

BOOK NOOK

Les Francais de Shanghai 1849 - 1949

(The French in Shanghai)
Guy Brossollet / Belin: Paris 1999
reviewed by Rena Krasno

Brossollet's history of the French community in Shanghai covers one century: from its beginnings in 1849 until its final days in 1949. The book is based on interviews with eyewitnesses, as well as on research. *Les Francais de Shanghai* received the Prix Auguste Pavie awarded by the Academy of Overseas Sciences.

Les Francais de Shanghai is of particular interest to former Shanghaianders who have personally met, or knew of, most of the people mentioned in the book. Moreover, they no doubt learned many fascinating details of Shanghai's history. A number of former French old China hands have complained to me of inaccuracies in the book, perhaps a result of faulty memories of some of those interviewed. On the whole, however, I believe that Brossollet brings to light numerous interesting details about the French Concession, which were not widely known.

Here is a section I translated for *Points East* readers about French Jewish jewelers in Shanghai.

Towards 1895, the Frenchman Max Sennet opened a jewelry store on Nanking Rd. The Sennet family, originated in Colman, left Alsace in 1870, fleeing the German occupation. Max spent several years in Paris, before embarking for China. Married, but childless, he invited to Shanghai his nephew, Marcel Heimendiger, who family also came from Colmar. Marcel was 18 years old when he arrived in China in 1908. He learned his craft from his uncle, then became his partner. Ultimately Jacques Levy joined the business.

Max Sennet retired in 1925 but retained his name in the business. Up to 1937, the jewelry store on 75 Nanking Rd. carried the names: Sennet Freres, Heimendinger and Levy. It was the most respected in Shanghai, surpassing by far its closest competitor, the English firm Boyes & Basset, located on the same road, selling mainly silver and items of luxury.

The French were specialists in precious stones. Every year, in turn, Marcel Heimendinger and Jacques Levy took the Trans-Siberian train to Antwerp - 15 days of travel there and 15 days back. They crossed Manchuria paying ransom both to Chinese warlords and to the Japanese. (Siberia, at the time, was a territory disputed by Russian "White" and "Red" armies, the Russian empire was shaken by revolution . . .) These gentlemen returned with gems in their belts - their merchandise for the coming year.

The stones were cut in Flemish workshops, sorted and mounted in Shanghai by Chinese employees. The clientele was wealthy. Chinese customers bought mostly rings - many of which were sumptuous. Roger Heimendinger, Marcel's son born in Shanghai in 1925, remembers having seen some of these jewels decorated with solitaires weighing up to 18 carats. European ladies preferred necklaces and bracelets, usually with less impressive diamonds.

Marcel Heimendinger married in Shanghai a young lady who had arrived in China after a very painful trip. Towards 1900, her parents fled Riga - at the time Russian - to escape pogroms destroying Jewish communities in Latvia. They crossed the continent in dreadful conditions that can only be imagined, and landed in Shanghai where the father died exhausted by his ordeal. The mother and daughter survived, and later never mentioned their experience of these terrible years. Mrs. Heimendinger, a symbol of international Shanghai, spoke 7 languages: Latvian, Yiddish, Russian, German, English, French and Japanese.

In 1937, Marcel Heimendinger left Nanking Rd. to continue working as a diamond dealer from his home. He had made a fortune and owned racing horses. His jockey was Sino-Australian and his stable-boy Russian.

The name Sennet was transferred several years later to a jewelry store in Hongkong, where it was managed by a certain Gensburger, also from an old Asiatic family in Shanghai.

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submitted by Erna & Sam Daniel
- Passover 5762 -

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N E W S
L E T T E R

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Group picture of participants of Seder banquet (some had left earlier). Mr. Hew is seated to right of old lady in center.

LEN HEW'S STORY

by Len Hew

[After I read about the Institute of Jewish Studies being founded in Kaifeng, I contacted Prof. Zhang Qianhong to find out about the mysterious Mr. Hew mentioned in the article. She put me in touch with him and I asked him to explain his interest in supporting the study of the Kaifeng Jews. The following is his story. It is the story of a very dedicated man. Anson Laytner.]

My Background

I was born and raised in Malaysia in 1935. My full name is Choy Len Hew but now it's shortened to Len Hew. My father and his parents were born in Mei-Zhou (previously Mei-Xien), Kwangtung Province, China. He moved to Malaysia while a teenager to join his parents, who had preceded him there. Mei-Zhou has been our ancestral home for the past couple of hundred years. After high school, I went to Taiwan for my undergraduate studies. I came over to Winnipeg, Canada for my graduate studies in 1963. After completing my M.A., I stayed and became a high school teacher for 20 odd years until my early retirement in 1988. Now I keep myself busy mainly running the Yunnan Project Hope, which I shall explain later. I am married to Cora, who was born in Yunnan, China but who grew up and was educated in Burma. We have 2 daughters: Nettie, an architect working in Vancouver and Carolynne, who works for CBC and lives in Toronto.

In 1995, when Cora, who is also a high school teacher, retired, we took up teaching assignments as foreign English teachers for

(continued on page 6)

**KAIFENG JEWISH DESCENDANTS
LEARN ABOUT JEWISH HERITAGE
AT NANJING SEMINAR**

by Prof. Xu Xin

For the first time in recent - or possibly even ancient - times, 12 Jewish descendants from Kaifeng, the city which housed a thriving Jewish community 200 years ago, traveled to a distant city in order to attend a three-week workshop on Jewish history and culture. Their goal was Nanjing University, Nanjing, China where they spent July 14-August 2, 2002 learning about the Jewish heritage and the Hebrew language long forgotten by their community.

Those serious descendants spent six hours daily in classrooms studying their history and culture, taking advantage of this unique opportunity to learn about their past. The 12 represent six different clans. (Traditionally, Jewish descendants from Kaifeng take one of seven clan names: Zhao, Ai, Shi, Li, Gao, Jin and Zhang.) As two from nearly each clan attended, their relationships spanned two generations: father-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, or mother-son. The oldest, Zhao Meiling, 58, is a retired worker and daughter of Zhao Pingya whose celebrated photo taken with the American Jew David Brown in 1930's is well known. The youngest, Zhao Hui, 12, is an elementary pupil whose mother, Gao Suyu, teaches in a high school. Moshe Zhang, who led the group, was as enthusiastic as his 17-year-old son. The work-

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SJI MEMBERSHIP

Country	Total
United States	255
China	14
Israel	13
England	8
Australia	7
Hong Kong	7
Canada	5
Japan	3
Switzerland	2
Germany	1
Indonesia	1
Italy	1
South Africa	1
Taiwan	1

TOTAL: 319

FROM THE EDITOR

Every once in a while, something in a story really sparks my curiosity. Buried in an article in our last issue was one such detail. The article had to do with the founding of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Henan University in Kaifeng. Now that, in and of itself, is truly newsworthy. But my mind was drawn to the people involved. Who is Prof. Zhang and why is she interested in our subject? But even more curious was her mention of Len Hew of Canada. Who is he? What is his motivation? The result, featured in this issue, is a thoroughly fascinating account of one man's personal journey and his philanthropic commitment to improving the lot of some of China's minority peoples.

