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- 1) The study of the ancient Jewish community of Kaifeng and assisting its descendants as appropriate.
- 2) The study of Jewish life in Shanghai, Harbin, Tianjin and elsewhere in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 3) The support of Jewish studies programs in China.
- 4) The study of cultural intersections between Chinese and Jews, for example adoptions, literature, diasporas, etc.
- 5) The study of Sino-Israeli relations.
- 6) To cooperate with other groups whose interests lie in Sinitic and Judaic matters.

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Points East

THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE 中國猶太研究院 מכון סיני יהודי

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**NEW TO KAIFENG,
 NEWS FROM KAIFENG**

by Eric Rothberg

I have been in Kaifeng for about three weeks. It has been quite an interesting experience. It is very difficult to teach the members when they are of completely different skill levels. I have recently realized just how wide the gap is. The problem is that I want to teach both groups (in the Yiciliye School), and I have had much more exposure to those who are more adept—or at least it began that way. I met Esther* first, but she knows quite a bit. Then I got to know Yaakov and Tsuri, who also know a lot. I taught them *Etz Haim, Aheinu, V'zot Hatorah*, and the first part of the *Shema*. We also did Havdalah together. I'm going to slow down a lot more now, because it seems like I need to let the information sink in. We are currently preparing for Rosh Hashana. They told me that they have never observed Rosh Hashana before, so I feel a little better, because even if I haven't done the best job, if they even have the slightest observance on a holiday that they had never know of before, then that is a step in the right direction. They tell me that when Timothy (Lerner) met them, he was not sure where to begin either.

Recently, I have been meeting with the group twice a week, two hours at a time. However, I think that is too much. I'm going to meet with them less and focus on fewer things. In the meantime, I figure that I will continue working with Esther on making Chinese translations of prayers, which, I'm sure, we will not be using for a while—if they even use them while I am here. I feel that they need to at least have the resources. Maybe they don't want to do much now, but eventually they might, and when they do, it would be nice for them to have Jewish prayers in their own language, until they get better at Hebrew. I think I will maybe meet with them for lessons an hour a week, because, even though they are very dedicated, they don't even know what they want me to teach them. It is a great thing that Or, Zohar, and Yair (visiting Israelis) were teaching them Hebrew. I'm just not sure if that is the only thing that they should learn. It takes a lot of time to really understand the members. They say that they want to learn prayers, but they don't really understand the concept.

Thus, I want to go really slow, because if I don't, they will lose interest. On the other hand, I do have Hebrew language teaching materials, but I think that I should wait to start using them until after the *Chaggim* (holidays). It is difficult for them to understand the concept of holidays, prayer, and religion. Sometimes I feel like their desire to learn about Judaism is a very

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**NEW FINDINGS CHALLENGE THE
 DATING OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS**

by Neil Altman

The Dead Sea Scrolls, the crown jewels of biblical scholarship, have been guarded for 60 years.

The scrolls were first discovered in a cave of the Qumran region near the Dead Sea in 1947. By 1956, archeologists and Arab treasure hunters found 10 more caves at Qumran that held mostly fragments of some 800 manuscripts, commonly thought to have been written between 200 B.C. and 25 A.D.

In short order, a scholarly elite emerged and took possession of the artifacts, keeping them hidden from scrutiny. Fortunately, that group was challenged and the scrolls are now available to a broader audience of scholars and the public.

Soon after the existence of the scrolls came to light, a scholarly debate broke out over whether the writings were indeed pre-Christian. Though it was commonly accepted that the scrolls were ancient, many respected scholars have begun to argue that the texts were much more recent in origin and, in fact, date from the 6th century A.D. or later.

Now, there is accumulating and compelling evidence that undermines everything we originally thought about the scrolls—including an incredible scroll from China that confirms this later dating and suggests a Central Asian origin to the Dead Sea Scrolls themselves.

A Mysterious Connection Appears

Part of that evidence is a relatively new scroll, the Moshe Leah (Li) Scroll, first brought to light by Leo Gabow, the late president of the Sino-Judaic Institute. In the Institute's journal, *Points East*, he recalled: "In July of 1983, a curious article appeared in the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*... 'A Jew Looking for Correspondents.' His name is Moshe Leah. He is 35 years old...He lives in Taiwan."

In a correspondence with Leah that lasted over three years, Gabow learned that Leah's grandfather fled with his parents to Taiwan from Kaifeng, China, that he was Jewish on his mother's side and that he and his brother were given Jewish names.

Most importantly, Leah's mother owned two ancient Hebrew scrolls, including one scroll that Leah called *The Book of Geshayeher*. Scholars would call it by another name: an Isaiah scroll, similar to the famed text found in the Qumran caves.

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FROM THE EDITOR

This year I am serving as the interim rabbi of Kol HaNeshamah congregation in Seattle, a fact that I share with you by way of apologizing for the delay in bringing this issue of Points East to light. With the holidays of Rosh HaShannah, Shabbat Shuvah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret and Simhat Torah to prepare sermons for, not to mention a variety of classes as well, it is a wonder that this issue isn't coming out before Hanukkah/Christmas!

But what an issue this is! A ground-breaking article on how the Moshe Leah Scroll helps prove that the Dead Sea Scrolls are much later than previously thought; another on cutting-edge developments in Kaifeng; a third on Birodizhan—plus book reviews, letters, reports of conferences held, and more.

Enjoy! *Anson Laytner*

Corrections

To the article "China Revisited" (P.E. 24:2):

- 1.The old lady should be ZHAO Shuping from Zhao family, not ZHOU.
- 2.The sign "Teaching Torah Lane" in Chinese, Hebrew and English was put up many years ago by Prof. Xu Xin, not by the Government.

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Points East

Anson Laytner, Publisher

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Taiwan	1
TOTAL:	261

Fred Marcus left Shanghai in 1949 for the U.S., where he graduated from university and received a Masters in Jewish Education. He lectured frequently on his experiences growing up in Nazi Germany and as a refugee in Shanghai.

Marvin Tokayer is a founding Board member of the Sino-Judaic Institute. He served for many years as the rabbi of the Jewish community of Japan. He has authored more than 20 books in Japanese on Judaica, and The Fugu Plan: The Untold Story of the Japanese and Jews during WWII. He recently retired a Rabbi of the Cherry Lane Minyan in Great Neck NY and leads Jewish tours to China, Japan, India and S.E. Asia. He is currently writing a history of the Jewish communities of the Far East.

These two books provide rich new insights into a major chapter of the Jewish Holocaust refugee experience. The fact that both authors were so young gives the works particular poignancy.

Introduce a friend to SJI by giving a free copy of *Points East*.

Simply send an email to laytner@msn.com and a sample will be sent.

In Memoriam

Ruth Fredman Cernea

Ruth Fredman Cernea, née Gruber, a cultural anthropologist who wrote on topics that included the Jews of Myanmar and the annual mock debate at the University of Chicago on the respective merits of Jewish holiday foods such as latkes and hamantaschen, died of cancer on March 31, 2009. She was 74.

She was on her second honeymoon in 1987 when she discovered a little-known Jewish community in Myanmar (Burma) and the country's only synagogue, the historic Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue in Yangon (formerly Rangoon). This spurred her enduring interest in the Jewish communities of the former British colonies of South and Southeast Asia. Over the ensuing two decades, she conducted interviews and archival research in Burma (Myanmar), the United States, Israel, Australia, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. The resulting 2007 book, *Almost Englishmen: Baghdadi Jews in British Burma*, pieced together the information in a manner that recreated the daily life of the community.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Cernea earned a bachelor's degree in English literature in 1956 and a doctorate in cultural anthropology in 1982, both from Temple University. Cernea dedicated her scholarly career to the study and interpretation of Jewish culture and symbols.

She authored *The Passover Seder: Afikoman in Exile* (1992), an anthropological analysis of the Passover holiday and ritual and *Cosmopolitans at Home: The Sephardic Jews of Washington, D.C.* (1982), the product of five years of research among Jewish immigrants from North Africa living in Washington.

