

International Diploma, M.A and Ph.D Programs

The Centre for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies
Shandong University, China

Shandong University in Jinan, China, invites international students to register for its one year Diploma, two year M.A or three-year Ph.D programs in *Philosophy, Culture and Inter-Religious Studies* at the Department of Philosophy and Social Development and at the Centre for Judaic and Inter Religious Studies at Shandong University. Scholarship and/or residence assistance are offered for scholars bringing broader intellectual skills to the department and other exceptional students in return for teaching commitments. Enrollment is now open for the year beginning August 2005.

The Centre for Judaic and Inter Religious Studies at the Department of Philosophy and Social Development has received key government support to develop its programs and inter – cultural scholarship with particular emphasis on the broad study of Jewish civilization language and thought. Translation projects and academic initiatives are encouraged together with a diverse group of student backgrounds.

Courses include modern philosophy, Chinese religion and thought, Judaic philosophy, history, language and literature as well as Chinese language tuition. Applicants are invited to become pioneers in the development of Judaic and interfaith studies in China while they improve their Chinese and experience Chinese civilization.

Shandong University is one of China's oldest and most prestigious academic institutions, established in 1902 by Christian missionaries, its School of Humanities is ranked within the top ten performing departments of its kind in China and the department of religion is second only to Beijing University. It is famous for nurturing some of China's most esteemed scholars, poets and thinkers.

The old campus is situated in a pleasant, leafy environment, on a river estuary, beside impressive architectural structures built in the 19th century in the heart of Jinan city, which is the capital of Shandong Province. Famous throughout China's history as the home province of Confucius and Mencius and for sites important for Buddhism and Daoism, Shandong Province continues to develop its reputation as an intellectual centre of China.

For more information, application forms and scholarship forms, please contact:
Professor M. A Ehrlich
School of Philosophy and Social Development
University of Shandong,
5 Hong Lou, Jinan, Shandong, 250100, China,
Webpage: <http://www.cjs.sdu.edu.cn>
Email: a.ehrlich.99@cantab.net, ehrllich@sdu.edu.cn

Join The Sino-Judaic Institute

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.

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

*Those who maintain membership at the Sponsor level will receive a free copy of Michael Pollak's *The Jews of Dynastic China: A Critical Bibliography*. Patrons will receive the above plus a free copy of *Sino-Judaica*.

Benefactor	\$1,000+
*Patron	\$ 500 - 999
Corporate Sponsor	\$ 250- 499
*Sponsor	\$ 100 - 499
Regular membership	\$ 50 - 99
Libraries	\$ 50
Academic	\$ 30 - 49
Senior citizens & students	\$ 25

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

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Mail to: The Sino-Judaic Institute, 232 Lexington Drive., Menlo Park, CA 94025



Points East

中國-猶太學院

Vol. 20 No. 1
March, 2005

A Publication of the Sino-Judaic Institute

A NEW SCHOOL FOR JUDAICA OPENS IN CHINA

Shandong in Eastern China is the region that gave birth to some of China's most famous philosophers including Confucius and Mencius. It is also the place where Judaism has started to be studied by an ambitious group of Chinese academic scholars.

In the tradition of Chinese philosophic openness, the University of Shandong in Jinan has been developing its Jewish studies program. A Jewish studies institute was founded by Professor Youde Fu, the Dean of the School of Philosophy and Social Development, ten years ago. Fu, himself an eminent Chinese scholar of religion, translated Spinoza's Hebrew grammar and Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed into Chinese and is well known in China for his work comparing Judaism and Confucianism. The institute he established, "the Centre for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies", is so named to denote the study of Judaism as well as other Western and Chinese religions. It has since received key government and university support to become the largest and most active centre of Jewish studies in China.

The Department of Religion, together with the Centre for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies, offers courses in Jewish philosophy, language and Religion, mainly aimed at Masters and Doctoral candidates and is developing an international program aimed at drawing candidates from China and internationally for interfaith studies, including comparisons and dialogue with Chinese religions and ideologies.

Amongst other goals, the Centre has embarked on an ambitious translation project, rendering some of the classic Hebrew and Jewish texts into the Chinese language and publishing them with the goal of broad exposure at university level around China. Examples of books already translated include Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, works by Ahad ha-Am and Martin Buber as well as Mordechai Kaplan. There are plans to translate the Mishna and various other legal, philosophic and religious texts.

The most recent senior appointment to the School of Philosophy and Social Development and to the Centre of Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies at Shandong University is Australian born and Israel educated, Professor M. Avrum Ehrlich. This will mark the first time that any university in China has offered a senior post and full professorship to a foreign expert for the teaching of Jewish religion and philosophy. Even more remarkable, as Professor Ehrlich has a strong background in religious Jewish philosophy and is an ordained rabbi. He is author of a number of books on

CHINESE UNCHECKED

by Amiram Barkat
excerpted from *HaAretz*, 11/26/04

Last December, Lauren Katz, a student at Beijing University, decided to conduct a survey among her Chinese colleagues about their attitude toward Judaism and Israel. In the course of two months, Katz, an American of Jewish descent, interviewed 214 students, most of them enrolled in the Beijing Foreign Students University (BFSU). The interviewees were asked about their knowledge of and attitude toward the Jewish people, Jewish culture and religion, and the history of the Jewish people. The Holocaust immediately stood out as the most familiar subject. The best-known Jewish figure was Albert Einstein, followed by Karl Marx, Henry Kissinger and Moses. Only three of those polled expressed hostility to Israel or to Jews. On the other hand, only 32 students were aware that a differentiation must be made between Israeli politics and the Jews, with two of them noting their reason: "because not all Israelis are Jews." More than 50 percent of the interviewees said that the Jews play an important role in the world, in business, politics, or in general. A similar majority stated that they were curious about the Jews and that they would be happy to learn more about them...

Katz's initiative is one of the few attempts that have been made so far to identify the mood in China with respect to the Jews. No opinion poll based on a statistically representative sample of the Chinese people on the perception of Jews has ever been conducted. Of course, her survey does not represent the broad public, but it does reflect a widespread tendency among the future generation of China's elites. The findings of the survey are included in a new study, "China and the Jewish People," which has just been published by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute (www.jpppi.org.il). This Jerusalem-based institute has been operating for about two years and is funded by the Jewish Agency and Jewish donors from North America. The study about China is intended as the first in a series of publications initiated by the institute's founding president, Prof. Yehezkel Dror, on "emerging superpowers without biblical tradition," a group that also includes countries such as India and Korea.