Much seems to be happening in China regarding the Kaifeng Jews and, happily, it is being done by the Chinese themselves. I say this because it is not for us, even if we share kinship with the Kaifeng descendants, to intrude in what the Chinese authorities regard as internal Chinese affairs. We are not proselytizers. But, with Prof. Xu Xin conducting educational workshops in Nanjing for members of the Kaifeng community, and Prof. Zhang and Mr. Hew planning on doing something similar in Kaifeng, we are witnessing the first indigent efforts at reviving Jewish culture in Kaifeng. Far from feeling left out, we should celebrate and support both of these wonderful, pioneering ventures!

Anson Laytner

IN THE FIELD

- ♦ Rena Krasno was the scholar-in-residence at Congregation Beth Israel, in Bellingham, Washington on October 13th. She also did a reading from her recently published book "Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai" that same day at Village Books in Fairhaven.
- ♦ The inaugural exhibition of the Old China Hands Archive, in California State University, Northridge, was held on October 4th and 5th, and featured lectures by many SJI notables, including: Richard Horowitz, Tess Johnston, Rena Krasno and Marcia Ristaino. The Archive may be contacted through its director, robert.gohstand@csun.edu, or its curator, tony.gardner@csun.edu. Its web address is: www.library.csun.edu/oldchinahands

Points East

Anson Laytner, Publisher

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from Nazi terror were penniless but the other long-term non-Chinese residents of Shanghai, who had some assets or income, even modest to Western standards, were able to hire Chinese servants, i.e. cooks, amahs, drivers etc.

Then came December 8, 1941, a day that will live in infamy! When you live in China, you're on the other side of the International Dateline so that December 7th in America is the 8th in Asia. I woke up in the middle of the night to the sound of gunfire. I later learned that the Japanese cruiser Yamoto had fired and sunk the British gunboat HMS Peterel, which was trying to sneak out of the Shanghai harbor. A US gunboat surrendered because its captain was ashore in bed with his Russian girlfriend. After all, it was a Saturday night. At the very moment of Japan's attack on Shanghai, Japan also attacked Pearl Harbor, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

Things changed after that date. The Japanese Army took over the entire City and all enemy aliens, such as Americans, Brits and Dutch were forced to wear red armbands, before being interned in several internment camps. Many friends and all of my teachers were among the internees. The Japanese also issued proclamation after proclamation containing a variety of different prohibitions, such as making it unlawful for anyone to listen to short wave radio broadcasts. (All short wave radios had to be surrendered). As a result we were denied any news from the West concerning the Pacific war and the only news we received was the Japanese version of what was happening every day, i.e. unending victories by Japan against the United States. However news about the war in Europe came to us also through the Soviet Russian radio station in Shanghai. Since Japan and Soviet Russia were not at war with one another, that source of news remained available to us throughout the war.

One of the more disturbing proclamations of the Japanese authorities was directed at stateless refugees who had arrived in Shanghai after 1937. All who fit that description were ordered to move into a "Ghetto" area in the Hongkew section of the City. Even though the word "Jewish" was not contained in the proclamation, the directive would obviously not apply to any non-Jew since it was primarily Jews who left Europe for Shanghai after the advent of Hitler. Since we had arrived in Shanghai after 1937, I feared that we would be

included in the definition of stateless refugees since Latvia had ceased to exist as an independent country, having been occupied first by the Soviets and then by the Nazis.

I recall attending school that day and when our teacher, Mr. McCorkindale, asked for a show of hands from all who would be affected by the proclamation, I raised mine. However we had the argument that, because of our family's previous residence in Japan, we were not "stateless refugees who arrived after 1937", within the intent of that proclamation. My father consequently went to see Mr. Kubota, the head of the Japanese refugee office and talked to him in Japanese, without the need of an interpreter. Kubota, impressed by a Caucasian man's fluency in Japanese, readily agreed to exempt our family from the intent of the proclamation and issued a written exemption for our immediate family and, at my father's urging, as well my Aunt Johanna, her daughter Musia and son in law Maxe Thal, who had arrived from Latvia in 1939, and who therefore had no previous residency in Japan.

A Match Made in Heaven and Shanghai

by Dvir Bar-Gal

SHANGHAI, June 26 (JTA) - This cosmopolitan Chinese city has witnessed what is believed to be its first Jewish marriage ceremony in more than 50 years.

Peter Cohen, originally from New York, met Anna Podtoptannaya, who hails from Ukraine, when he worked there as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer.

Seeking adventure, the two later moved to China, ultimately settling in Shanghai, home to some 300-400 Jews. Cohen works there as a management consultant and Podtoptannaya runs a brand management company.

Their wedding, which took place less than a month after the opening ceremony of Shanghai's Jewish community center, highlighted the international flavor of the Chinese city. Guests arrived from the United States, Europe, Australia and Asia.

The ceremony itself turned out to have a wider-than-expected audience. Many of the employees and guests at Shanghai's Cyprus Hotel - used to Chinese weddings, but unfamiliar with the Jewish ceremony - watched through the hotel's windows.

The last Jewish wedding in Shanghai took place in 1950, Cohen said. The wedding had three parts: The chupah was raised and a traditional ceremony held; then, a representative of the Ukrainian Consulate registered the couple; lastly, the bride and groom read their vows to each other.

The leader of Shanghai's Jewish community, Rabbi Shalom Greenberg, and his wife, Dina, had difficulty arranging all the Jewish aspects of the ceremony, including having documents proving the couple's Jewishness sent from overseas.

Since the mikvah, or ritual bath, at the new Jewish center is under construction, the rebbetzin took the bride to Lake Tai Hu for the pre-wedding immersions. As a natural body of water, Tai Hu, one of China's largest lakes, qualifies as an acceptable mikvah, she said.

The trip to the natural mikvah wasn't the only symbolic part of the wedding: The post-wedding reception and dinner were held in the Sassoon Halls, named after Sir Victor Sassoon, one of the leaders of Shanghai's Jewish community in the early 20th century. The couple plans to live in Shanghai for the next few years.

