1512, and the 1512 inscription in Kaifeng seems to have originated there).¹² Individuals living in Yangzhou, Ningbo and Ningxia are also mentioned. The 1512 inscription actually writes "Moreover, believers are not only in Kaifeng".

The 1489 synagogue inscription in Chinese mentions Jews appointed to positions in Zhejiang, c. 1425, in She (Anhui), c. 1436-1450, in Chongming (Jiangsu), c. 1447, in Ningxia, c. 1489, and in Weiyang

(Yangzhou), c. 1489. Ricci also mentions a Jewish official appointed in Yangzhou, c. 1605. Most of these appointments have been confirmed by the local gazetteers of these places. These do not, however, mean any kind of Jewish settlement in these places, for officials always had to leave after a few years.

The 1663 synagogue inscription in Chinese names several Jewish officials and army officers stationed in various parts of China, mentioning in particular Kunming and Yiliang in Yunnan, Shanghai *xian*, Dingzhou *fu*, in Fujian, Guyuan in Shaanxi, Pingyuan in Shanxi. Once again we have to state this does not provide real evidence of any Jewish community in these places. Gaubil, 1725, mentions Jews as having been in Zhejiang, Peicheli and Shaanxi.¹³ We can be fairly sure, however, that he just took this from Ricci or the 1663 inscription.

A few isolated cases are given by foreigners. Bell of Antermony, 1720, saw Jews in Beijing, but these may well have been from Kaifeng.¹⁴ Gaubil, 1723-5, also mentions Jews in Beijing. Gaubil was also told that a Torah scroll had come to Kaifeng from Canton via Ningxia in the 16th century. More interesting is Froger, who cites Visdelou as meeting a Jew in Jining-zhou in Shandong in 1700.¹⁵ We must stress that the Kaifeng community was almost certainly cut off from Jewry elsewhere from the 16th century, suggesting that there were no other Jewish communities in China with which to associate or intermarry.¹⁶

It is important to stress that though we are fairly confident that the Kaifeng community originated in Persia,¹⁷ we do not know whether it came by sea (via Guangzhou or Quanzhou) or by land (via Dunhuang).

We should note too that by the Qing there were several million Muslims in most areas of China, in Gansu and Yunnan, in Xi'an, Hangzhou and Kaifeng, in Beijing and Nanjing. One can only suspect that there were pockets of Jews among these large Muslim communities as has proved to be the case for Kaifeng (with some evidence also for Hangzhou, Beijing and Nanjing).

2. Modern References to Chinese Jews Outside Kaifeng

The Jesuit missionaries discovered true Rabbanite (Talmudic) Jews in Kaifeng,

stemming from the Song. It is likely that other Jewish communities were formed elsewhere, but the evidence is slight, and it is doubtful if any survived into the 18th or 19th century. In recent years, many claims have been made, some more plausible than others.

A Jewish community in Hangzhou is claimed for 1804.¹⁸ However, it is highly likely that this claim is based on a misreading of Ricci's much earlier statement.¹⁹

Stanley Jackson, in his book *The Sassoons*, 1968, also suggests somewhat dubiously a Chinese Jewish community in Shanghai for c. 1850. Others claim to have met (Kaifeng) Chinese Jews there.²⁰

Equally unconvincing is the claim of Aaron Arnould, chief rabbi of Strasbourg, in 1855, based on a letter from his cousin Jacques Aaron in Shanghai, c. 1851-2, of Jews in Kangchiou (Hangzhou?) and Arnoy (Amoy?), Chang-chou (Zhangzhou or Quanzhou?) and Peking.²¹

Liebermann in 1867 (though not Fink) has 200 families moving from Kaifeng to Beijing with three Torah scrolls. Many scholars met Jews in Beijing around this time (e.g. Cordier, Wells Williams, Wylie?), but this is one of the few suggestions of a real community as opposed to Kaifeng Jews visiting there. Liebermann/Fink also mentions Jews in Hansho (Hangzhou?) and near Ningbo, probably based on Kaifeng claims. Fink (though not Liebermann) mentions an unnamed Jewish Mandarin in Canton, c. 1864.²²

Finn, 1872, citing Simon, writes of a rabbi and synagogue in Tianjin, c. 1863.²³ One must wonder if this was a western group of Jews. When did foreign Jews first reach Tianjin?

F.H. Balfour writes of Jews in Hangzhou and Suzhou in 1876, but if true these would presumably have come from Kaifeng.²⁴

I.N. Choynski, in 1880, met a Chinese who told him he came from a Jewish group in Ningbo.²⁵

A German (Jewish) Colonel Lehmann is supposed to have found a colony of 500 Jews in Tang-chwang (Tangchuang), 100 miles southwest of Kaifeng, c. 1899. This claim has never been confirmed.²⁶

Fred Meyer Schroder, cited by Robert Easton, *China Caravans*, 1982, claimed a community in Baoding-fu, north of Kaifeng, c. 1912. His story, however, is not convincing.

Ed. Noyé, 1935, and others, claim Jews were in Xi'an. This has not been confirmed.

Almost all such claims imply some kind of Jewish community stemming from earlier times. It is possible that individual Kaifeng Jews migrated to these places, but the suggestion of local communities is dubious. We should note here folklore beliefs in India or other western areas of Jews visiting China in the 19th century or earlier.²⁷ We should also note that sightings of Chinese (Kaifeng?) Jews have been recorded for various places.²⁸

More recently, we have had even more dubious claims of Jews in other cities. Murray Gendell claimed to have seen Chinese Jews at a service for American soldiers in Kunming in 1945, highly unlikely.²⁹ Jews were supposedly seen in Xining in 1949. Moshe Leah, in Taiwan, claimed to be of Jewish descent, c. 1986, certainly possible, but his photos of Hebrew scrolls are not convincing.³⁰

More significant, if it could ever be confirmed, is the claim by Samuel Stupa Shih (Shih Hung-mok, Shi Hongmo). Born in Kunming (into a Jewish community?) in 1924, he claims to be the only Chinese Jew in Taiwan. Two separate streams of Jews came to China from India, one to Changan (Xi'an) in 620 C.E., the other in the 8th century, which reached Kaifeng in the 12th century. The Kunming group stemmed from the first stream, passing through Shangjiu in the 9th century, arriving in Kunming and Dali in Yunnan in the 14th century. This group comprised 85 souls, of four clans, Shi, Li, Ai and Ha (this last surname only is not a Kaifeng one.)³¹

Shih also claims to have found a Jewish cemetery in Hangzhou, several miles to the west of the city, with only Qing dates on the tombstones, with some Hebrew as well as Arabic writing.³²

In recent years, a renewed interest has developed in mainland China. A few Chinese Muslims have discovered their Jewish ancestry and written about their family traditions. There can be little doubt that these or most of them are truly descended