"The study about China is a strategic document which is intended to assist the Jewish people to prepare for the moment when China becomes a superpower," according to Avinoam Bar-Yosef, the institute's director general. According to forecasts by the experts, the event Bar-Yosef is referring to will occur during the first half of this century. American and French

(continued on page 5)

(continued on page 5)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Featured Articles:	
A New School for Judaica	1
Chinese Checked	1
To The Editor	3
In the Field	3
Articles:	
The Jewish Community in Shanghai	4
Faith in the Path of the Tsunami	6
Carved History	7
Review of Tetsuya Noda's Art Exhibit	8
Book Nook	10

SJI MEMBERSHIP

Country	Total
United States	229
China	16
Israel	14
Canada	9
England	8
Japan	5
Hong Kong	4
Australia	4
Switzerland	2
France	2
Germany	1
Indonesia	1
South Africa	1
Taiwan	1
TOTAL:	297

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of *Points East* catches yours truly midway in a career change so my comments will be shorter than usual.

For the past eleven years I have directed Multifaith Works, an organization that provides low-income housing and supportive services to people living with AIDS in the Seattle area. Now I am returning to the Jewish communal field to head up the American Jewish Committee's Seattle office. But between preparing for the transition in my old organization and laying the groundwork for moving into my new position, it has been a hectic couple of months.

But *Points East*, like death and taxes, waits for no man, especially its editor. This new issue is chock full of all kinds of tasty items to help you celebrate the lunar new year. I hope you enjoy them!

Anson Laytner

The Jews of Kaifeng Could Visit Your Community

The Sino-Judaic Institute's exhibit is a hit wherever it goes!

Educational ?

A great community relations bridge between Jews and Asians ?

Unique programming and public relations opportunities for all age groups ?

Complementary materials and speakers available ?

Affordable ?

Easy to install

Next available dates:
Spring 2005

For scheduling information,
please contact
Linda Frank
720/941-3725 or
linda@franknet.net

Points East

Anson Laytner, Publisher

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:

Preferred Form:
e-mail: Laytner@msn.com

or to: Rabbi Anson Laytner
1823 East Prospect St.
Seattle, WA 98112-3307
fax: 206-322-9141

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

Points East is published three
times a year, in March, July
and November.

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
(650) 323-1769

President, Prof. Albert E. Dien
1st Vice President, Rabbi Joshua Stampfer
2nd Vice President, Michael Pollak
Publisher, Rabbi Anson Laytner
Public Affairs, Rena Krasno
Treasurer, Shelton Ehrlich
Counsel, Robert Grodsky

Board of Directors

Arthur H. Rosen, Chair	Rena Krasno
Wendy Abraham, Ed.D.	Rabbi Anson Laytner
Rabbi Arnold Belzer	Prof. Donald Leslie
Mary Cha	Dennis Leventhal
Mark Cohen	Prof. Andrew Plaks
Marshall Denenberg (z'l)	Michael Pollak
Prof. Albert Dien	Prof. Vera Schwarcz
Shelton Ehrlich	Prof. Louis Schwartz
Linda Frank	Elyse Beth Silverberg
Leo Gabow (z'l)	Joshua Singer
Judy Green	Rabbi Joshua Stampfer
Prof. Steve Hochstadt	Rabbi Marvin Tokayer
Phyllis Horal (z'l)	Albert H. Yee
Dr. Ronald L. Kaye	

Shanghai Diary: A Young Girl's Journey from Hitler's Hate to War- Torn China

by Ursula Bacon
Milwaukee, Wisconsin: M Press, 2004,
\$24.95

reviewed by Audrey Friedman Marcus

Throng of people, hordes of bicycles, filthy beggars with running sores, peddlers hawking their wares, damp, cloying air, horrible smells, litter, flies, and rats. This "symphony of sounds and smells" were what greeted nine-year-old Ursula Blomberg and her refined parents when they stepped off the ship in Shanghai in 1939. It was a startling contrast to the beautiful country home in Breslau, which they were forced to leave because of the Nazis. Ms. Bacon's book recounts her dramatic story through the eyes of a young person growing up in strange circumstances.

Ms. Bacon's father established a painting and decorating business with a Chinese partner, Mr. Yung. Their customers were primarily houses of prostitution, opium dens, and gambling establishments. As she accompanied Mr. Yung to these places to present the estimates, Ms. Bacon learned the ways of the world, which she reports in a hilarious fashion. Two years later, as tutor to General Yi's "three sisters" (in actuality, his concubines), she moved in a most unusual world for one so young. The knowledge she gained in both of these settings was augmented by her amah, who, amidst copious giggling and much pidgin English, imparted to "Young Missy" the facts of life.

A precocious child who had grown up in a protective environment surrounded by adult family members and servants, Ms. Bacon's childhood came to an abrupt end in the conditions under which the family lived from 1939-1947. Yet, her strong values, resilience, and appreciation for her rescue comes through on every page – in her enthusiasm for learning from the nuns at her Catholic school, her interactions with a Buddhist monk, her friendship with a warm and welcoming family with two sons (one of whom she married), her love of music and culture, and her humor and optimism.

The book is sometimes repetitive and the language occasionally slightly peculiar,

due to the many mixed metaphors and an odd use—and overuse—of adjectives. And I am always skeptical of long paragraphs of dialogue from over 60 years ago reproduced verbatim. However, these are minor quibbles. It's an uplifting and engaging story, and the reader is carried along throughout.

Audrey Friedman Marcus is the founder of A.R.E. Publishing, Inc. After selling the business in 2001, she established AudreyEdits, a freelance editing and proofreading business (see www.audreyedits.com). Her husband, Fred, now deceased, was a refugee in Shanghai from 1939 to 1949.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: JEWS IN SHANGHAI

compiled by Audrey Friedman Marcus

Bacon, Ursula. *Shanghai Diary*. Milwaukee, WI: M Press, 2004.

Brailovsky, David. *A Covenant in Shanghai*. San Jose: CA: toExcel, 2000.

Eisfelder, Horst "Peter." *Chinese Exile: My Years in Shanghai and Nanking*. Bergenfield NJ: Avotaynu Inc., 2004.

Heppner, Ernest G. *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Kaplan, Vivian Jeanette. *Ten Green Bottles: Vienna To Shanghai – Journey of Fear and Hope*. Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2002.

Kranzler, David. *Japanese, Nazis & Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai 1938-1945*. New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1976.

Krasno, Rena. *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai*. Berkeley, CA: Pacific View Press, 1992.

———. *That Last Glorious Summer 1939: Shanghai Japan*. Hong Kong: Old China Hand Press, 2001.

Meyer, Maisie. *From the Rivers of Babylon To the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardic Jewish Life in Shanghai*. Washington, DC: University Press of America, 2003.