Post-script to the Story

Menashe (Maxi) Kaltmann comments: Unfortunately at present there is no Mikvah in Shanghai. Rabbi Shalom and the Kehillah attempted to purchase one of the old Mikvahs. The building in which it was now houses today 8 Chinese families! One of the present occupants asked the Rabbi if the "Yotairin"—Jewish Folk who lived in this building—needed a pool for raising fish. The Rabbi didn't even attempt to answer this question. [And even if his Chinese were up to the task, who knows how his answer would have been understood! Ed.]

Please can you both publicize this fact as the present arrangements are clearly NOT acceptable. We know that the Shulkan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law, mandated that the first building to be built by any Jewish Community is a Mikvah. The building of a Mikvah precludes even a Shule (synagogue) according to The Shulkan Aruch. The Kehillah is growing in Shanghai. Present estimates are that in 5-10 years there will be about 5,000 Jews living in Shanghai. Surely the time is ripe to build the new Shanghai Mikvah! The Rabbi is now attempting to raise funds to build a Mikvah. Anyone wishing to donate to this worthy project can be honored by partial or full naming rights.

ters, since much of the land is below sea level. We just sat in the dark and waited till the "all clear" was sounded.

Then the unexpected happened. On July 17, 1945, shortly before the war ended, our Ghetto became the target. U.S. Air Force B 17s intended to knock out a Japanese military radio station located near our ghetto. Unfortunately they missed, bringing death and destruction into our area.

I worked at Rosenberg's Restaurant when the tragedy occurred. For the first time it was an attack in bright daylight. The sky was clear when the sirens sounded. We were serving lunch and I stood by the kitchen stove to fill the orders. The kitchen was located on the mezzanine floor. Mr. Rosenberg, the owner, called me down for some special instructions. I left the kitchen and came down. All of a sudden bombs fell all around us. A direct hit struck the building next door to us. I was flung to the floor, some shrapnel in my hand. The walls shook. Debris was flying. People were in agony, screaming, moaning, taking shelter under the tables. We did not know what hit us, it all happened so fast.

When it was over, two minutes later, I returned to the kitchen. Tom, the cat, my constant companion, who enjoyed being near me by the stove, was shredded to bits. Luckily I was called downstairs or the same destiny would have awaited me. I escaped death. The Japanese authorities were quite helpful to us. They sent ambulances and medical personnel to take the many injured to the hospital.

Thirty-one of our people were killed, along with many more Chinese who lived among us. The next day, a mass funeral took place. Trucks arrived to carry the dead in the scorching summer heat. We walked behind to accompany them to the cemetery. The stench of human remains was unbelievable. We covered our noses with handkerchiefs. Perspiration, mingled with salty tears, ran down our faces. The silent march of the mourners, along with the memorial prayers chanted by the cantor, still linger with me.

A month later, the 15th of August after the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Emperor Hirohito announced the unconditional surrender of Japan. On the second of September, President Harry Truman officially

proclaimed "V.J." Day, as the Japanese surrender was signed aboard the U.S. Battleship Missouri at 10:30 A.M.

"Shalom, Shalom,"—"Peace is here". Shouts of joy rang through the ghetto. It was like a dream, it seemed unreal.

Bloomsday Shanghai 2002

by Rena Krasno

Jenny Laing-Peach, a journalist and lover of books and literature, organized *Bloomsday Shanghai 2002* on June 14th, at the Pushkin Monument in Shanghai. In attendance were the Consul-General of Russia, diplomats, writers, poets, artists, and avid readers.

Jenny Laing-Peach introduced the event stating that the monument had been built in the 1930's by the Shanghai Russian Community not only to honor their great writer, Pushkin, but poetry and the arts in general, "those expressions of the human spirit that bless us and enable us to bear those sufferings in which we are engulfed".

In a letter to me, Jenny Laing-Peach writes that "the name of your father, "David B. Rabinovich was heard again in the leafy streets of Shanghai". He had been the editor of a well-respected tri-lingual (Russian/English/Yiddish) cultural weekly in Shanghai, had translated classics by Jewish writers into Russian and published a small book of poetry in Russian called *Serdze Nastej (The Wide Open Heart)*. As a teenager I had attended the original dedication ceremony of the Pushkin monument with my father. At the 2002 ceremony, Laing-Peach also read the description of this event from one of my books.

"Walking through the heat and hazy glare of a Shanghai afternoon, under the cool leafy grandeur of the trees of the old French concession", Jenny Laing-Peach says, "moving from Joyce Reading to Poetry Reading, was a wonderful experience of conviviality, uplifting of spirit and communing of soul, which was enriched and blessed by the remembered presence of your father, you and your family..."

The Russian Consul-General read some Pushkin poems in Russian and laid a bouquet on the monument, climbing high on the plinth to place the flowers where they could be seen from afar. There they re-

mained for more than a week. "The bouquet was made by a Chinese girl, Angel Shen who runs a flower shop in Pudong and who is married to a Pudong policeman - an expert on James Joyce!!! China never ceases to amaze!"

Jenny Laing-Peach further notes that "a distinguished visitor from Beijing was Mme. Wen Jie Ruo, the widow of the writer Xiao Qien, who, with her husband had translated "Ulysses" into Chinese. A second printing had been launched to coincide with Bloomsday, and so Wen Jie Ruo sat beside the long window of another old Shanghai home, now another Irish Pub, "The Blarney Stone" in Dong Ping Lu, and signed copies of the Chinese *Ulysses*.

Indeed, China, its people and the ever-energetic, creative city of Shanghai never cease to amaze!

CORRECTION ~

We apologize to Mr. Jedeikin for the typographical error that inadvertently transposed a section of his article "From Latvia to Shanghai", which appeared in our last issue. The section, as it should read, follows and should be inserted on pages 12 and 13. Any reader wishing the full article may email the editor at Laytner@msn.com.

Excerpt of "From Latvia to Shanghai"

by Joe Jedeikin

Life in Shanghai was very interesting. The City was very cosmopolitan and a great commercial center. Everything under the sun was legal. Among the indigent Chinese population of some 5 million, there was great poverty, misery and hunger. You could daily see people lying in the street with open sores and wounds. Many died of starvation or froze to death in winter. Among the non-Chinese there were people from many parts of the world living here in addition to the Chinese inhabitants. There were many Russians who had escaped the Communist revolution some 20 years prior, such as my own mother and her family. There were people from the Middle East and India—Jews from Iraq and Egypt—and now there were the about 17,000 more recently arrived Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Most of these refugees

Book Appeal

Dear Friends,

For the new Institute of Jewish Studies at Henan University to function as a credible research institution, it is necessary for it to build up a good collection of books and materials on Jewish topics. With the help of Mr. Hew, we have established the "Sifriat Shalom" (Shalom Library), which has now collected about 400 books on the topics of Judaism, Jewish history and culture.