She also edited the selected anthology *The Great Latke-Hamantash Debate* (2006), a collection of "scholarly" mock-academic debate speeches by American faculty pleading the "superiority" of one or the other Jewish holiday foods—the Chanukah potato pancake or the Purim tri-cornered pastry. The annual "debate" among faculty, initiated some 60 years ago at the University of Chicago, was replicated over time on countless campuses across the United States. In her introduction, Cernea characterized the exercise as "a unique contribution to American folklore."

From 1982 until 1996, she served as the highest ranking woman in Hillel in the capacity of publication and research director, responsible for internal and external newsletters, compendia and the *Guide to Jewish Life on Campus*, the popular directory for high school seniors looking for information on Jewish life at colleges across the country.

Survivors include her husband of 22 years, Michael M. Cernea of Bethesda, MD; three children from her first marriage, Jonathan Fredman of the District, Andrew Fredman of Coral Gables and Lauren Huot of Jakarta; two stepchildren, Andrei Cernea of Bethesda and Dana Cernea of Englewood, N.J.; a sister; a brother; and 11 grandchildren.

The Washington Association of Professional Anthropologists (WAPA), of which Dr. Cernea was a past-president, held "The Ruth Fredman Cernea Memorial Lecture" on November 1 in the Katzen Art Center of American University, in Washington DC. The lecture is co-sponsored by the Anthropology Departments of the American University and the University of Maryland, the international Hillel Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, the US ASEAN Business Council's *Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue Project*, and other groups.

Professor Jonathan Boyarin, the *Leonard and Tobee Kaplan Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies* at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, spoke on "The Anthropology of Jews and the Jews in Anthropology."

This is the first time that WAPA is honoring the memory and research of a departed member by organizing a public memorial lecture.

Despite many obstacles in putting on the workshops this month, the seminar completed its week at the university with positive reviews from the participants before moving on for two more weeks at Shandong University in Jinan.

At Shandong University, the seminar focused more on student participation. The first day included about 100 attendees from graduate programs from Macau to Chengdu.

SJI Board member, Seth Garz, the seminar's project adviser, said the seminar was an important step in encouraging the Jewish community to connect with emerging communities around the world. "People don't know about the real level of interest scholars and citizens in China have in studying the Jewish and Israeli experience," he said.

II. The "Holocaust Education International Seminar"

The "Holocaust Education International Seminar" sponsored by the Yad Vashem Shoah Memorial, London Jewish Cultural Center, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, International Task Force for Ho-

locaust Education, Remembrance and Research and jointly organized by the Institute of Jewish Studies of Nanjing University and the Institute of Jewish Studies of Henan University, was held in Nanjing University from July 19th to 24th.

Over 70 participants from overseas sponsors and domestic Nanjing University, Northwest University, Nanjing Normal University, Shanxi Normal University, Henan Normal University, Henan University and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences attended the seminar. The director of IJS of Nanjing University, Prof. Xu Xin, the Vice President of Zhengzhou University and Director of IJS of Henan University, Prof. Zhang Qianhong, the director of London Jewish Cultural Center, Mrs. Trudy Gold, the Chief of Overseas Project at LJCC, Dr. Jerold Gotel, presided at the opening meeting and delivered speeches.

Lectures included reviewing the history of the Jewish nation and religion, reassessing the definition of racial ideology in modern times and promoting Holocaust education and research in China. The keynote

speeches made by overseas lectures covered a wide range topics: Judaism in Biblical and Rabbinical periods, Judaism's response to Enlightenment and Modernity, the origin and definition of anti-Semitism, the rise of Nazism in Germany, the Nazi race policy regarding the Jews, the Final Solution and concentration camps, and an illuminating testimony by a Holocaust survivor.

The Chinese scholars studying Jewish history and philosophy, and the State of Israel delivered their speeches on the Jewish Diaspora in Ancient and Modern China, Jewish and Holocaust studies in China, current Chinese views of Jews and Judaism, and facts about Israeli politics.

The workshops offered wider perspectives on keynote topics, participants were provided with materials for individual cases exemplifying the histories in textbooks and historians' writings, and given the approaches and tools for teaching the history of Jews, especially the Holocaust, at Chinese institutions.

BOOK NOOK

Sanctuaries in Shanghai: 2 Reviews

by Marvin Tokayer
excerpted from Jewish Book World, Fall 2009

Strange Haven: A Jewish Childhood in Wartime Shanghai

by Sigmund Tobias
University of Illinois Press, 2009. 207 pp. \$25.95

Survival in Shanghai: The Journals of Fred Marcus 1939-49

by Audrey Friedman Marcus and Rena Krasno
Pacific View Press, 2008. 288 pp. \$22.95

Holocaust refugees were safe in Shanghai, but as these two firsthand accounts show, life was far from easy...

Sigmund Tobias, author of the memoir *Strange Haven*, remembers his childhood days in Germany where he was cursed, spit upon, and pelted with garbage and rocks.... After being refused sanctuary everywhere, they fled to Shanghai where a visa was not required. Tobias was six.

Tobias' well-written memoir describes their new world in China. People ate

with chopsticks, and there was one toilet for seven families in their shelter. He describes his schooling at the Kadoorie School and the Mir Yeshiva, and how his faith was shaken by the yeshiva's greed and self-interest. During the war, the yeshiva students could afford to purchase cigarettes and new clothing, and were served expensive food such as butter and cream, while many refugees were starving and wore clothes made of flour sacks. When funding from the U.S. was cut off to the refugees, the yeshiva received private funding but did not share with others in need.

Tobias celebrated his bar mitzvah in Shanghai, just after the war, in the presence of a U.S. Army chaplain with the Star of David on his collar, speaking slowly in English and ending with "Am Yisrael Chai," which brought tears to the rabbi and to everyone in attendance.

At fifteen, Tobias came to America alone, without his parents, and he describes the warm reception of the Joint Distribution Committee that welcomed and assisted all new immigrants. He eventually became a highly respected university professor who was invited to Shanghai to lecture, and the return to his former home

in Shanghai is a beautiful ending to his memoir.

Sigmund Tobias was fifteen when he left Shanghai in 1948; Fred Marcus was fifteen when he arrived there in 1939. Marcus' diary, *Survival in Shanghai*, covering the ten years he lived there, is an absolute gem.

Written in poor quality wartime ink, on faded pages, it was never translated by the author. Fortunately, Marcus' widow contacted gifted translator Rena Krasno, who lived in Shanghai from 1923, and the two women collaborated on this book, adding an illuminating commentary which provides a detailed picture of Jewish life in Shanghai as well as an excellent bibliography of the Holocaust refugee experience in China. Each page is a treasure of information as the teen-aged Marcus overcomes obstacles of survival, including depression. We learn of the terrible conditions that thousands of refugees endured...and the heroic and dedicated doctors who prevented major epidemics. Marcus attended lectures by refugees on music, Chinese culture, art, history, etc. Despite the deplorable situation, sixty German plays were produced in Shanghai, and several operettas as well....

IN THE FIELD

♦ New Website on Chinese-Jewish Cultural Intersection

Student journalists Candy Cheng and Brad Stell of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism have officially launched their website Chinese & Chosen. The interactive website explores how Chinese and Jewish cultures intersect in New York City through interfaith couples, adoptive families and those born with dual identities. Hear what it's like to be both Chinese and Jewish from three main perspectives: by marriage, by birth and by adoption. Go to: <http://chineseandchosen.com/>.

Contact the authors at answeringmachine@chineseandchosen.com and comment on their blog. If you'd like to be a contributor to the blog, send them an email to the address above. The authors hope this will be an ongoing conversation about this unique dynamic of heritage and religion.