Ristaino, Marcia Reynders. *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Ross, James R. *Escape To Shanghai: A Jewish Community in China*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.

Rubin, Evelyn Pike. *Ghetto Shanghai*. New York: Shengold Publishers, Inc., 1993.

Tobias, Sigmund. *Strange Haven: A Jewish Childhood in Wartime Shanghai*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

New from the Pens of Leslie and Eber

by Maisie Meyer

I feel it would be of interest to your readers to know that two leading figures in the Sino-Judaic field of research Donald Leslie and Irene Eber have written exceptionally good autobiographies.

Donald Leslie, **Not a Bowl of Chicken Soup: Memoirs of a Jewish Confucian**, Dobson's Printing Service Pty Ltd, NSW Australia, 2003. He is now proofreading his new book (written together with Yang Daye and Ahmed Youssef) **Islam in Traditional China: A Bibliographical Guide**, Monumenta Serica Monograph No. 54, which hopefully is to be published this year. "Jews and Judaism in Traditional China: Prospects for Research" in *Youtai*, University Mainz in Gernersheim is also to be published.

Irene Eber's autobiography, **The Choice**, was published by Schocken Books, New York, in 2004. Irene is in the process of writing a book on Jews in Shanghai and will publish an essay in Hebrew on both Kaifeng and Shanghai entitled "Overland and by Sea - Eight Hundred Years of the Jewish Presence in China." "A Critical Survey of Classical Chinese Literary Works in Hebrew", in Leo Tak-hung Chan, ed., *One into Many, Translation and the Dissemination of Classical Chinese Literature*, (2003) has appeared in print. About Yiddish poets in Shanghai, one is in German "Auf einer einsamen Insel. Jiddische Dichter in Schanghai", *Judischer Almanach des Leo Baeck Instituts*, 2001, pp.160-169, and "Bridges Across Cultures: China in Yiddish Poetry," in *China and Her Biographical Dimensions, Commemorative Essays for Helmut Martin*, (2001), pp. 277-284.

BOOK NOOK

Escape to Manila: From Nazi Tyranny to Japanese Terror

By Frank Ephraim
Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

reviewed by Rena Krasno

Historians believe that Jews first reached the Philippines in the 17th century, together with Spanish traders. In 1873, some two centuries later, two Jewish brothers from San Francisco, Adolphe and Charles Levy, landed in Manila. In 1899, by the time the United States occupied the archipelago, a mere 50 Jews resided there.

After World War I, the Jewish population in the Philippines had grown to 150 families. It included American Jews, Sephardi Jews, and Russian Jews who had fled Czarist pogroms. Jewish religious ceremonies were held in private homes. In 1919 a formal Jewish Community was organized, a site was bought and a synagogue constructed, Temple Emil.

With the rise of Hitler, German Jews began to seek refuge far from the motherland that now persecuted them. On September 8, 1937, a ship sailed into Manila Bay carrying Jewish refugees. Among them, was an energetic, talented man named Fritz Mosert, who founded the "Manila Tageblatt" ("Manila Daily"). This newspaper was much in demand among the newly arrived German speakers.

Ephraim writes: ".....the Filipinos were a tolerant people who never interfered with nor took action against the Jews. Temple Emil on Taft Avenue was very visible, and Jews attended services and congregated in front of the Temple without the slightest disturbance..."

The continuing influx of Jewish immigrants worried the Germans. The German Consul complained to his Foreign Office that German Jews now exceeded the number of Germans in the Philippines. According to him, "this was intolerable" however, he continued, "the Jews were keeping a low profile." He did not elaborate what a "low profile" meant. According to his count, there were 523 Jews at the end of 1939. This number, it must be

stressed, did not include Jewish immigrants from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Poland and several other countries. The author then follows the lives of a number of Jews in Manila, describing their efforts to survive.

On December 26, 1941 McArthur declared Manila an "open city", which meant that Manila would not be defended and enabled the Japanese to enter it without a fight. As U.S. troops deployed to make a stand against the Japanese in Bataan, they burned oil stocks and blasted supplies that could be used by the Japanese.

When the Imperial forces finally occupied Manila, European Jewish refugees knew little about Japan and its policies. Ephraim writes: "Three Japanese attitudes about Jews emerged, each with an underlying endorsement of the anti-Semitic fantasy of Jewish power and influence. One attitude was the desire to use Jews to enhance the growth of the Japanese empire. A second was the opposing view, that using Jewish power would have a devastating negative effect on Japanese ambitions. The third attitude was more pragmatica system of close observation of the Jews so that any attempt by them to seek control would be met by immediate counter-action; at the same time, Jews would be treated equitably... This third approach became the generic Japanese policy toward Jews in Asia."

On Jan.6, 1942, the Japanese announced that "third party residents" had to register. These were defined as foreign residents "who were citizens of countries neutral or uncommitted to either the Axis or the Allies." This posed a problem for the Japanese as far as Jews with German and Austrian passports were concerned. Finally, the Japanese decided to register them as "stateless Jews" and this notation was stamped on their original passports.

The author elaborates in well-researched detail how the daily lives of Jews were affected by Japanese policy and the trials they had to endure. American schools were not reopened and children had to be sent to Filipino parochial schools. All English, history and geography courses

were eliminated. The only "leftover courses" were mathematics and music. New compulsory lessons were included on Japan and its propaganda efforts. Learning the Japanese language became mandatory.

On January 26, 1943 the Manila "Tribune" published an article headlined: "Warning. Non-collaborating Jews in the Philippines to be Dealt with Drastically." In October 1944 Japanese naval troops occupied Temple Emil. The situation of foreigners, and of Jews, worsened drastically. There was hunger, disease, lack of medical care and shelter. When American troops finally re-entered Manila, the Japanese resisted fiercely bringing destruction and death. It took until March 3, 1945 for the U.S. to subdue the last Japanese resistance in Manila.

Ephraim writes: "More than eleven hundred Jews came across the Pasig River to the northern city districts with only the clothes on their backs – and these were often bloodied and torn – after surviving the holocaust in the southern residential districts of Manila. Sixty seven of their brethren lay dead, and more than two hundred were badly wounded – from Japanese bayonets, grenades, bullets, incarceration, torching, American artillery and mortar shrapnel, severe burns caused by exploding white phosphorous rounds, falling debris, smoke and lack of medical aid and water." The synagogue had been looted but the Torah survived, lying in a corner covered with dust.