We appeal to you to help us build up our collection by donating to us any Jewish books in English that you no longer need or want. Anyone who donates a certain number of books (still to be determined) would have the donated books put in a separate collection named after him/her. For a donation insufficient to qualify a separate collection, we would stamp each book to acknowledge the donor. We would feel greatly honored if we can receive autographed copies of the books

written and/or edited by you.

Thank you very much for your support.

With best regards,

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Documentary on Jewish Refugees in Shanghai

excerpted from *Reuters*, Oct. 2 2002

"Shanghai Ghetto," filmed by the husband and wife team of Amir Mann and Dana Janklowicz-Mann, tells the little-known tale of 20,000 mostly German Jews who escaped to one of the few places open to non-visa holders as World War Two began.

The film, which took five years to make and cost less than \$100,000, is narrated by Academy award winning actor Martin Landau. It opened in New York last Friday.

The story is movingly told through the recollections of former refugees, two

of whom the Mann's took back to Shanghai with them to act as guides to the twisting alleys of Shanghai's Hongkew district.

"Just listening to their stories was truly draining, heart-wrenching," Janklowicz-Mann, who co-directed and produced the 95-minute documentary, told Reuters.

She said she was inspired to make the film by the experiences of her own father in Shanghai as a refugee.

In interviews with survivors, pieced together with stock footage and still photos, the film tells how the Jewish refugees and the Chinese suffered together from malnutrition and disease

under the Japanese occupation of the city..

At times, the Mann's had to secretly shoot scenes of places they did not have a permit to film. They managed to capture the site of the Shanghai Jewish School, where many of the refugees spent their teens and started their own soccer team.

And they filmed the Ohel Rachel Synagogue which remains a monument to the small Jewish community in Shanghai.

"Shanghai Ghetto" opens in Los Angeles on Oct. 25 and other U.S. cities to follow.

Israel Cancels Einstein Exhibit After China Censors His Zionism

Israeli officials canceled an exhibit illustrating Einstein's Jewish and Zionist connections after Chinese authorities censored the exhibit to eliminate references to Albert Einstein's Judaism and Zionism, THE JERUSALEM POST reported. The show, scheduled to tour China in the fall, was prepared in cooperation with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and is currently touring other locations in the Far East, including Taiwan and Australia. According to a source in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the references to Einstein as a Zionist are viewed by the Chinese as not being "politically correct." An official from the Chinese Ministry of Cultural Affairs said the office had no immediate comment.

Einstein and Sino-Israeli Ups-and-Downs

by Jonathan Goldstein

Why would China not permit Albert Einstein's Jewish heritage to be discussed or highlighted in an exhibit from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem scheduled to open September in five Chinese cities? Does this episode signify a major crisis between Jerusalem and Beijing? ["Albert Einstein, Political Pawn," THE NEW YORK TIMES, August 4, 2002].

The objects in this exhibit were deposited by Einstein, under the terms of his will, in the archives of the Hebrew University, an institution which he helped found in the 1920s. According to media reports from Israel, China's Ministry of Culture insisted that three facts about the famous physicist be removed before the exhibit could open: that Einstein was Jewish; that he backed the creation of a Jewish state; and that Israel's first prime minister David Ben Gurion invited Einstein to become Israel's second president, a position which the elderly professor declined. Amir Sagi, a spokesman for Israel's Beijing embassy, said that Israel had no choice but to cancel the long-planned exhibit since "we can not accept this change in the records of history. This is an insult to the Jewish people and to the State of Israel."

The exhibit itself was the brainchild of Chinese President Jiang Zemin, who visited Israel in 2000 and proposed it to his hosts. How could plans for such an event derail so rapidly? According to the Israeli newspaper YEDIOT AHRONOT, China was trying to "de-Judaize Einstein so as not to spark Arab anger." There is no question that a high-profile exhibit from Israel would evoke protest from Arab embassies in Beijing and around the world. But until now China has been willing to "take the punches" from the Arab side while cultivating its relations with Israel. Jiang Zemin's visit was a case in point. He spent nearly a week in Israel, only two days in Egypt, and China withstood any diplomatic fallout from that prioritization.

Why was China willing to "take the hits" from the Arabs two years ago but not now? The answer lies in the recent history of Sino-Israeli relations. When the exhibit was first proposed Sino-Israeli relations were the warmest they had been in years. Israel had terminated arms sales to Taiwan, thereby clearing the way for China and Israel to exchange ambassadors and for Jiang's visit. Non-stop air service had begun between Beijing and Tel Aviv. A Sino-Israeli Dry Lands Research Center maintained joint research projects in China's westernmost province. Judaic Studies programs were in place in universities in Harbin, Kaifeng, Nanjing, and Shanghai. A Tel Aviv-based "Israel-China Friendship Society" highlighted these and other activities in its newsletter ISRAEL-CHINA VOICE OF FRIENDSHIP.

The high point of Sino-Israeli relations, in sheer dollar value, was Israel Aircraft Industry's multi-million dollar contract in the late 1990s to sell China its "Phalcon" aerial reconnaissance aircraft. The sale was aborted in August 2000 under intense pressure from the United States, which feared China would use the aircraft against Taiwan. In February 2002 Israel paid China a reported \$350 million as compensation and on March 25 Israel Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met his Chinese counterpart Tang Jiaxuan in Beijing to make amends.

From the Chinese point of view, the forced cancellation of the Einstein exhibit

may be but a mild rebuke of Israel for the vast delays and difficulties China now faces in creating or purchasing an alternative aerial reconnaissance system. While the Phalcon negotiations were ongoing, China was willing to put up with a degree of Arab chastisement. Now that deal has fallen through, Arab-Israeli tensions have heightened, and China no longer feels the need to put up with and try to deflect the barrage of Arab criticism that would inevitably follow an exhibit highlighting Einstein's ties with the Jewish state.

Does this episode signify a major crisis in Sino-Israeli relations? Probably not. There remains a commonality of interests between the two countries. Both China and Israel share deep concern over the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia. Both remain committed to cutting-edge technological cooperation. Almost simultaneously with the cancellation of the Phalcon deal and the Einstein impasse, Israel and China signed an agreement of approximately equal value to the Phalcon contract wherein Israeli-made HK 1 and 2 satellites will broadcast the 2008 Beijing Olympic games.

The days are probably over when the Chinese, acutely aware of Einstein's Jewishness, would jointly praise "Marx, Freud, and Einstein" when welcoming Israeli delegations. And it is unlikely that China will feature Einstein any time soon on a second Chinese postage stamp [In 1979 China issued a postage stamp showing Einstein alongside his famous equation, Scott #1468]. Nevertheless Einstein's portrait continues to hang in Chinese schools and museums, alongside other world-famous scientists and authors, as examples of universal rather than specifically nationalistic excellence. The "Einstein flap" will more than likely recede as a mere blip in the positive context of Sino-Israeli relations.