♦ Coming soon to San Francisco

"The Jews in Modern China" exhibit will run approximately February 25 - May 15, 2010, at The Presidio Former Officers' Club Museum, in conjunction with the "Shanghai: 2010" exhibit at the Asian Art Museum (February - September 2010). The American Jewish Committee, Northern California office is the presenting sponsor; co-sponsors include the Consulate of the People's Republic of China in San Francisco, the Asia Society of Northern California and the Sino-Judaic Institute. There will be an opening event, plus collateral programming and education running throughout the three-month exhibit, targeted to segments of the Jewish and general communities.

♦ Award Given

Mazal tov to SJI member Harry Rutstein, who won the 2009 Independent Publishers Travel Book Award for his new book *The Marco Polo Odyssey*. If you would like to find out more

details on the book and the accompanying DVD *On the Roof of the World with Marco Polo*, please visit his web site: www.MarcoPoloFound.org. Harry may be contacted at HRutstein2@aol.com.

♦ To 120!

Irene Eber, esteemed Israeli Sinologist at Hebrew University and SJI Board member, will be celebrating her 80th this coming December and a commemorative volume featuring essays by her colleagues has been published: Raoul David Findeisen, Gad C. Isay, Amira Katz-Goehr, Yuri Pines, and Lihi Yariv-Laor (eds.), *At Home in Many Worlds. Reading, Writing, and Translating from Chinese and Jewish Cultures. Essays in Honour of Irene Eber*. (Wiesbaden, 2009). Mazal tov, Irene!

♦ See the Trailer of the film *Kaifeng, Jerusalem*

SJI member Albert Cheng (merrygo8@gmail.com) strongly recommends going to Noam Urbach's website <http://www.kaifengjerusalem.com/> to see the trailer of his new film *Kaifeng, Jerusalem*. To access the trailer you will need to the following information: User Name: producer and Password: israel65. Urbach needs financial support to complete production of this wonderful film. Please help bring this film to the world.

TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

Greetings from Guilin!

I read your site's article on Two-Gun Cohen with great interest; the history of our people in China is fascinating stuff, and I'm looking to take a trip to Kaifeng at some point soon. I was wondering if you happened to know Two-Gun Cohen's Chinese name, assuming he had one? I'm not seeing it anywhere on the internet

and I'd hate to think it's lost to the ages.

My immediate goal, if his name can be found, would be to translate Two-Gun Cohen's Wikipedia entry into Chinese for inclusion on analogous Chinese websites; he played a fascinating role that I'd love for more Chinese to be able to read about, but it's hard to interest them or write anything when I don't have a proper name.

Best,

Joe McReynolds
joemcreynolds714@gmail.com

To the Editor,

I am grateful to Distinguished Teaching Professor Grunfeld, in his refutation (*Points East* July 2009) of my article (March 2009), for providing a superb example of the anti-Chinese propaganda to which I was referring. While historical interpretation is exactly that, historical facts supposedly should be based on research. Moreover, the appearance of material objects and buildings, whether in situ, in museums or old photographs are not amenable to change in accordance with politically correct wishful thinking. Similarly, geographical features, such as China and Tibet sharing a plateau rimmed by the highest mountains in the world directly to the south with eastward flowing river valleys and comparatively easy passes to the north between the two that led to millennia-old major trade routes and modern rail links, cannot be altered according to Sinophobic preferences.

Jordan Paper
jpaper@uvic.ca

To the Editor,

I read with great interest your recent article on the topic [of changing the characters for the word "Jew"]. Institute members might be interested in this letter I sent to the Committee on Chinese Language Reform, back in 1988: <http://seedyroad.com/israelism/chinesecharacter.htm>

I never received a response.

Regards from a once (and future?) SJI member, Dan Silverman

From Kaifeng to Kibbutz:

by Hana Levi Julian
 excerpted from <http://www.israelnationalnews.com> 10/21/09

For the first time, a group of seven descendants of the Jewish community of Kaifeng, China has moved to Israel. The new arrivals, who were brought here by the *Shavei Israel* organization, arrived at Ben-Gurion airport late Tuesday night...

"I am very excited to be here in the Holy Land," said Yaakov Wang, one of the new immigrants. "This is something that my



Michael Freund (left) greets Yaakov Wang (center) and Shi Heng (right) upon their arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport outside Tel Aviv

ancestors dreamed about for generations, and now thank G-d I have finally made it."

Wang said that he eventually hopes to become a rabbi, so that one day he can help other Kaifeng Jewish descendants to learn more about their heritage.

"We received special permits from the Interior Ministry to bring them here for a year, during which time they will prepare for conversion. They will then receive Israeli citizenship and be considered new olim," *Shavei Israel* chairman Michael Freund told *Israel National News*. "The group will be staying at Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu, near Beit Shean, where they will study in the Hebrew ulpan."

From the airport, the group went straight to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, where they recited the "Shehecheyanu" blessing, and then burst into a chorus of traditional Hebrew songs.

"It took us more than two years to get the requisite permits from Israel's Interior Ministry to bring them over, but it was worth the wait," said Freund. "This is an historic event," he said, adding that, "Kaifeng's Jewish descendants are a living link between China and the Jewish people, and it is very moving to see the

remnants of this community returning to their roots".

Based in Jerusalem, **Shavei Israel** (www.shavei.org) reaches out and assists "lost Jews" seeking to return to the Jewish people.

Report from Kaifeng

(continued from page 1)

Chinese one, rather than a Jewish one, as an act of filial piety instead of an act of believing in the Jewish religion. In fact, they don't really understand much about the Jewish religion.

Sometimes it seems like the only beliefs that they have were generated from reading a Chinese (Christian) translation of the "old testament" and their contact with Jackie Li (a Christian from Hong Kong who helps them a lot). Albeit, Jackie is a great guy and does not seem to want them to convert or believe in Christianity, but the mere concept of G-d in the Christian mind is different from the Jewish concept. For example, until I recently told them, they were saying the Chinese pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton (G-d's unpronounceable Hebrew name). Since this particular method of referring to G-d is an obviously Christian Chinese one, they inevitably have slight Christian influences that they cannot even understand.

A few weeks ago, I worked with Esther to bring a manageable version of the *Shema* together. We put the Chinese translation of the *Shema* under each Hebrew line, in an effort to show them the meaning of the prayer. I taught them to cover their eyes when saying the first line of the *Shema*, and most of them seemed pretty interested. Nonetheless, they still seem fairly uneasy about the concept of religion. This, to me, seems like a modern Chinese influence; wherein religion is tolerated and understood merely as a cultural practice.

I can perfectly understand their desire to make *aliyah*, but they have no idea what they will do once they arrive in Israel. I am trying to give them a very basic understanding of Judaism, so that they will be more comfortable there.

The more that I am exposed to them, the more I have to look back to my early ex-

periences with Judaism. For a very long time, I knew extremely little about Judaism. Basically all that I knew was that I was not Christian and that I did not believe in Jesus, but that did not really testify what I believed, but rather what I didn't. I feel that after the *Chaggim*, it will be a good idea to revert back to teaching them more linguistic Hebrew skills, and maybe some Hebrew songs. In fact, I think that we will have to go back to the things that I already taught them, and go very slow.

The problem is that I don't want to only cater to those who know much. I feel bad if the others are not progressing. Unfortunately, they are prone to very slow progress. I have learned that I need to have a lot of patience, and focus on my own studies and experiences sometimes, instead of spending too much time to teach them. In fact, I was so afraid of coming unprepared, that I believe I prepared way too much. The ironic thing is that I have learned a lot of things about Judaism and about myself that I would not have learned, had I not taken up this project.