The author, Frank Ephraim, a German Jew, arrived in Manila in 1939 with his family and had the opportunity to witness directly many of the incidents described in "Escape to Manila". He tells his personal story, as well as that of a number of Jewish families he knew well, their suffering, despair and hope. Ephraim's fascinating account is based on his own reminiscences, archival research and oral history. His book discloses yet another tragic result of Hitler's murderous ideology, and the ensuing Holocaust.

TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

Where [Frank's] article says that thousands of Jews fled to Harbin during the '20s and '30s mainly to escape Communist and later Nazi oppression, the early Jewish settlers were often people who fled Czarist oppression, or adventurers who became fur trappers and fur merchants in Siberia and Manchuria and settled into settled in Harbin as fur traders and exporters. Much of that trade developed with the US, and because Shanghai was the major shipping port and financial and business center, most of the Russian Jewish community in Shanghai by 1937 had come down from Harbin. (Some also settled in the port city of Tientsin, where the shul was in the heart of town and is readily identifiable from the street. It now houses a seafood restaurant.)

I think the impetus for much of the general move down to Shanghai in the 1930's, aside from the open hostility of some of the White Russians, was from families with children who wanted to provide a better education through the excellent foreign schools (among them the Kadoorie-sponsored Jewish school) and universities. The general thought was ultimately to move the family to the US, where the children would have a chance for a better life. This was, of course, before the postwar events made it possible for all Jews to migrate to Israel.

Art Rosen

To the Editor,

I'm interested in finding out more about the Jewish community that existed in Harbin for a possible article. I'd love to talk to [people] who might work in this field, or who might point me to someone (or several people) who have knowledge of the Jews of Harbin.

If you send your phone number I could call. Or we can simply e-mail. If you send a #, please let me know where you're located (I'm on the East Coast, in the Washington, DC, area).

Thanks very much,

Anne Glusker
glusker@starpower.net

To the Editor,

As a long time subscriber and reader of *Points East*, I particularly enjoyed the recent issue with the articles on Harbin for a particular reason. One of my father's brothers immigrated to Harbin from Russia in the late 1880's when my father went to London. We then lost track of him and I wondered how I might contact someone or some agency who might be instrumental in obtaining a bit of information.

Should you have any suggestions, I would appreciate your forwarding them to me.

Thank you,
Irving J. Karp
RIKFOR@aol.com

To the Editor,

I have not seen mentioned in *Points East* any reference to the "Emigranten Adressbuch." This copy of the 1939 Shanghai Jewish directory could be a valuable resource for finding families who may have been there.

Listed in the directory is the name, Georg Welsh, of Breslau. I wonder if this gentleman with my family name, who came from the same city as my family (which emigrated to the UK in the early 20th century), is known to any of the *Points East* readers?

I was able to email your reader who inquired in the November issue about her forebearers in Shanghai with a copy of her grandparents listing in the directory.

Sincerely,
David Welsh
dwwelsh@adelphia.net

IN THE FIELD

- Recently the Center of Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies at Shandong University was endorsed and funded by the Chinese Ministry of Education to become one of China's one hundred elite key research institutions, to translate Jewish works, bring out Jewish scholars, be a forum for discussion and research on a plethora of subjects and teach Jewish studies including Hebrew, Hebrew Bible and Jewish philosophy. The Center for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies is based in Shandong University's Department of Philosophy and Social Development. Contact: Prof. M. Avrum Ehrlich, School of Philosophy and Social Development, University of Shandong, 5 Hong Lou, Jinan, Shandong, 250100, China, Webpage: <http://www.cjs.sdu.edu.cn>. Email: a.ehrlich.99@cantab.net or ehrllich@sdu.edu.cn. Mobile: +86 13793163722, Home: +86 531 8016083. See related story on p. 1.
- Diane Estelle Vicari, of DOCdance Productions, and Vice-President of the International Documentary Association, is pleased to announce that **Sugihara: Conspiracy of Kindness**, a film by Robert Kirk and Diane Estelle Vicari, will air in the U.S. on PBS, May 5, 2005 at 9:00 p.m. (check local listings). Be sure to tune in.
- Rabbi Shalom Greenberg, of the Shanghai Jewish Center, invites anyone coming to Shanghai for the March 1-6, 2005 Fair (East China Import Export Commodity Fair at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre in Pudong) to join with him to pray together and have meals at a hotel near the Expo. Email: office@chinajewish.org. Phone: 862162780225. web: <http://www.chinajewish.org>
- Dvir Bar-Gal, of Tours of Jewish Shanghai (shanghaijews@hotmail.com) wrote that in October they opened an architectural exhibition entitled "Carved History." In this exhibition he asked international architects who live and operate in Shang-

hai to design a conceptual idea for a Jewish memorial site that focused on the lost Jewish headstones Bar-Gal had collected over the past 3 years. Nine famous and talented architects volunteered their time and creativity. There was a great crowd in the opening with some 150-200 people attending, including many architects, journalists and others. For the exhibition they printed a beautiful catalogue that tells the history of Jewish Shanghai and goes into more depth about the project and about its goals. See related story by Rena Krasno on p. 7.

- <http://www.InterFaithFamily.com> recently published a series of articles on raising mixed Jewish-Asian children in interfaith American families. If interested, go to the following: <http://www.interfaithfamily.com/article/issue147/golin.phtml> ; <http://www.interfaithfamily.com/article/issue147/botwinik.phtml> ; <http://www.interfaithfamily.com/article/issue147/ettinger.phtml>

The Jewish Community in Shanghai

by Rebecca Toueg

[Biographical Note by Rena Krasno Rebecca Toueg is a member of the highly respected Toueg family. Her father and mother, Isaac Hayim and Grace Toueg were both born in Baghdad. There, like many young Iraqi Jewish men, Isaac Hayim sought employment at the famous Sassoon Co. and was transferred to Shanghai before he was 20. The Sassoon Company was the first Jewish firm to be established in Shanghai. After a few years, Toueg set up as stockbroker on the Shanghai Exchange and eventually sent for his entire family to join him in China. In 1930, Isaac Hayim married Grace, his brother's eldest daughter.

Isaac Hayim Toueg soon became an active member of the Shanghai Sephardi Jewish Community and was elected Board member of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, which his entire family attended regularly.

Rebecca Toueg studied in Shanghai at the British School and later - after spending a year with her family in the U.S. - at the Jewish School. She entered the Hebrew University in 1951, taught English Literature at the Tel Aviv University, and spent three years as a student in England and France. At present, she is completing her Ph.D. in Philosophy at Haifa University, and translating academic publications from Hebrew into English.

She married Ezra Toueg, a second cousin who was born in Egypt and who came to Israel in 1957. They have one son, Jacob, who is now 31 years old, married, and looking forward to his first child, expected to be born in February 2005.