Jonathan Goldstein is a Professor of History [East Asia] at the State University of West Georgia. His books include *China and Israel, 1948-98: A Fifty Year Retrospective* [Praeger, 1999] and *The Jews of China* [M.E. Sharpe, 2000].

ing the seminar, they believe they will have much more to share with visitors. "The Hebrew language, Jewish rituals and Jewish songs we learn at this seminar will tie us closer to other Jews. We should be able to do something together next time we meet Jewish visitors in our city," commented Ai Xiuqin, daughter of Ai Fengming, who had been chosen as far back as in 1952 to represent the Kaifeng Jews in Beijing when the country celebrated National Day. "We feel very lucky to become the first group to learn about our history and culture in such a systematic way. We hope more opportunities like this will be available to us and other Kaifeng Jewish descendants," others remarked.

During the seminar they received free copies of books dealing with Jewish history and culture, such as the Chinese edition of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, *Anti-Semitism: How and Why* by Xu Xin, the Chinese version of the *Dent Atlas of Jewish History* by Martin Gilbert, *Cactus in the Desert—Sketch of the Jews* by Xu Xiangqun, and *Ahad Ha'am and Jewish Spirit* by Alfred Gottschalk. All are in Chinese!

Their learning obviously roused the interest of Chinese media. A reporter from the 21st Century World Herald, one of most popular weekly papers in China, arrived in Nanjing to interview them and their instructors. As a result, three related articles appeared in the Aug. 5th issue under the generally eye-catching title: "Will Chinese Jewish Descendants Immigrate to Israel?" The Chinese radio network also reported it.

The organizer (Prof. Xu) covered all their expenses during the seminar including travel, accommodations and board. The generous sponsorship from institutions such as Kulanu, the Sino-Judaic Institute, and individuals such as Michael Freund made this unique, groundbreaking program possible.

The 1942 Census in Shanghai

by Joan Deman
from the *Rickshaw Reunion* Web Site:
www.rickshaw.org

[The Census of 1942 gave the Japanese authorities pertinent details about the refugees and made the Jewish Refugee Committee guarantors for the refugees' good conduct. Joan's father, Prof. Wilhelm

Deman, was active in the "Juedische Gemeinde" during the war and kept detailed records of all official matters.]

In July of 1942, the Japanese Authorities ordered that a Pao Chia Census form be completed in triplicate with two copies to be sent to the local police station and the third to be retained by the head of family. It is possible, that this census form was the basis for the incomplete 1944 list published on a CD Rom and included with "Exile Shanghai."

Listed on the census form were the names, ages and occupations of all family members, as well as "former German Jew" in the column for Nationality. Every change of address was noted on the form, as were the certificate numbers of the residence certificate with the yellow stripe that was issued on July 15, 1943. When a family member died the name was crossed off and the date of death was recorded on the form.

Most disturbing, was the fact that on the reverse side of the form was the following:

Mutual Guarantee and Mutual Responsibility Bond

We, the undersigned, are willing to guarantee that the persons mentioned overleaf in this form are bona fide residents and will never conspire with lawless elements or commit any hostile acts.

In the event of violation of their respective pledge of good conduct, the undersigned will accept full responsibility.

Signature Rubber Stamp of the
Juedische Gemeinde Address
Date 15/7/42 signed Trum

(The signature was that of A. Trum, an official of the Juedische Gemeinde. I have a letter addressed to my father that Mr. Trum signed in his capacity of "geschaefsf. Gemeindesekretaer.")

Also included with the census form was a small piece of paper marked Sheet No. 2, that stated:

NOTE

The following additional particulars are required:

- 1) Date of Arrival in Shanghai

- 2) Number of Telephone Residence Office
- 3) Name of National Association of which you are a member
- 4) Address of above

The Census of 1942 preceded the Proclamation of February 1943, which led to the formation of the Honkew Ghetto in May of 1943. Thus, the Japanese Authorities had complete information on the Jewish refugees as early as July of 1942, and through the Mutual Guarantee and Mutual Responsibility Bond, had turned the Juedische Gemeinde into the equivalent of the Juden Raete, that were forced to obey the Nazi edicts.

The Unforgettable Air Raid

by Hans Cohn

When I was nineteen years old, I developed a phobia listening to air raid sirens. It haunted me for years. To this day, hearing police or ambulance sirens wailing, I experience fear as I remember those days in Shanghai.

On May 7, 1945, a news bulletin came over the Russian radio station that Germany surrendered unconditionally at the headquarters of General Eisenhower, who was then the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe. The next day another surrender took place, under the Soviets, who had occupied Berlin. Hitler committed suicide; the war with Germany came to an end. The long awaited day finally arrived. Our community rejoiced, although we were still under Japanese occupation, forced to remain in the Shanghai ghetto. The war with Japan continued unabated.

The American Air Force began to bomb installations in Shanghai. We had blackouts almost every day. I was terrified when the sirens sounded as American planes coming from Iwo Jima came flying low to reach their targets. Usually nothing happened in our area. Bombs fell in the distance. Anti aircraft fire lit the skies along the waterfront of Shanghai, as American planes attacked naval installations. The word Shanghai in Chinese means "up from the sea." The city is located on the Whangpoo River, which empties into the Yangtze River. We had no air raid shel-

I have received praise and awards from Chinese governments in doing exactly the same things in Yunnan for the other national/ethnic minorities. So if I am careful, the local Kaifeng authorities may be hard put to find a good excuse to interfere or stop me from doing for my own people the things I have done legally for others and for which I have received praise and recognition from other local and regional authorities.

Concerns

The political climate of the host country: One can only operate successfully within the confines of what is allowed and must be in accordance with the stated policy on national minorities. Knowledge of, and sensitivity to, Chinese government's policies, rules etc. is essential. Even for someone like myself, because I have lived all my life outside China, it is difficult to know for sure how to navigate this. It is culturally and politically speaking, difficult terrain, full of "landmines."

The lack of adequate resources and failure to secure necessary support: Now that I have got their attention, created interest and excitement, how am I going to deliver the substance to sustain this interest if and when my resources become insufficient? If the goods do not come, this gift-bearing Santa Claus will be regarded as a phony. Where and how I am going to win and secure the necessary support?

Local communal intrigue:

Potentially there is the possibility of internal squabbles within the local Jewish community fighting to control access to what we have to offer. For example, members may quarrel over the issues of leadership and who is/is not of Jewish descent. Such a squabble would frustrate or scare away potential helpers and invite the authority's intervention.