Anyway, tonight, we will be having a Rosh Hashana meal. We practiced blowing shofar and they seemed to short of like it. We won't be blowing it on Shabbat, and, frankly I don't know if they will be interested in doing anything for the second day. I feel sort of depressed, because, often, I am neglecting my own Judaism so that I can be with them. I am very sad that I probably won't be able to hear the shofar this year during Rosh Hashana, and probably Yom Kippur, even though I brought my own, and they already have three—very ironic, but that's okay. Tonight, we are going to have a meal with different sorts of new fruits and *mantou* (Chinese steamed buns) with honey for *motzi* (blessing over the bread). I am lending my *kittel* (white ritual gown) to Tsur for him to use during the *kiddush* (blessing over the wine). It's actually pretty exciting! We are going to have the meal with the traditional prescribed talmudic foods, i.e. pomegranate, dates, etc. I'm going to buy some exotic fruit for the *shehecheyanu* (blessing).

I'm not sure what we are going to do for Yom Kippur, but I figure that we can do a simple group activity about forgiving and asking forgiveness. I already talked about the theme of the ten days of repentance, etc. so I don't want to dwell

In Memoriam

Rena Krasno 1923-2009

by Audrey Friedman Marcus

Our beloved friend and colleague, Rena Krasno, passed away on October 28, 2009, a little over a month before her 86th birthday.

A unique and brilliant individual, Rena worked hard all her life, studied daily, charmed all who met her, influenced countless individuals, spread love and caring wherever she went, and provided inspiration to the many people whose lives she touched. Our loss is incalculable.

Rena Krasno was born on December 4, 1923 in Shanghai, China, the daughter of David, a writer, and Aida, a businesswoman. She earned a Certificat D'Etudes, Brevet Superior, at the French Municipal College, and Bacalaureate (Philosophy section). Before departing for Israel in 1949, she studied for three years at the Faculty of Medicine at the Jesuit Aurora University.

In Israel, Rena met and married her husband of 60 years, Hanan Krasno. She and Hanan had two daughters, Dafna and Maya. They lived in seven different countries because of Hanan's business, including Korea, Germany, and the Philippines. Rena, fluent in six languages, became a simultaneous interpreter for international organizations such as UNESCO, the ILO, FAO, and the Olympic Committee. Wherever she lived, she contributed in meaningful ways to the community, becoming Honorary Chancellor of Austria in Seoul and starting a library project in the Philippines.

Somehow she found time to give hundreds of speeches, appear in several documentaries, write numerous articles, and publish nine books, five of them for children. She was working on three more at the time of her death. Her book *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai*, first published in 1992, remains a staple of Shanghai lore to this day. She stayed in touch via email with hundreds of friends around the world and received frequent visitors who wanted to learn from her and hear her fabulous stories. She traveled to China several times where she was feted and honored and gave presentations.

In recent years, Rena devoted a great deal of time to the Sino-Judaic Institute. She served on the board, was the Public Affairs Officer, a member of the editorial board, and a frequent contributor to *Points East*. She also devoted considerable time to SJI's China Archive at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University to which she donated many of her papers.

I met Rena in 2003. When I learned she knew German, I invited her to translate my late husband's diaries, written when he was a refugee in Shanghai. As she worked on the translation, we became friends and decided to write a book together based on the diaries. The result was our book *Survival in Shanghai: The Journals of Fred Marcus 1939-49*, which was published in December 2008 by Pacific View Press.

Rena became my wise friend, my mentor, and my role model. Her optimistic and indomitable spirit, her positive outlook on life despite her health problems, and her warmth and generosity will always remain with me.

While all who knew her will deeply mourn Rena's passing, we must also celebrate her life by emulating her example every day: being a caring and concerned friend, acting in loving ways to our families, studying and learning new things, and always, always telling stories.

Two Conferences in China

I. Israel Studies Seminar

Using the Bandeis University's Schusterman Center for Israel Studies' Summer Institute as a model, Peking University and Shandong University in China created China's first workshops in the field of Israel, which took place July 12-17, 2009 at Peking University and July 19-31 at Shandong University. Both were funded by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.

These Israel Studies seminars were attended by more than 100 professors, high school educators, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Schusterman Center director Ilan Troen helped create and organize the China seminar, and invited faculty members from Israel to be seminar instructors.

The Israeli professors that joined Troen teach Israel Studies from a variety of disciplines. Elie Rekhess, a Dayan Center Senior Fellow and director of the Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation at Tel Aviv University, is an expert on the Arab minority in Israel; Sammy Smooha is dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and sociology professor at the University of Haifa and is a specialist in comparative ethnic relations; and Yitzhak Galnoor is a political science professor at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ilan Troen, himself a historian, sparked a lively discussion on representation, national liberation, and democracy by analyzing in comparative perspective the American Declaration of Independence, the Israeli Declaration of Independence, the Palestinian Liberation Organization Charter, and the Hamas Covenant.

As the most prestigious institution of higher learning in China's capital, any programming at Peking University, or PKU, is subject to intense scrutiny. When the university applied for approval to host the seminar from the Ministry of Education, the application was immediately passed to the Foreign Ministry.

The idea of Jewish professors lecturing on topics such as Zionism or Islamic radicalism to a room of Chinese academics raised concerns among school administrators and government officials.

Eventually the government approved five days of programming at PKU, but attendance was by invitation only and the title for the seminar was carefully worded.

Many of the Chinese Islamic and Persian scholars who attended the seminar said they were impressed by the efforts to present balanced views on Israel, perhaps indicating their prior concerns about bias from the all-Jewish cast of lecturers from abroad.

Jerusalem for two years, and received a monthly stipend of U.S. \$ 600 (5000 Chinese yuan) that covered the rent. In addition, they received 6000-yuan (\$700) a month for living expenses and medical insurance equal to the [standard of living of a] middle-income family. They were also provided with furniture and appliances. **L.** did not work. He spent half days, three times a week, at an *ulpan* [intensive Hebrew language training program], the rest of the time he had free time. He went for walks, watched TV, read books, surfed the internet and cooked. At least three times a week, he went to the synagogue and used Hebrew to read the prayers. **L.** said that once he felt he could communicate, he was able to look for a job. Gradually the aid society decreased the amount of aid and eventually stopped it altogether. No matter to what standards one compares **L.**'s living conditions, his two-room apartment is not considered small. On the snow white painted walls, hangs a Chinese scroll. Also displayed in the living room are seven or eight picture frames depicting the old Kaifeng synagogue and the scenery around it.

Observing Jewish rituals

During the interview the reporter asked **L.** "To what extent did you observe the Jewish tradition in Kaifeng?"

L. said, "In the old days, there was a saying that 'seven surnames and eight families'^{12,12} This is another name for the Jews in Kaifeng. These surnames were bestowed in antiquity by the emperor. Our surname was historic and our ancestors held a fourth grade official rank in the court. The household was rather prosperous. There were also rather many Jews in old Kaifeng who observed the tradition. We had our own family tree, which also was a proof that we were Jewish. Before the Cultural Revolution [1966-1969], our family still kept the imperial tablet¹³ but later we lent it to a display in Beijing. It was never returned to us, and we lost its trace. There are also stone inscriptions left in Kaifeng that had recorded the deeds of our ancestors.¹⁴ The graves of our Jewish ancestors near Kaifeng are still in good conditions. There are approximately 30 tombs. Buried among the bodies of nine generations is [the grave] of my elder brother who recently passed away. On the door of our house, we had a special Jewish sign that we touched when we entered or left the house. It was a

sign of 'to go and come in peace'. Our family observed the Sabbath on Friday sunset until sunset on Saturday. That time we did no work. Our family had also read the Chinese version of the Jewish prayers."

L.'s wife is not of Jewish descent but she said that [since her marriage] she had understood and respected [her husband's] national identity and traditional customs. **L.** said, "During the ninety years of living in Kaifeng, our family had not eaten pork or shrimp and these customs had been preserved until today." Before immigrating to Israel, **L.** ran a rather small factory and his wife used a room in the house to run a barbershop. **L.** has an elder sister and a younger brother who live near the community housing in Kaifeng. They also follow the same customs as the **L.** household.

The interview is nearing an end and the reporter asked **L.**: "Do your sister and brother hope to immigrate to Israel? Why did they not come yet?"