Rebecca Toueg has close ties with the Association of Jews from China (Igud Yotsei Sin) in Tel Aviv and the Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center.]

I consider myself a by-product of Babylonian Jewry, living in the Shanghai Jewish Community that had come under the influence of British culture and gradually assimilated the language, literature and social traditions of the English people. Yet most of those who came to Shanghai from Baghdad, Bombay or Calcutta maintained their own communal way of life within the family circle. They lived, one might say, a double life. Inside the home there was the warmth of oriental customs and loyal family ties. My grandmother never spoke English and knew only Iraqi Arabic, so that I was forced to speak it in spite of my terrible anglicized accent. She dressed and comported herself in the traditional Baghdadian manner.

Our community, which called itself the Sephardi Jewish Community, began to get organized towards the end of the 19th century through the efforts of the Sassoon family that began trading with the Far East and which had trained young men of their community in Bombay to be sent as clerks to work in their firm in Shanghai and Hong Kong. My father was one of those young men who, at the age of about eighteen, were sent from Bombay to Shanghai. Those sent soon brought over their families, and later many of them left their jobs with the Sassoons to establish their own business enterprises, as did my own father.

Shanghai was a city of tremendous opportunities, an international city that was open and free to all who wished to come there and make their fortunes. The Babylonian Jews took full advantage of this and were extremely successful. But they were also very community conscious, and in 1909 the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association was established. Already in 1904 one of the community leaders, N.E.B. Ezra, founded an English newspaper, Israel's Messenger, in which he promoted Zionism and published many articles on Jewish life in Shanghai, Baghdad and Bombay.

One could see there the close ties maintained among the Babylonian communities in the Far East. Learned and pious men were often brought over to serve these communities as spiritual leaders or to fulfill the function of *hazan*, *shochet*, or *melamed*. They spoke Iraqi Arabic among themselves, but educated their children in British schools, and many of the wealthier families used to send their children on to universities in England. Besides the clubs and social centers, the community also set up their own schools, hospitals, and shelter houses for the aged poor. Yet most of the families sent their children to British schools rather than to the Jewish school.

Although there were also other sections such as the French Concession where many of the Russian Jewish community had settled, as well as a large American, Portuguese and Japanese community in the city, it was the British who sent the tone in the International Settlement in Shanghai, and the Babylonian Jews quickly adapted themselves to the English way of living, and the family life style was similar to that of a well-to-do English family. The homes of the richer members were built like estates with large buildings and wide stretches of garden surrounding them, and the servants lived with their families in their own quarters within the compound.

I realize now that the community had patterned itself on the English model of the class system, and that there was a certain amount of social snobbery in the way the wealthier members adopted a grander style of living, owning racing horses and enjoying the pleasures of high society. But this did not prevent the creation of a traditional orthodox Jewish life within the

this exhibit, Noda states that he now identifies with two cultures, Jewish and Japanese. A portrait of the artist's "Jewish Family" (the Barturs) is displayed side by side with that of his "Japanese family". There are identification strips above the heads of each person written in Hebrew letters for the Barturs, and in Japanese characters for that of the Nodas.

In an 1996 interview, Noda explained: "One of the reasons I chose two families from different cultures from Japan and Israel-to be shown in exhibitions is that I wanted to show the differences between these families. As to composition, I relied on traditional Japanese techniques of expression. For example, leaving a large amount of blank space is one of these traditions in Japanese painting. "Blank space" means, in other words, the "in-between", doesn't it?"

In the introduction to the catalogue "Days

in a Life - the Art of Tetsuya Noda", Robert Flynn Johnson, curator-in-charge of the Achenbach Foundation For Graphic Arts, Fine Arts, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, writes:

"What makes Tetsuya Noda an important artist his ability to embrace the *zeitgeist* of his time and incorporate it in a meaningful way into his art. Refreshingly, nostalgia has no place in the way he sees the world around him". Noda is seldom confrontational in his art, but there have been times when he could not avoid expressing strong emotions. This occurred "when he experienced the shock of a report on television of a suicide bombing at a seder in Israel". Noda explained:

"I am not a religious man in any way, but having a Jewish wife I am invited almost every year to the Passover Seder. It is still for the Jews one of the most celebrated

ceremonies. It is a time to think about the importance of freedom and share time with family and friends. No one should be left alone on such a day.

On March 27, 2002, we were invited to share a secular kind of seder with an Israeli family from a kibbutz living in Tokyo. Since I kind of make my sketches with my camera, you can imagine me here sitting in front of both parts of the image, one facing the Passover table and the other facing the tragedy on our TV set.

Although the Middle East problems are happening in the Middle East, I cannot but feel concerned and involved, and they are very much part of my life now."

In his art, Noda depicts family, friends and simple every day objects. His images of mundane objects such as flowers, fruit, pots and pans, cigarette butts are endowed by him with a spirit that haunts the viewer.

Ernest G. Heppner, 83

excerpted from the *Indianapolis Star*, 8 October 2004 & the *Jewish Post & Opinion*, 13 October 2004

Ernest G. Heppner, 83, who escaped the Holocaust by fleeing to Shanghai, China, died on Wednesday, October 6, 2004.

Mr. Heppner was active in the community and as a member of the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation. He was a self-taught scholar whose book *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto* is the only documented memoir by a survivor of the wartime Jewish community in Shanghai.

As a result of the research for his book, he disclosed to the world the service of a Dutch consul in Lithuania, Jan Zwartendijk, who helped more than 2,000 Polish Jews flee the Nazis.

He was born in Germany, where his family had owned a bakery that produced matzos. He and his mother fled to China from Europe in 1939. He arrived in the United States in July 1947.

Heppner was a fervent enemy of racism and other bigotry, [served as President of the Council on the Jewish Experience in Shanghai, and was active in Anti-Defamation League, the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council, the Civil Liberties Union, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the Inter-religious Commission on Human Equality, among other organizations.]

For services rendered he received a citation from the FBI. In 1992, the ADL established a Distinguished Community Leadership award in his name and, in 1997, Indiana University bestowed on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

hai. Some were broken, some writing was illegible, but others were almost intact. Bar-Gal's detective work led him to discover Jewish headstones used as steps, laundry boards, part of walls, in muddy paths. One farmer had paved the floor of his storage shed with several gravestones.

Bar-Gal contacted the Israeli Consulate, which encouraged his efforts, and he has been able to recover 85 old Jewish headstones. This is but a fraction of the estimated 3,700 from four Shanghai Jewish cemeteries. On my part, I proposed to introduce Bar-Gal to descendents of Jews buried under some of the headstones, should I be able to locate them. My parents had arrived in Shanghai at the beginning of the 20th century, and had personally met many Jewish old-timers. Thus the project would become a living one—not only the history of stones, but also of people and families related to them even today. We at the Sino-Judaic Institute, based in Menlo Park Ca., offered whatever assistance we could in this project.