My Hope and Dream

Due to limitation of personal resources and those I can control and influence, and the number of useful years remaining in my life, I can only afford to have very modest hopes and dreams. At present, the Kaifeng Project and I are not yet credible enough to win outside support, especially financial support. But whatever I have now is enough to cause some attention, to create some interest and excitement among the local Jewish descendants and at the university. Beyond this initial stage and/or for expansion of our activities, I would have, of course, to find additional resources from other sources. I cannot justify Kaifeng expenditure beyond certain percentage of the

general budgets of both Yunnan Project Hope and my family household.

The Kaifeng Jewish community has been called the forgotten Jewish orphan. What I hope to achieve in the next few years is to help bring this Jewish orphan back into the fold of its parent; short of that, at least to close the distance that now exists between child and parent. I aim to revive and to promote, within the confines of the law and in accordance to the stated national minorities policy of China, this community's Jewish consciousness, the interest of its members to want to know more about their cultural heritage, to believe that being of Jewish heritage is something to be proud of, and the belief that to desire to revive and take steps to revive one's cultural heritage is/are not being unpatriotic (which I sense people are most afraid to be accused of). Hopefully, if the community can reach this stage in development, then Jews around the world would be satisfied and would regard Kaifeng and its members as being Jews and would accept them back into the fold. Hopefully too, by then, China would have modernized enough to not be xenophobic and to welcome Jews from foreign countries to come into China to work with their Kaifeng brethren and to foster Judaic studies in China. It would be really nice if by 2005, the 400th Anniversary of the rediscovery of Kaifeng Jews, this dream could become reality.

As for Judaic studies at the newly formed Institute at the Henan University, my hope is that, by the time I depart from the scene, it will be established enough to avoid the fate of a premature death and that, later on, it will grow to be a credible and successful institution.

Kaifeng Jewish Descendants at Nanjing Seminar (continued from page 1)

shops were originally designed to train Chinese professors who lead courses in world history or western civilization. The goal was to present reliable, accurate, and concrete knowledge of Jewish history and culture through intensive study, facilitated by Jewish scholars from outside China. This, in future, would enable local professors to incorporate information on Jewish history and culture into the scope of their courses, passing on the knowledge to their students.

The first two workshops of this kind held by the Center at Nanjing University in the summers of 1997 and 1999 were so effec-

tive and useful that the third was added to meet the growing demand for such information.

While the workshop did not aim its subject matter at the Kaifeng Jewish descendants, the organizer offered them the opportunity to join the scholars in residence and benefit from their expertise. Since the Kaifeng Jewish descendants are non-academic and do not have necessary English skills, special treatment was provided. The first week, when all lectures were delivered in Chinese, they joined the other 36 participants from Chinese colleges and universities. After this, they met in their own, separate classes where Ellen Heilman and Tamar Friedman, wives of two Jewish professors from the US and Israel, and scholars in their own right, presented classes emphasizing Jewish customs, traditions and Hebrew.

The requirements for their classes were practical rather than academic. Therefore, Mrs. Heilman focused her teaching on Jewish holidays and rituals. When she taught about Passover, she emphasized how to have a seder at home. A Chinese version of the Passover Haggadah was specially prepared. Mrs. Friedman focused on spoken Hebrew, blessings and Jewish songs. All three foreign experts, Professors Heilman, Friedman and Dr. Perednik, who were invited to conduct the workshops for academic group, also presented pertinent lectures.

Bo Yang, a former MA student of mine, who will go to Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati to pursue his Ph.D., served as an English interpreter to make sure that the Kaifeng Jewish descendants understood the special lectures intended for them. Both Chinese professors, Xu Xiangqun from Beijing and myself, provided a general outline of Jewish history and culture.

In addition to the regular classes, they were involved in cultural activities, including setting up Sabbath services, blowing the shofar, reading Hebrew, and singing. Over 20 Jewish artifacts collected by Xu Xin, were presented to the participants. These included a Torah scroll, Sabbath candlestick, teffilin, tallit, mezuzah, shofar, megillah scroll, yarmalke, seder plate, spicebox, and yad. We wished to provide them with as much tangible and concrete knowledge of Jewish culture as possible.

Many had formerly had the opportunity to meet Jewish visitors in Kaifeng but lacked knowledge of their own history and customs when questioned. Now, follow-

Workshop on Jewish History and Culture

by Professor Xu Xin, Director, Center for Jewish Studies, Nanjing University

A three-week workshop on Jewish History and Culture was successfully held at Nanjing University, Nanjing, China, July 14—August 2, 2002. Its rationale: To promote the study of Jewish subjects among Chinese scholars and develop various projects and programs arising as a logical outgrowth of work in Judaic Studies carried out for the past 15 years.

More than 200 books on Jewish subjects have been published in Chinese as knowledge of Jewish history, Judaism, culture and people dramatically expands. However, bringing newly available information to a wider audience, especially to the younger generation currently studying at Chinese universities and colleges, requires special effort. Few universities and colleges in China have ever had Jewish programs. To reach students, one must reach their teachers.

This workshop on Jewish history and culture specifically trains Chinese professors who currently lead courses in world history or western civilization. The goal — to present reliable, accurate, and concrete knowledge of Jewish history and culture through intensive study — is facilitated by Jewish scholars from outside China. This, in future, enables local professors to incorporate information of Jewish history and culture into the scope of their courses, passing on the knowledge to their students. Following the success and effectiveness of the first two such workshops, held by the Center during the summers of 1997 and 1999, a third seminar was organized and presented in the summer of 2002. Forty-eight Chinese were invited to attend the seminar and received scholarships.

Students

Although the original design called for a class of no more than 30, increased interest and demand expanded the original plan. The participants formed three groups:

1. A core group of 20 instructors or research fellows from 17 institutions in 15 provinces in China consisted of trained historians who have been teaching world history for years.

2. A graduate student group of 16 Ph.D. or MA candidates from some of the best-

known universities in China who will most likely become college instructors or research fellows in Chinese institutions upon graduation.

3. A special group of 12 Jewish descendants from Kaifeng, who consider themselves as such but know very little about Jewish history and traditions, had the opportunity to study Jewish history and culture (including Hebrew language). Because they are non-academic and do not have the necessary English knowledge, we provided special classes for them.

Faculty

While the previous two workshops were solely led by Jewish scholars, this time Chinese scholars were also involved. The use of Chinese faculty established the Chinese character of the program and solved language problems. In addition, Chinese instructors provided the necessary background knowledge of Jewish studies that will be the basis for the additional instruction offered by outside experts.

Prof. Xu Xiangqun from Beijing and Prof. Xu Xin of Nanjing University served as local faculty, teaching the first week of the seminar. Both Judaic scholars have considerable teaching experience and have published books on Jewish topics.