L. said: "Of course, they would like to immigrate; they also sent in their application. But two main obstacles are in the way: One, there is no organization that is willing to give them the documentation that they are Jews. Two, financing is also a problem. You know, immigrating requires a lot of money and the organization that helped and financed us is helping other people."

In conclusion, it must be added that **L.**'s family are not the sole Chinese Jews living in Israel. During World War II, many Jews sought refuge in Shanghai and other places in China; some of them married to local Chinese. The children of these mixed marriages have Jewish blood. After the liberation, some of them went to Israel with their Jewish mother or father; others came to Israel after the opening of relations between the two countries in search of their mother or father. In every town or city in Israel, one can find such examples.

About the Author

An Tifa is special correspondent for the 21st Century World, a Chinese periodical.

About the Translator

Tiberiu Weisz sits on the Board of the Sino-Judaic Institute, and author of two books about China and the Jews: The Kaifeng Stone Inscriptions: The Legacy of the Jewish Community in Ancient China, iUniverse 2006, and The Covenant and

the Mandate of Heaven: An In-depth Comparative Cultural Study of Judaism and China. iUniverse, 2008.

Translator's Notes:

¹ Zhang Xingwang has been a spokesman for the Jewish community in Kaifeng and also goes by the Hebrew name of Moshe. He is very outspoken about Judaism in China and, here, he expressed his views to a Chinese reporter. He is a Physical Education teacher and a Wushu (martial arts) coach in a high school in Kaifeng. He is also member of the Chinese Communist Party and former city council member. (There is doubt that he is Jewish). I met him several times, but had never had a chance to talk with him. At one of the dinners, I sat next to his daughter, at the time a high school student, with whom I exchanged a few words. She was very surprised that I could talk in fluent Chinese, and once she realized that we could converse freely, she was very talkative. Unfortunately she was called away to give us a "demonstration of her knowledge of a Hebrew song."

² A very good Chinese friend of mine, who was assigned to a "working brigade" in Lanzhou (Xinjiang/Gansu Province) during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969) and spent nineteen years there, said that he knew people of Jewish descent in Lanzhou.

³ What he is referring was the celebration of the National Minority Day in 1952 when the Kaifeng Municipal Government and Bureau of Central South chose two Jewish descendants from Kaifeng, Ai Fenming and Shi Fenying, to represent the Jewish minority at the national celebration. Both members became ardent communists and worked later for the government. According to Xu Xin, the reason that these two Jews were chosen was "that the local government was aware of the existence of Jews in the city and wanted to ensure equal rights for any ethnic group living in their region. These two Jewish descendants were introduced as Jews while in Beijing and were well received during the celebration." (For details see: Xu Xin, "Chinese Policy Towards Judaism." Points East, vol. 19, No 1, March, 2004 pg. 3-4, and Gustavo D. Perednik, "The Chinese of Jewish Descent at Kaifeng." Points East, vol. 23, No. 1, March 2008, pg. 4).

⁴ Han is the Chinese term for Chinese.

⁵ I have met Qianhong on several occasions in China. She has published several books and articles about Judaism and Jewish history.

⁷ Elousi is a Russian minority between the Uyigur Autonomous Region and Heilongjiang.

⁸ See above note 5

⁹ This is the original stele of the 1489 and on the other side is the engraving of the 1512 inscriptions. For a full translation of the Chinese text, see The Kaifeng Stone Inscriptions, The Legacy of the Jewish Community in Ancient China. iUniverse 2006..

¹⁰ An official document.

¹¹ For a more detailed explanation of these events, see Xuxin, "Chinese Policy Towards Judaism." Points East, Vol. 19 No 1, March 2004.

¹² This is another name for the Jews in Kaifeng.

¹³ This tablet was displayed at the entrance of the Kaifeng synagogue.

¹⁴ For a new annotated translation of these inscriptions in Jewish context, see *The Kaifeng Stone Inscriptions*.

too much. I feel like I already taught them enough songs and Hebrew liturgy for a while. I will tell them a little about the fast and then just make a few plans for the holiday, if people are interested.

For Sukkot, we are going to build a *sukkah* (booth) at Sarah's parents house. It's so exciting!!! My experience with building *sukkot* will come in handy! Unfortunately, we won't be able to get a *lulav* and *etrog*—I didn't realize how difficult they were to get in China! I'll just mention a few themes of the holiday and then we can have some fun just talking about the plans. We're going to eat moon cakes in the *sukkah*! Sarah's mom said that I could come over to use the *sukkah* for meals throughout the week.

I'm certainly not doing a perfect job, but it seems like we are learning some things.

I have begun to learn of the complex politics of being a member of the community. I'm not sure whether I should try contacting either of the two other Jewish factions or not, because I don't want people in the community to start to dislike me for getting too much into their business. That having been said, I really wish that idea of yours to have everybody in one *sukkah* for Sukkot could work...

I went to the Kaifeng museum and saw the Jewish exhibit. It was interesting, but not nearly what I thought it would be for 10 dollars.

I am settled down into my Chinese classes, and doing *taichi* pretty much every morning. My Chinese is getting better, but the more I learn, the more I realize how much I have to learn, and it's really frustrating. Kaifeng a nice city, I just miss wearing my *kippah* around like I did in America. I get tired of wearing hats.

II

This Rosh Hashana was the most interesting one that I've ever had. This is the first one that they have ever celebrated. For the past few weeks, we were working on blowing the *shofar* (ram's horn). One of the members became very good at it—a man from Shanxi. Although the *shofar* is not supposed to be blown on Shabbat, the members didn't fully understand that, so they blew it on Friday night. At any rate, it was very moving and I felt as if I could come to tears. It

was not halakhically correct, but what is here? This was the first time that they blew *shofar* as part of an organized service. It was so beautiful. No one blew the *shofar* on Sunday, when it was supposed to be done, but, as that member blew the *shofar* on Shabbat eve, I examined my life and was so happy to be here.

Tsuri donned the *kittel* that I lent him, and after the *shofar*, he said *shehecheyanu*, the first line of the *shema* (with everyone joining in), *kiddush* for Rosh Hashana, and Shalom Aleichem (which everyone sang along to). Afterward, we all washed our hands and Tsuri did *motzi*, dipping the bread in honey. Tsuri began passing the bread, and Yair (a Israeli Hebrew teacher here) told him that he was doing it wrong, and began throwing the bread over to people way on the other side of the room. It was classic!

Before Shabbat, we prepared the various Talmudic foods for Rosh Hashana. After *motzi*, Xue Fei said the blessing over the apple and everyone dipped apples in honey. Then, we had the shofar-blower say, "May we be the head and not the tail" while holding the plate of a fish and fish head, because he was the oldest male who could read Hebrew (sort of a community leader). I brought a dragon fruit, *liu lian* (a gigantic spiked Thai fruit), and some interesting little apples, which I had never seen the likes of before. These fruits served the purpose of eating fruits for the first time in the season, and they made for a tasty *shehecheyanu*. We had wonderful meal, and then made plans for the next day.

Yair and David (an Israeli who was visiting for the weekend from Beijing) agreed with me to do a little *shacharit* in the morning. Tsuri and Yaakov came with us for the morning service in the top floor of the "Western" bar that the Israeli Hebrew teachers stay at. It was nothing like a regular traditional Rosh Hashana service, but it was the first service of its kind among Chinese Jews in Kaifeng. Though only two of them came, it felt like a great *mitzvah* to hold the service. I led the service, and lent my *tallit gadol* to Yaakov (since I had my *tallit katan* anyway)...

We concluded the *Amidah* (standing prayer), and then I exclaimed, "the first *Amidah* in Kaifeng!" We began singing "*siman tov umazal tov*" and dancing in circles. It was such a moving moment and a great step for this community! I

realized that, soon, however, Tsuri and Yaakov, would be going to Israel (*Be'ezrat Hashem*). Afterward, we sang Ashrei, Ana B'koach, and Adon Olam. This was one of the shortest Rosh Hashana services that I had experienced, but it was also one of the most emotional.