As he came across more and more stones, an idea germinated in Bar-Gal's mind: the founding of a permanent memorial to Jews who had settled in Shanghai, Jews whose history was closely interwoven with the fate of this city. Bar-Gal's idea developed and led to the opening of an exhibit entitled "Carved History".

"Carved History" was an artistic and conceptual display where artists and architects could freely use their creativity in designing a memorial to Shanghai's Jews. Bar-Gal had become Director of the Shanghai ARTSEA Studio & Gallery. Prominent Shanghai architect Christopher Choa joined him in this project. They invited five leading artists/architects residing in Shanghai to suggest designs for the historic memorial.

The forward of their beautiful catalogue "Carved History" states: "With our joint efforts we hope to bring to the public the story of the lost Jewish cemeteries...This exhibition wishes to bring back to the Shanghai people a bit of these extraordinary days."

[The following is a poem taken from one of the words of two of participants in the exhibit:] "Separated from the remains of the dead, these stones deserve quiet repose..."

*Nomadic messengers
the scattered
refugees
like leaves
disperse
the seeds of culture
to live again
let them be."*

Jeb Beresford ("Sculptural Seeds")—"inspired by a series of stories, each Sculptural Seed will create new memories in the fabric of the City. These new memories are made in remembrance of those from the past who have shaped the present.

Celebrating the City of Shanghai as a place of Diversity.
Celebrating the City of Shanghai as a place of Harmony."

James Brearley ("Floating Stones")—"The memorial takes the form of an inverted grave-mound. It is a barge with no fixed address.... (It) echoes the uneasy history of Jewish immigrants..."

Edgar Budoy ("Shanghai Jewish Ghetto")—"The conceptual plan includes a Chinese bamboo trees enclosure, symbolically expressing a shield or protection. The themed gardens express faith, joy, love, peace, and hope. The inspiration is "The legacy of Jewish Community in Shanghai."

Silas Chiow ("Wall of Memory") with Stefan Rau (planner) and Xu Yi (Designer)—"These "found" gravestones find their place in an appropriate memorial where visitors, too, experience their "absence"...here they discover a meaningful place within themselves suspended in one's own contemplation..."

Christopher Choa ("A Jewish Memorial Island")—"The Jewish Memorial Island is surrounded by a figural moat, a symbol of ritual ablution. Visitors access the memorial island by crossing over a granite-slab bridge. At the head of the bridge, a gate structure incorporates historical information about the former Jewish settlement...A single climax poplar tree is planted at the southern end of the island, a symbol of the Jewish Tree-of-Life".

Corvin Matel ("The Presence of Absence")—"This site encompasses the former "Jewish Ghetto". It will "co-exist in parallel with a planned and sensible develop-

ment of the site....Just as the Hebrew names are carved out of the tombstones creating voids in the marble, the volume of these existing buildings in the Jewish Ghetto will also leave their outline as public space within the mass of future development on the site. It's a subtractive process just like the engraving of the tombstones."

Milan Petlach ("The Shanghai Jewish Memorial")—"Since for me architecture is the art of creating space, I have given the composition a spatial, that is, as three-dimensional character.... (this) "creates a metaphorical gateway to another world - the world of sunken time, sunken lives, and sunken memories...The final compositional element is the wall which follows an elliptical line. This represents the journey between beginning and end, the consolation of contradictory elements, the peace ultimately achieved."

Tim Schwager ("Voice in Stones")—"The plan is a rectangular space with trees on one side and a series of vertical pillars fixed on a tombstone...Each pillar will have a small speaker which will say at random, the name of the person, the place of origin and maybe the dates - it will be a visual and a "sound" experience...The voice should say in Chinese, Yiddish, maybe Hebrew and probably English..."

Review of Tetsuya Noda's Art Exhibit

by Rena Krasno

Diary:
Woodcut and Silkscreen on Japanese Paper
Asian Art Museum
San Francisco

Decades ago, I met Tetsuya Noda as a young man at the Tokyo residence of Israeli Ambassador Bartur. He was a friend of their daughter, Dorit, whom he later married. Noda eventually converted to Judaism, an event he celebrated by creating the somewhat mysterious image of a synagogue - in woodcut and silkscreen on Japanese paper.

It was indeed a surprising delight for me to see Noda's remarkable work displayed at the San Francisco Asian Museum. At

family circle and the maintaining of close ties with the community both in the synagogues and in other social gatherings on festive occasions. Families could enjoy both styles of life at the same time. They would go to the synagogue on Saturdays, study Torah together, and enjoy their meals with all the traditional blessings and hymns around the family table, and on Sundays they could go riding or sailing in the daytime, engage in sports activities, and then go to the cinema or nightclub dancing in the evenings. Children were given piano and ballet classes and encouraged to participate in scout activities. Today all this might seem to conflict with a religious way of life, but at the time it was quite natural to live in this way.

We were an Iraqi community with a very strong sense of identification. We sang the same familiar hymns from Baghdad, and the religious ceremonies and festivities were held with all the songs and melodies that can now be heard at any Iraqi synagogue. Our home in Shanghai was on the same street as the Ohel Rachel Synagogue where we prayed regularly. Open house was held during festive holidays, and large communal party gatherings were often organized for Purim and Hannukah at family homes.

Those were the grand old days of our community that ended with the Japanese occupation of Shanghai during the Second World War. Our community was then split into two. Those holding British passports because they had been born in India, such as my own uncle and aunt, were sent to various internment camps together with other British and American people in Shanghai. Those who had kept their Iraqi citizenship were considered as neutrals, but were highly restricted in their movements. We were mostly confined to our homes, daily life became very difficult, and community ties were hard to maintain.

I recall that our home became a community meeting place after the Japanese took over the Ohel Rachel synagogue. Synagogue services for the holidays were held at our home, and the distribution of *matza* and other basic foods such as oil and rice was organized there. Besides this, there was the need to assist the many refugee families that had fled to Shanghai from Europe and my family was closely involved in all the charitable work done

both by the Sephardi and Russian communities for their relief. Yet for me, those war years were the best years of my life. The Pacific War began on my ninth birthday. There were seven of us children in a big four-story house. There was no school, though we had private tuition arranged for us. But there was still a lot of free time for games, for reading, and organizing our own activities. The house was full of books, on which I feasted, mainly from the synagogue library that had been transferred to us for safekeeping.