Three professors from the United States and Israel conducted the remaining sessions: Samuel Heilman, professor and Chair of Jewish studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; Menachem Friedman, professor of Bar-Ilan University; and Gustavo Perednik, Director of the "Program for Education and Understanding of the Jews' Role in the World" in Israel.

The use of foreign experts for two thirds of the seminar provided pedagogic resources on Jewish history and culture that are presently unavailable in China. In addition, faculty wives—scholars Ellen Heilman and Tamar Friedman—taught workshop classes, with emphasis on those sessions especially set up for the Kaifeng Jewish descendants on customs, traditions and the Hebrew language.

Xu Xiangqun focused six lectures on the early Jewish history and Jewish spirit. Three sessions dealt with the history from Abraham to the destruction of the Second Temple followed by one the outline of Diaspora history and two on Jewish spirit. Xu Xin's instruction emphasized charac-

teristics of Jewish history and culture, which complemented Prof Xu Xiangqun's subjects. He also covered the history of Jewish Diaspora in China, one of his primary research fields. Both Chinese professors provided a general outline of Jewish history and culture and introduced essential terminology for the participants.

Heilman taught a Jewish history course covering an introduction to the ethos and worldview of Jewish history, re-exilic Jewry, European Jewry, Sephardic Jewry, modern Jewry, and American Judaism. The intention was to give participants a general overview of Jewish history from the viewpoint of a Jewish scholar.

Friedman covered two main subjects: Nation in Exile—The Riddle of Jewish Existence and The Founding of the State of Israel. Perednik taught Jewish identity, the Hebrew Bible, Jewish faith and values, Jewish philosophy, the nature of Judeophobia, the image of the Jews, and Jewish contributions.

Ellen Heilman taught Jewish holidays and rituals to the class of the Kaifeng Jewish descendants with emphasis on practical applications, for instance, how to set seder at home for Passover. Tamar Friedman chiefly taught spoken Hebrew and Jewish songs to the Kaifeng Jewish descendants. All the scholars presented lectures to the Kaifeng class.

Program

Before coming to China, each scholar worked out a detailed syllabus. Six hours per day were devoted to instruction: three for history and three for culture. The history class was taught on topics rather than on strict lineage, giving a general background and an all-around picture of each issue. The culture class was equipped with video tapes, computer projector, Jewish artifacts, and engaged in various activities such as setting up Sabbath service, blowing the shofar, reading Hebrew, and singing Jewish songs. Over 20 artifacts collected by Prof. Xu Xin were presented to the participants. The intention was to provide the participants with as much tangible and concrete knowledge of Jewish culture as possible. Discussion sessions were structured to provide feedback.

In the first week, when lectures were given in Chinese, all participants attended the same class. Two classes were set up in the next two weeks when foreign experts

taught. One was intended for academic participants and the other for the Kaifeng Jewish descendants. An English interpreter was assigned for Kaifeng class to make sure the descendants understood these special lectures. Several evenings a week, an Ulpan (Hebrew class) was set to assist academic participants in learning Hebrew. This made it possible for them to acquire knowledge of the basic Hebrew vocabulary that appears regularly in Judaic studies. Voluntary participation in the evening programs also included viewing over a dozen videotapes, which supplemented formal classes. Films from Jewish history to Jewish life, from Holocaust to Middle-East conflicts were shown. These not only strengthened the regular teaching but also enriched the cultural knowledge of the participants. Various activities — including outings and weekend tours — were organized to bond instructors and participants.

This session was better prepared with materials than the previous seminars. A number of books in Chinese had been ordered and freely distributed among the participants either as reference or reading materials. Pamphlets prepared by Xu Xiangqun and Perednik were also distributed. All participants received essential handouts.

The Judaic library built up by the Center for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University was open during the seminar and the participants were free to use it, including borrowing books to take back to their home institutions for further reading. A Chinese version of Passover Haggadah was specially prepared for the Kaifeng group.

At the request of participants, CD programs on various Jewish subjects were distributed. These materials will be made available for them to use at their home institutions when they include Jewish history and culture in their teaching.

Evaluation

In order to assess effectiveness of the workshop, a final survey was conducted. According to this survey, most participants came with little knowledge of Jewish history and culture. Very few had ever heard of such Jewish classic works as the Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, or commentaries. The three-week training period helped them to gain some concrete concepts about Jews, the dynamic aspects of Judaism, Jewish experiences throughout history, and Jewish contributions to the

world civilization in general and to the Western civilization in particular. They now have had a deeper understanding of who Jews are, what makes Jewish history unique, the meaning and inspiration of Judaism, Jewish viewpoints, Jewish contributions to the world, the social consciousness and justice of the Jewish people, causes of anti-Semitism and persecution, the meaning of Zionism, Jewish values, the meaning of Jewish holidays, and the continuity and the development of Jewish history and culture. Those not only reflect different needs and perspectives of the participants but also show the wide ranges the workshop covered.

Obviously, the three-week workshop provided a rare and unique opportunity for Chinese scholars to learn about Jewish history and culture without going abroad. To absorb information about Judaism from celebrated and experienced Jewish professors is unique. Jewish and Chinese scholars spending three weeks together offered Chinese scholars a chance to have direct, concrete contacts with Jewish culture. It was the first time for many participants to meet Jews in person and have direct contacts with them. In their words, they not only learned about Jewish history and culture but also "touched and tasted Jewish life." Again, as always, participants wish that the organizers and instructors would keep in touch with them after the workshop and assist them in their teaching and research by providing materials, some basic Jewish books, and further learning opportunities.



Len Hew (on left) with some children of descendants of Jews with matzah. The other adult is Mr. Ai, community leader.

Len Hew's Story (continued from page 1)

3 years at the Yunnan Institute of Nationalities in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. It was during this time that my wife and I started a small charity called "Project Hope for the National Minorities of Yunnan, China", in short "Yunnan Project Hope". We volunteer our time and energy to run this organization and to raise fund from relatives and close-friends to help provide educational opportunities for needy children/youth of national/ethnic minorities in Yunnan. For details please access our website: <http://www.yunnanprojecthope.org>. Our work for national minority education has received recognition from all levels of government in China. I was awarded Friendship Awards by both the Yunnan government and the national government of China.

Though we have been back in Winnipeg since 1998, we still devote most of our time and energy administering this charity. My wife and I have given a pledge to donors who want assurance that their donations would get to the needy students that we, or at least one of us, would make an annual trip to China to oversee how the fund is given out or used. The Kaifeng Project, though it has a separate name, still remains a part of the Yunnan Project Hope. In addition to working for Yunnan Project Hope, my wife volunteers as principal of one of Winnipeg's Saturday Chinese schools and I assist in whatever way and wherever I can. My wife and I have been active in local Chinese community all our adult life.