We concluded the service, and we did the first Shabbat morning *kiddush* and *motzi* here over *mantou*. (Yes! I told you that we would do *motzi over mantou!*) *Mantou tov, u'siman tov, u'siman tov, u'Mantou tov....!*

Thereafter, we left the bar, Tsuri and Yaakov went home, and David, Yair, and I went to Sarah and Yoel's parent's home for dinner. We spent the day there, going back and forth between Hebrew, English, and Chinese at the dinner table! We had a wonderful time!

At three o'clock in the afternoon, ten to twenty members went with Yair and me to Yangjia Lake for *tashlich* (symbolic casting off of sins)—another first for Kaifeng. We each picked up a rock that we would throw in the lake at the conclusion of *tashlich*, and we meditated for a minute or two on the sins that we would momentarily and "throw" into the depths of Yangjia Lake. We donned our *kippot* after finding a location with fairly few people. I had the members who weren't making *aliyah* take turns reading the main texts of *tashlich*; at the end, Tsuri and Yaakov (two of the members soon making *aliyah*) said the last line in unison, and we threw the rocks, symbolizing our sins of the past year, into the lake. The feeling of performing this entirely "new" *mitzvah* with them shook me... At the end, we made a circle and embraced. I expressed my hope that we would continue learning and progressing together as a community, and I thanked them for being so warm. They also thanked me. We made a short prayer to Hashem (G-d) that we would have good blessings and happiness in the coming year. We then went around in the circle, asking if for others' wishes in the coming year. This was a very special experience.

At nightfall, we did *havdalah* (the first time for the old-timers, and probably the fourth time for the others), and David left for his return journey to Israel. That night, I talked with Yair (my roommate for the night) at length about how fantastic this community is, and what an

interesting experience it is. The next day, we had breakfast and Yair went on his way.

I was invited to a Kaifeng Jew's wedding (though, I should add that it was not in any respect "Jewish"). It turned out to be a very weird place to spend Rosh Hashana afternoon at, especially when the DJ had me sing and made a total spectacle of me because I was a foreigner. The funny thing was that he had me give the bride and groom their wedding certificates! I felt very out-of-place. However, even though I felt bad for intruding on this important family occasion, the bride and groom seemed to be glad that I was there! It was quite bizarre! I wondered how many of these people considered themselves to be Jewish because everything seemed thoroughly Chinese. The Jewish community is clearly starting from nothing, yet the heights that some of its members have reached are quite remarkable.

I returned to Sarah and Yoel's parent's place. We rested, and I gave a short lesson on the *Chaggim* in preparation for the rest of the festivals to come. I found the Chinese translations for biblical verses relating to the *Chaggim* in Numbers, and then explained to them the significance of the festivals—in Chinese, of course!

At the end of the day, I had one of the women, Neitah, do *havdalah* for us, and we all responded at the end with "amen."

Although I could not be nearly as observant as I wanted to be, what a memorable day!

III

So many people came to the New Year (Rosh Hashana) celebration that it wasn't even funny! They appeared out of nowhere! I can't imagine what it would be like if Shi Lei's group joined—that is, if some of them weren't joining in already! I really don't know. Everything is uncertain in Kaifeng. It is a mysterious city, and the Jewish community is just as mysterious...

The ironic thing is that sometimes I feel like these guys aren't very Jewish. It really goes up and down. I just thought about the probability that most members, if not all, have not been circumcised. As much as I want to consider them Jewish, it is hard to when they aren't circumcised. The idea seems very foreign to me. That

having been said, the more I get to know these people, the more I can sense a very clear Jewish spark. It seems like their souls have a Jewish side to them that just needs a little prying to get at. In fact, I think that they seem to be becoming more spiritual as the time goes on. It is very complex. What I have decided is that I should treat the descendants/Jews similar to their spouses, because the spouses often seem very interested in Judaism...I basically consider them Jewish, but there are limits. Nonetheless, I really feel like they have Jewish souls. To me, this is the important thing. Even though their interest is often fueled by filial piety, there are limits to Confucianism, and there seems to be a point at which things change. Look at Yaakov and Tsur, they *believe* in Judaism instead of just liking what their parents are.

In the beginning, I felt frustrated that all their teachers wanted to do was help them get to Israel, instead of wanting them to learn about Israel, but now I feel a greater understanding. No matter how observant they can hypothetically become, they still are uncircumcised, and that is simply nothing that can be overlooked. Even the *mikvah* ordeal is not so complicated, but I really wonder how many members living in China would want to get circumcisions, especially at their ages. Consequently, I doubt that most Jews in China would be much help to them. I mean I had to come all the way from America. It seems like most people willing to help them are in the minority and they are fairly liberal. For example, I doubt that Chabad would have any interest in helping them. The Orthodox world is a tough one and it often subverts logic and goodwill...

As time goes on, we are getting to the point where the issue of separation between the sexes becomes an issue. For the most part, the people helping them have had more Orthodox philosophies, even if they aren't observant. It is a very difficult issue to address. Who makes the decision whether a woman can go up to read their mock Torah scroll or not? Who makes the decision whether a woman can wear a *tallit*, lead a prayer, or blow a *shofar*?

These issues are creeping up, and I don't know how to deal with them. I told Esther of the differences between the different groups of Jews, and how these differences relate to women, but I don't know how

appropriate it would be to tell the rest of the community. The problem is that they have so little exposure to the outside Jewish world. They don't know the differences between any Jews, except that some are religious and some are not. If it were up to me, I would let women read from the mock Torah and lead prayers, but Yaakov and Tsur seem pretty opposed to that, because of the lessons that Avrum Ehrlich has given them. I'm just afraid, because there are few males left. These issues are very big, in fact, much bigger than Yaakov and Tsur realize.

I don't even know if I should tell anybody about the differences or divisions relating to sexual separation. It was kind of a lot for Esther to handle. I often struggle with what to tell these guys, and what to withhold. I don't really care what decision they make, I mean: it's their community. The problem is that I don't even think that I can bring it up so that I can give them the choice. There are too many forces at work and too many competing outside influences. Wow.

So many issues! Too many...

Eric Rothberg, an American Jew, is studying at Henan University in Kaifeng and as a volunteer teaches some of the Kaifeng Jewish descendants at the Yiceleye School.

Challenge the Dating

(continued from page 1)

Strange Similarities

Why was the scroll in China? Gabow contacted many scholars and sent photos of the Moshe Leah Scroll to help unravel the mystery. Many saw distinct similarities to the famed Dead Sea Scrolls.

The late Michael Pollak, then vice-president of the Sino-Judaic Institute, author of five books and a leading expert on Chinese Jewry, was the first to make a breakthrough: "The lettering is Hebrew and is in Chinese calligraphic style," Pollak said, "especially the long, giraffe-like lamed." (The lamed is the Hebrew letter "L"—a style which is a signature feature of the Dead Sea Scrolls.)

Rabbi Dr. Nathan Bernstein, of La Habra, CA, not only found Aramaic words mixed with the Hebrew on the Moshe Leah Scroll, but was also the first to rec-

Kaifeng, but some people followed the tradition and called themselves Jews. The Kaifeng Jews followed the patrilineal tradition, that is, if the father was Jewish, the offspring were Jewish, too, and they used the father's surname. In the 1920 census, during the Republican Period [1911-1949] a few Kaifeng descendants wrote "Jew" as their nationality affiliation. They did so out of conviction of historical loyalty and not due to political or economic aspirations. Even on the 1952 census [form], some Kaifeng Jewish descendants wrote "Jew" [as their nationality] even though there were not many [who observed] Jewish tradition at the time, but in that generation, people were permitted to determine their own religious affiliation. The census did not require any proof of ancestry or nationality; descendants knew the origin of their ancestors. This kind of "Jew" was actually [a Jew] in a cultural sense. Interestingly, the descendants of the Kaifeng Jews based their being Jews on the tradition, but other people claim that they are not [Jewish]. This is strange because no other minority, not the Han Chinese nor the Muslims, are required to prove their [affiliation], so why are the Kaifeng Jews?