When the war ended, the community tried its best to resume its former way of life. But the heart had gone out of it by then. The tragedy of the Holocaust in Europe had put a pall over everything. Nothing could ever be as it was before. I returned to school and graduated after a few years. But by then the Communists had taken over the country and most of the foreign residents had left or were leaving. We were among the last to go in 1950, first to Hong Kong and then to Israel. Our Iraqi passports had been cancelled in 1947 and we were now stateless citizens. Israel was the only place we could go to, and we arrived here in 1951 soon after the large immigration of Iraqi Jewry. My parents discovered some of our distant relatives from Baghdad and joined an Iraqi synagogue in Tel Aviv, which my brother still regularly attends. Two *sefer* Torahs belonging to my family in Shanghai were brought there and the circle has now been completed at the Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center, where the history of my community will be commemorated.

A New School

(continued from page 1)

Hasidism and articles on Jewish mysticism and religious sects, as well as biblical commentaries and articles on Jewish ethics.

Professor Ehrlich teaches courses in Modern Hebrew, Biblical Hebrew and Tanakh, Talmudic thought and Jewish mysticism. He was a graduate of the Cambridge based Centre of Jewish-Christian Relations and a researcher at the Department of Social and Political Sciences at Cambridge University and Clare Hall, Cambridge. His contribution to the Centre of Judaic and Inter Religious Studies intends to supplement its all round Inter-Religious Studies program.

He aims to develop the internationalism of the Centre and hopes that Israelis and other Jews, as well as any person with interests in Judaism, inter-religious studies or in studying Chinese religions such as Confucianism, Buddhism or Taoism as well as Marxism will exchange their own accumulated knowledge with the Chinese students at the Centre.

According to Ehrlich, one of the first questions to address is how the growing field of Jewish studies can be useful and contribute to Chinese academe, its opening culture and its growing desire for internationalism. He will address this question at a lecture entitled "Exploring a Judeo-Sino Intellectual Exchange" at the upcoming Jewish Studies Conference to be held at the University of Nanjing in October.

Chinese Checked

(continued from page 1)

researchers recently estimated that by 2050 China's gross domestic product will be 75 percent larger than that of the United States and more than twice as large as that of the European Union. Israel and Jews would appear to have a great deal to lose if the United States, which is today considered their main and almost only ally, is deprived of its international dominance.

Enhancing ties

Dr. Shalom Salomon Wald, the author of the study on China, is optimistic. In his view, with a relatively small investment, the Jews can gain a great deal by cultivating relations with China. China, he notes, does not have an anti-Semitic past and its attitude toward the Jews is characterized by curiosity, openness and originality, he says. Wald lists a series of steps that could help enhance relations between the two nations, including encouragement of productions on Jewish themes, cultivating academic activity in China in the field of Israel and Judaism studies, and establishing a permanent and representative presence in China of the main movements and streams of the Jewish people.

Wald offers a complex picture in analyzing the manner in which China views its relations with Israel on the one hand and with the Arab world on the other. Traditionally, he notes, China expresses pro-

Palestinian and pro-Arab positions, but in his opinion that policy is limited mainly to rhetoric. The Arab countries' fierce objections to cooperation between China and Israel in security and other spheres has no effect on the judgment of the Chinese, he says. Wald believes that China's growing dependence on Middle Eastern oil will bring about a change in its traditional strategic conception and lead to China's increasing involvement in the Middle East. However, even this development will not necessarily lead to disengagement from Israel.

"It would be simplistic to say that China will develop dependence on Middle Eastern oil states while ignoring the dependence of the oil states, which will develop in parallel, on what will be the world's largest market. As a general comment, we can say that the Chinese always make it a point to conduct negotiations from positions of independence and strength. Cultivating relations with Israel in spite of the Muslims' protests sends precisely such a message."

...To research the study, Wald spent a few months in China. He does not speak Chinese, and his work was limited to reading books in other languages. In addition, he interviewed about 100 researchers from China, the United States and Israel, and held meetings with students in six universities in China.

Wald notes that the number of Chinese who ever met a Jew is infinitesimally small and even students of Jewish subjects in Chinese universities have mostly never seen a Jew. However, it is his contention that there is basic sympathy for Jews and for Israel among the Chinese public, precisely because of Israel's posture vis-à-vis the Arab states. "That sympathy is not always expressed in the official declarations or in the media reports, but it is very pronounced in public forums such as Internet chat sites." In his research, Wald analyzed Chinese views of Jews and grouped them under four heading: Jewish wealth, success and power; Jewish contributions to world civilization, particularly in the fields of science and technology, longevity of the Jewish people and the persecution of Jews during the ages, particularly in the Holocaust.

Israeli and other Jewish researchers support this conclusion. Rebecca Bitterman has been visiting China since the beginning of the 1980s within the framework of her position as curator of Asian art at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. As an Israeli and as a Jew, she says, she never encountered a negative approach. "The characteristic reaction of the person on the street is to link Israel with force and the Jews with cleverness and wealth, but in the positive sense."

One of the researchers this writer spoke with maintained that Israel's force-driven behavior actually reinforces the esteem in which it is held by many Chinese, against the background of powerful negative and even racist feelings toward Muslims that are widespread in Chinese society. Prof. Andrew Plaks, an expert on Chinese literature from Princeton University who also teaches in Israel, notes that his impression is that "as a whole, the reports in the Chinese media about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are far more balanced than those in Europe, for example."

Wald, though, says that the reports about developments in the territories and in Iraq are inciting the Muslim minority in China against Israel and the Jews. According to unofficial estimates, there are up to 40 million Muslims in China, double the number of Muslim migrants in Europe. In China, though, in contrast to Europe, this is a negligible minority - less than 3 percent of the population.

Chinese Jews

...In his study, Wald describes in detail the academic activity in the sphere of Jewish studies in China. The absence of an umbrella organization to coordinate academic activity in this area made it very difficult for him to collect the data.

Academic study of Judaism began in China only after the death of Mao Zedong, in 1976. There are now between eight and ten academic centers for the study of Judaism and Israel in the country. The most active center is at Nanjing University and it enjoys funding by Jewish organizations in North America. In 1993 the center's director, Xu Xin; published a Chinese translation of the Encyclopedia Judaica, a project in which 40 researchers took part. According to Xin, about 2,000 students at the university take a course on Jewish subjects every year. Three universities in

Points East

China (Shanghai, Nanjing and Kaifeng) grant degrees in Jewish history and culture. A fourth, in Jinan, grants a degree in Jewish philosophy. Wald estimates that about 200 researchers are engaged in Jewish subjects on a partial basis and that between 15 and 20 deal with Jewish subjects full-time.