Winnipeg has a vibrant Jewish community. Many of my university mates and friends are Jewish. Through them and from them I learned to appreciate the greatness and wonder of Jewish culture and the achievements of the Jewish people, individually and collectively. In fact, long before I discovered my Kaifeng connection, I was already, and still am, a lover of Jewish culture. I would like very much to see more Chinese, especially in China, learn and know about Judaism as a civilization. The Jewish people and Jewish culture have so much to offer to China and the Chinese, and I strive toward this goal.

My Interest in Kaifeng

The Hews, my side of the family, are the Hakka dialect-speaking Chinese. In Mandarin language, Hakka is pronounced "Ke Jia" which means "guest people" or sojourners. The Hakkas were originally from

central China. Over the past millennium, because of invasions from the north and natural disasters, they were forced to move south in successive waves. Historically, the Hews are from the Henan Province where Kaifeng used to be the capital. One of the many branches/clans of the Hews was from Kaifeng itself.

A few years ago I came across Bishop William White's book "The Chinese Jews", which led me to other books on the same subject. I discovered that one of 7 surnames of Kaifeng Jews is Zhao. My grandmother's maternal surname is Zhao and her family, like the Hews, has been in Mei-Zhou for a long time but was originally from Kaifeng. I vaguely remember something to the effect that her family has something to do with "lan mao hui". Exactly what, I am not sure. That got me interested. So in 2001, during our annual trip to Yunnan, my wife and I did a side trip to Kaifeng. There we met Moshe Zhang Xin Wang and told him about my grandmother. Later on, after he had done some checking, he told me that there were a few Zhaos from the Kaifeng Jewish community who had been sent as mandarins to Kwangtung Province during the Qing dynasty. He thinks it is highly probable that my grandmother's maternal family is connected to one of these families and from that moment on he and the rest of the Jewish community treated me as one of their own.

I was happy to learn of the connection and was very touched by their goodwill to claim me as one of them; I feel close to them. As a gesture of reciprocity, I decided to do something to help some of my newfound kinsmen. I gave the mandate of my Yunnan Project Hope a slightly broader interpretation so as to have some of the program(s) that I would do for the Jewish descendants in Kaifeng covered within the scope of our organization. They are without doubt an ethnic minority in China and thus qualified. Last year (2001) I gave the Jewish community 10 bursaries (RMB Y 500 each) for needy students at elementary and high school levels and 2 graduate scholarships (RMB Y 3,000 each) at Henan University to foster Judaic studies. I thought that Judaic studies at the university level would change the traditional local perspective to make Jewish culture and being of Jewish descent more respectable. This year with the founding of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Henan University and the increase in number in bursaries from 10 to 15, our financial commitments have increased.

When I visited Kaifeng this past March, the visit coincided with the Passover. I hosted for the community, at my own expense, the first public group seder in living memory attended by more than 80 people. Though the seder was not very kosher, nevertheless it was the first in nearly a hundred years. My relationship with the Kaifeng Jewish community has had a good start and is close and friendly. Nevertheless, I still exercise caution when I deal with the community and/or its individual members, and I adopt a low profile approach to what I do for the community. One can never be too cautious in this matter.

My Connection with Professor Zhang

My wife and I didn't meet Prof. Zhang during our 2001 trip to Kaifeng. She was then still studying in Israel. We met the Dean Yen and the former Dean Ma of the College of History and Culture, Henan University. I tried to encourage these 2 gentlemen to consider setting up an institution to promote the studies of Judaism as a civilization, and, as a starter, provided them with 2 graduate scholarships (RMB Y 3,000 each). Dean Yen accepted the scholarships and promised to check to see if any of the graduate students would be interested. When Prof. Zhang came back from Israel and finished her post-doctoral work in Nanjing, she corresponded with me. I repeated my suggestion made previously to Dean Yen and encouraged her to try to set up an institution for Judaic studies. I promised to support her to the best of my ability. With this assurance from me, and the help from many of her colleagues in the faculty, she at last succeeded in founding the Institute of Jewish Studies. I co-hosted the unveiling of the nameplate ceremony with Vice-President Li of the University on March 25, 2002. In recognition of my role in helping to set up the Institute of Jewish Studies, Henan University appointed me the honorary director of the new Institute.

So far I have used resources from the Yunnan Project Hope plus some of my own to bring about the following programs at the new Institute:

- Two annual graduate scholarships, each RMB Y 3,000, for new graduate students coming in starting this September;
- An annual essay competition on Jewish topics with book and cash prizes. This competition is opened to all on the campus;
- Setting up a library of Jewish books and materials. I have given it the name of "Sifriat Shalom"—Peace Library. I have

asked for, and have been given, about 300 used books by the Kaufman/Silverberg Library of the Asper Jewish Cultural Center, Winnipeg. I have also provided fund for Prof. Zhang to buy local materials in Chinese and to photocopied others.

I promised her I would try my best to find/raise for her the necessary funds to continue the above-mentioned 3 programs in the years to come.

Rationale for the Institute

Given its Jewish historical importance, and the fact that a Jewish community or community of Jewish descendants continues to exist there, Kaifeng seemed to me a logical place to begin the promotion of Judaic studies in China. So I started the Kaifeng Project there. The promotion of such studies in Kaifeng would produce in the local Jewish community a greater awareness of their cultural heritage and foster pride in being, culturally speaking, Jewish, thus making it easier to revive the community. My feeling is that, if and when the Kaifeng Jewish community has been successfully revived, many more Jewish descendants in other parts of China that have been assimilated, would come back to the fold. Jewish studies in other cities in China may not yield this important effect. Some suggest that the promotion of Judaic studies at the university level and working to revive the cultural heritage of the local Jewish community should be separated, because the latter is politically more sensitive. Perhaps, for the time being, they should be unlinked. But, to me, they are complementary, each leading to the same goal in Kaifeng—an active Jewish community participating in Jewish culture and fostering Judaic studies. These goals/intents of mine—to revive the community and fostering Judaic studies at the University—may be legitimate aspirations in any free and democratic society, but in China and Chinese local society they may be misinterpreted and misread to sound subversive. So we have to be very careful about it.

I am excited about my role in the Kaifeng Project. Being Chinese and speaking the language and having the status of an oversea relative of the local Jewish community, it is a unique opportunity for me to do and accomplish things in Kaifeng. What I am doing and what I want to do—giving financial assistance to local Jewish kids and promoting Judaic studies—seems not only a reasonable and customary thing for a member of the community to sponsor and to do, it hopefully is looked upon as a patriotic gesture of an oversea Chinese, especially in helping needy students.