21st Century World: But according to [Israel's] Law of Return, they are not Jews.

Xuxin: That is correct. I was talking about Jews in a cultural sense. Strictly speaking, I do not regard them as Jews, and that refers to the "Jewish descendants", too. I think that it is ludicrous that they want to immigrate to Israel. According to the Law of Return, only if the mother is Jewish, or the individual is converted to Judaism, he or she is a Jew. Based on these standards, they are obviously not Jews, because the descendants of the Kaifeng Jews follow the father's lineage. But this is a legal definition, and one cannot suppress these peoples' traditional right to call themselves Jews. We should not forget that during biblical times the Jewish lineage was patrilineal and only after the exile [586 BCE], the standard changed to matrilineal. When China examined its definition of national minorities, the status of the Jewish minority was also considered. In 1952, two delegates from Kaifeng represented the Jews in the National Minority Day Celebration. But in 1953 the Central Committee reaffirmed the article [of the basic laws] that maintained that there are only 56 minorities in China, and Jews were not among

them, yet the [same article] also protected their rights to preserve their traditional customs.

21st Century World: Now it appears that the Kaifeng Jewish descendants want to immigrate to Israel, how do you look at this?

Xuxin: In the 1990s, the Kaifeng descendants became interested in immigration. Among the Seven Surnames of the Kaifeng Jews, the Jin family went to Beijing and asked to immigrate. The Consulate of Israel, however, refused to consider their application because the Law of Return. Then they [the *Jins*] went to Israel from a third country (from Russia to Finland and to Israel). My understanding is that a Christian organization helped them. But I doubt that they can become eligible to be Israelis according to the Law of Return unless they convert. [They did.] ... Most Chinese do not understand Israel; they think that immigration is good. But, I tell them straightforwardly that immigration is a difficult affair. I do not approve of immigration, they do not speak the language, they have no skills and life in Israel is very difficult.

Special correspondent An Tifa reports for Jerusalem.

Since 1986, many foreign and Chinese visitors have come to Kaifeng to interview L. (I use the name L. because the interviewee did not agree to use his real name), and the descendants of the Kaifeng Jews. After the establishment of relations between China and Israel in 1992, these kinds of interviews increased daily. And L.'s name started to appear in a few places both in China and abroad. An unexpected opportunity in 1999 changed the fate of L. At the beginning of that year, L. received assistance from an organization that in the 1920's started to help overseas Jews to immigrate to Israel, and they expressed their willingness to assist L. to be the first Kaifeng Jew to immigrate to Israel.

Once the reporter met L. she asked: Why do you want to immigrate to Israel?

L. said, "Since I was little, I have known that I was Jewish. When I was little, my mother told me that one branch of [the family] is Chinese and one branch is Israeli. Reaching out to the other branch

has been one of my dreams since childhood."

After 1999, L. sought the path of immigration, but that path was not successful. It can be said that behind each emigration from China, there is a complicated story. But in the end they achieved their goal. By the year 2000, they obtained the various permits, spent four months in Finland, and went to live in Israel.

L. explained the process of immigrating to Israel as a Jew. "First, I needed to prove that I was a Jew. Though I wrote 'Jew' as my nationality in the 1996 census, officials told me that I had to write either Han or Muslim and could not continue to write 'Jew' as nationality because there was no such name among the 56 names. Then I had to produce an official notarized letter. I went to the Foreign Ministry in Beijing where I was told that [such] a notarized letter needed to be approved by higher levels at the Ministry. After two weeks, I received the approval of the higher officials in the ministry, and in addition, it was also stamped by the Israeli Consulate." L. continued: "If one wants to maintain Jewish identity one needs also to obtain a notarized [letter] from one's rabbi. But there are no rabbis in China. The few Jewish descendants 'perhaps several thousand people altogether' are widely scattered throughout China and very few of them are observant Jews."

Once the identity is recognized, traveling becomes a question of expenses. According to the records, the aid society who helped them immigrate, had already taken into account the expenses and successfully provided them enough financing. Thus in the fall of 1999, L. [and wife] embarked for Finland, where they stayed for four months and in the end they arrived in Jerusalem.

They lived in Jerusalem for two years.

"Because of the sensitivity of the immigration issue, the government hoped that we would not come to Jerusalem directly from Beijing, therefore we adopted a two stage plan. First we went to Finland and then to Israel. Our expenses in Finland and in Jerusalem were covered by the aid society. For two years after we left Kaifeng we had received about ten thousand U.S. dollars in aid." They lived in

tradition. According to reports, when Jin Xiaojin, who worked at the Institute for Minority Research, found out in the 1980s that he was of Jewish descent, he sent his daughter Qu Yian, who at the time was a reporter in Beijing, to Los Angeles to study Judaism.

The Latest Jewish Records

Kaifeng is an old city; its economy naturally cannot be compared to the coastal area. Song Nushi, who works for the city Migration Assistance Bureau said that, because of the high unemployment rate, many people considered going to work abroad, and last year a number of people asked about Israel.

Zhang Xingwang directed the reporter to the Teaching Alley (*jiao hutong*). That place is marked on the map as the “remnants of the Jewish Synagogue” but the original synagogue site has been replaced by the Peoples’ Number Four Hospital and the only historical marker is an ancient well in the hospital boiler room.

Cui Shuping, a widow of a Jewish descendent, lives on the southern side of the Teaching Alley. She is a Han Chinese but her late husband Zhao Pingyu was of Jewish descent. Everyday she sees local and foreign visitors. On the table in the house, there is a candleholder, and a “Great Six Star” (Magen David) paper cut window decoration that her daughter had cut out and put in the framed mirror. She told the reporter that the paper cut is both a decoration and a reminder. On the sides of the door are hung two traditional Chinese scrolls designated for peace. Apart for these reminders, her house is no different from that of her neighbors.

On the fourth floor of the Kaifeng Museum is the Jewish department, and to gain admission one needs to apply in advance. Fortunately, the gatekeeper was there and asked the guide to take the reporter to the fourth floor, on condition that she take no pictures nor make any recording. On display in the museum is an extremely important memorial engraving, the original stone stele of “The Record of the Rebuilding of the Pure and Truth Temple” and “The Record in Honor of the Daojing Temple”⁹. The floor was very dark and very humid and the mood was somber. Due to the declining number of visitors, Zeng Guangqing, the head of the department, told the *21-Century*

World reporter that the Kaifeng Jews were a historical phenomenon and that there is no Jewish minority among the 56 national minorities in China. But of course the reporter knows this.

The local Kaifeng Jewish descendents, however, welcomed the publicity. Li Suisheng’s wife bought a watermelon to serve the reporter while she showed her two sets of original census documents as proof of their nationality. The nationality of Li Suisheng was clearly marked “Jew” in the old the Red Book¹⁰. The new census is handwritten and has the word “Jew” for Li Suisheng and his daughter, but a closer look at the census record of Li Suisheng shows that there is a trace of change. His wife explained that the census official wrote it wrong and he immediately corrected it.

Officially, neither country recognizes them as Jews

The reporter followed up with the census registration office. The People’s Police pulled up the record of Li Suisheng on the computer and the reporter could see on the screen that the nationality of the three members of the Li clan is Han Chinese. The deputy director explained that most of the new census is computerized but the transfer [to computerized system] occurred while the census was taken. At the time, the software was not secure and therefore Li Suisheng’s registry was handwritten. But he added that the computerized system has only two nationalities Han or Muslims. China has 56 nationalities and Jews are not among them.