In the realm of Jewish culture, books on Jewish subjects that have been translated into Chinese have succeeded in making inroads among the broad public. Unlike the Europeans, the Chinese are less interested in contemporary Israeli authors such as Amos Oz and David Grossman, and more in historical and religious literature. "Books that describe Jewish antiquity generate special interest," Wald says. "The first edition of the book, 'Jerusalem, 3,000 Years of History,' was published in a printing of 5,000 copies in the middle of 2003 and sold out within a short time." Prof. Plaks notes the demand for canonical Jewish books. "Books such as the translations into Chinese of *Pirkei Avot* [Ethics of the Fathers] and the *Mishnah* [teachings of the early sages] are a considerable commercial success and sell thousands of copies each."

Faith in the Path of the Tsunami

by Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm

Phuket, Thailand: Ten minutes after the disaster hit the news, my phone started ringing. It's been ringing ever since, 24 hours a day. Husbands looking for wives. Mothers looking for daughters. Friends looking for their traveling companions.

As one of the Chabad emissaries living in Southeast Asia, I was dispatched that very night to the hardest hit areas. My mission: to aid with the search and rescue efforts, particularly in regards to the thousands of missing Israelis and other Jewish travelers. Yakov Dvir, from the Israeli Consul in Thailand, as well as Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, put in the urgent request to Rabbi Yosef Chaim Kantor, the director of Chabad activities in Thailand, that Chabad step in to help. All of us—the six Chabad rabbis and our families and the twelve rabbinical students living in Thailand—immediately moved into 24-hour mode, fielding calls, compiling lists, and offering aid and comfort to the survivors.

Points East

When I arrived in Phuket the bloated bodies still lined the streets. I had hundreds of names on my lists, with new ones being added every hour. For three days now I have been making my rounds of the morgues, hospitals and makeshift shelters, trying to match faces and fates to the names in my lists.

For the dazed survivors I arrange food, clothing, medical care and transportation back home. For the dead, I have the unfortunate task of helping the ZAKA (Disaster Victims Identification) volunteers who've flown in from Israel make the identification, arrange for a proper Jewish burial, and get the news to loved ones keeping vigil by the phone. But in a place where unfortunately so many will be thrown together in mass graves, there is some sense of relief and closure knowing that the victim has been found and will receive a Jewish burial. From the moment a Jewish body is identified, it is not left alone for a minute. This is the last respect and love we can give to our brothers and sisters...

Our three Chabad houses in Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Ko Samui have been transformed into crisis centers for counseling, clothing, communication, food, money, transportation and shelter. We have opened our phone lines for free calls to assuage the fear of parents who will not rest until they hear their son or daughter's voice on the other end. Our free email service has enabled hundreds to contact worried loved ones and assure them of their safety.

The survivors come to us shaken, hungry and overwhelmed. They need to go home and be with their family. Until that is possible, it is our responsibility to provide them with that love, comfort and safety while they are still here. For some that means a warm meal, others need money and arrangements for necessary travel documents, some a hug or shoulder to cry on, and others a place to sleep.

The Thai government has been incredibly helpful and organized. Now that people have been able to travel here to help, we have been joined by dozens of volunteers who've flown in from Israel. We're all working together, round the clock. No one has yet digested the magnitude of what has happened. Right now, there's too much to do to even pause for moment to contemplate it.

The unity amongst all the workers is incredible. I was moved to tears when I saw the Israeli media and news reporters join us to help locate and identify the injured and dead. They were no longer looking at the situation through the camera, but through their tear-filled eyes, as they worked alongside the rabbis, government officials and volunteers.

On a larger scale, this disaster has joined every race, creed and religion together. There are no divisions in suffering. There are no barriers. Rich, poor, young, old, male, female, were all the same in the eyes of the waves. And now, once again are all the same when it comes to offering aid, support and love...

What keeps us going are the miracles that are sprinkled throughout the horror...There are no words to describe the horror that has happened, and certainly no understandable explanations or reasons for its occurrence. But we must believe that though we can't make sense of it, this, like everything we experience, it is part of a larger picture that we currently don't see. More importantly, we must use this opportunity to focus on our ability to overcome, to help others, and to rebuild. Every living, breathing person who survived this not only has to live his or her life, but must live for those who were not able to survive.

And we must remember that just as instantaneously as utter destruction struck, so too in a split second we can be redeemed, we can start anew, we can have complete peace, love and goodness.

I've seen more the pain and suffering in the last few days than I've seen in all my 32 years. But I have also been privileged to witness compassion and faith of a magnitude that I never imagined existed. I have watched as people from different cultures, faiths, countries and mentalities join together to help another. For the G-dly soul, hidden deep within, often shines forth precisely when externally there is nothing to depend on. When physicality is destroyed, the only thing left is spirituality, and that is now what is apparent throughout this annihilated area.

So, for now, I continue to help rescue and identify the victims, working along with representatives from throughout the world

here to do the same. We still are hoping to find more survivors, to provide the injured with all their needs, and make possible for those who were not so fortunate to be brought to their families for a proper burial.

Thanks to everyone's unbelievable dedication and work, we have made much headway. From an initial list of 2,000 missing Jews, only 17 remain unaccounted for. May G-d bless us to continue to be successful in our work, and may this disaster be the last we know of pain and suffering and the beginning of the true ushering in of goodness and redemption.

Contact: Chabad of Thailand, 96 Rambuttri St., Banglamphu, Bangkok 10200 Thailand. Tel: (661) 837 7618. Email rabbi@jewishthailand.com. Website: www.jewishthailand.com.

"Carved History" - A Project of Dvir Bar-Gal by Rena Krasno

I met Dvir Bar-Gal, a young Israeli filmmaker, some years ago during a visit to Shanghai. At the time, Bar-Gal was a fairly recent newcomer to the city. The history of Jews in Shanghai fascinated him. His enthusiasm was evident as we conversed while he interviewed me—an Old China Hand—in the former Shanghai Jewish Club. When I was growing up, this building was the center of political, cultural, social and sports activities of the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Community. I knew it well and old memories quickly came to fore. Today, it has become the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Many will remember the remarkable documentary filmed there during Isaac Stern's unforgettable visit there.

Bar-Gal's interest in Shanghai Jewish history developed into a full-time passion. In November 2001, Bar-Gal learned that two old Jewish headstones were on sale in an antique store in Shanghai. He bought them and that led him from film-making to an active interest in history and archeology. He also developed skills as a detective! Refusing to be discouraged by statements that only a few graves still existed in Shanghai, he persisted in his search. Eventually, he found more and more gravestones in and around Shang-