Not only that the local government did not recognize them as Jews, but when the reporter went to the Office of Migration of the Foreign Ministry [in Beijing] inquiring about the application of the Jin family to Israel, an official at the Public Documentation Office admitted that in 1996 the local government made an error issuing those certificates. At the time, the Public Notary Office issued individual IDs that did not constitute legal recognition of the Jews.¹¹ Later the Public Notary Office revoked the Jewish certificates and since then IDs with Jew on them were illegal. According to the official, China has only 56 minorities, and the Jewish minority is not among them.

[The reporter went] to the Israeli Consulate in Beijing located on the 4th floor of

the West Trade Center building

The response from the Israeli Consulate was the same. The Public Relations Officer told *21st Century World* that the Israeli Consulate recognizes only the legal procedure of the Foreign Ministry and does not regard the Jewish certificates as legal. He also said that the Consulate had not issued immigration certificates to any Jewish descendents.

Though neither country admits officially that they are Jews, a few organizations assist the Kaifeng descendents to return to their traditional culture. Chou Cailian, a Chinese Canadian, helped many Chinese minority poor children with education. Since he [Chou] suspects that his great-grandmother was of Jewish descent, he had helped several Jewish descendents of Kaifeng. He financed the education of fourteen Kaifeng Jewish descendents among them was Lijing, Li Suisheng’s daughter, who just recently had received a scholarship. In March of this year, Chou Cailian invited the families of the descendents to a restaurant to celebrate Passover. At the same time, other organizations also assist the Kaifeng Jewish descendents to immigrate to Israel. The Jin family only recently immigrated to Israel with the help of such an organization.

The Jewish teacher at the Israel Cultural Training Center of Nanjing University offered some private thoughts to the hopeful few who want to immigrate to Israel: “If one wants to become a Jew, of course you can become Jew. But, this is a very long and slow process. Besides, I want them to think about three things: Is it worth becoming a Jew? Jews have many enemies, a long and sad history of bitterness and strict laws.... But no matter what we say, if they want, we welcome them with open arms.

Are the Kaifeng Jewish descendents Jews?

To clarify this question, the reporter interviewed Professor Xuxin from the Nanjing Jewish Cultural Center...

21st Century World: The descendents of the Kaifeng Jews called themselves Jews in the past, what is your view about this question?

Xuxin: After the end of the 19th century, there were no Jewish descendents in

ognize the Book of Isaiah in the Leah scroll.

Hebrew paleographer Rabbi Dr. Emanuel Silver, curator of the Hebrew section of the British Library’s department of Oriental manuscripts, confirmed what others had seen: “Anybody slightly acquainted with the Dead Sea Scrolls,” he wrote, “will notice at a glance the overall similarity of the hand that wrote the Moshe Leah scrolls to that of certain documents of the Dead Sea caves, and anyone a little familiar with the Dead Sea texts will be struck by the resemblances in orthography.”

Scroll Writing In Asia

The connection of the Dead Sea Scrolls to Asia is deeper than many have believed. Most prominently found in the Dead Sea Scrolls was the Chinese character “di,” which meant “god, divine king, deceased king, emperor,” according to Dr. Victor Mair, graduate chairman of Chinese at the University of Pennsylvania, in a 1991 *Washington Post* article.

The appearance of “di,” which he dated between the second and ninth century A.D., has been confirmed by a growing number of sinologists. Dr. Donald Leslie, an Australian sinologist and leading expert in Kaifeng Jewry, would confirm Mair’s dating and present the possibility that it could be later. He wrote in 1992 in *Points East* that it is unlikely that Jews and the Chinese knew much, if anything, about each other’s cultures before the time of Jesus.

“There is no hint in Western sources of any knowledge of the Chinese language or writing until perhaps a thousand years later,” Leslie wrote in 1992.

Mair identified several Chinese characters on the scrolls, and even more have since been identified by other Sinologists, including “tian,” which means “sky, heaven or God.”

In addition, Gabow had a copy of the Khotan text, a business letter that came from Chinese Central Asia and had been dated from the eighth century A.D. It had numerous Hebrew letters matching those in the Dead Sea texts.

This information raised a simple question: If, as commonly believed, the Dead Sea Scrolls were written before Christ’s

time and then buried in caves until the 20th century, how could the same script show up in China in the eighth century A.D.—or even later?

Was The Moshe Leah Scroll Authentic?

The key to the string of revelations was the Moshe Leah Scroll. Its existence suggests that the dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls is wrong, unless the Moshe Leah Scroll was a well-done forgery.

Its authenticity was investigated in the 1980s, but further details were apparently stowed away. It was not until March of 2006 that the Sino-Judaic Institute found and shared with me documentation of the investigation and correspondence relating to it.

As others had found, the research showed parallels between the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Moshe Leah Scroll and other texts. As Pollak stated in a *Points East* Addendum in 1987, “at least four paleographers have independently identified the calligraphy in the available passages (of the Moshe Leah Scroll) as closely akin to that of the Dead Sea Scroll era.”

The research also indicated that the scribe of the Moshe Leah Scroll was interested only in the prophetic passages of Isaiah and omitted the “prose” and “chronological” verses. According to the reports, those verses were intentionally “left out by design” by the scribe.

By the same token, the Isaiah passages in the Moshe Leah Scroll contain Aramaic words that are not present in the Qumran Isaiah Scroll. On the other hand, the Qumran Isaiah Scroll contains Western numbers and medieval Tiberian Masoretic vowel points (which started between 10th and 12th century A.D., respectively) that are lacking in the Moshe Leah Scroll.

What did it mean? The Moshe Leah could very well predate the Dead Sea Scrolls. No ordinary forger (and certainly not Moshe Leah, who didn’t even know Hebrew, according to Pollak) could have so expertly copied such specific passages and elements from the Dead Sea Scrolls. The scroll probably wasn’t a fake.

Upon Closer Inspection

Why have we not heard about the Moshe Leah Scroll until recently? According to Gabow’s article, he ignored the advice

and in-depth research on the Moshe Leah Scroll by Michael Pollak, the world’s leading historian of Chinese Kaifeng Jewry. Instead, Gabow, in the late 1980’s, dismissed it. According to the Gabow article, Dr. Leslie claimed that the Moshe Leah Scroll was a copy from a Dead Sea Scroll photograph in J.T Milik’s, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea*, which included all passages in the Moshe Leah Scroll photo.

But, thirteen years or so later, intense analyses of the photographs reveal that “unreadable” or “missing” letters in the Hebrew word “Judah” in the Trever and Milik Isaiah photographs, “do appear” in the Moshe Leah Scroll! The Moshe Leah photograph shows words that are cut off in the Milik photograph, including an all-important Hebrew letter “yod” from an earlier chapter that does not appear at all in Milik’s photograph. Obviously, Leah could not have copied what does not exist in Milik.

Gabow’s article states that Rabbi Dr. Emmanuel Silver “is loathe to attribute forgery to the copier of the scroll” and that appears to be correct.

Professor Milton Fisher, former Old Testament professor and president of the Philadelphia Theological Seminary, in an extensive January 2000 report wrote, after comparing Milik’s photo of the Isaiah text with Leah’s, “There is little reason to call or classify this (Moshe Leah) manuscript a hoax or a forgery.” Fisher and I found many differences between the photos of the Moshe Leah Scroll and Milik’s photo of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

My Jesus and the Mystery of the Good Shepherd’s Staff

Professor Fisher made an amazing discovery on the Moshe Leah Scroll that explains why a particular letter in the Qumran Isaiah Scroll is oddly shaped like a “shepherd’s staff.” This peculiar letter shape appears in the Hebrew word “L’hoshe-ainee” meaning, “(ready) to save me,” in Isaiah 38:20. Significantly, unlike the Qumran Scroll, the scribe of the Moshe Leah Scroll separated the word to read “from her” and “my savior” or “my Jesus”. And the first letter, “lamed,” of the word “from her” looks like it was turned into what appears to be a shepherd’s crook.

Hence, the Moshe Leah scribe understood the messianic Christian meaning of the

Hebrew by dividing one word into two words to create the phrase “from her (came) my savior / my Jesus.” Is it by mere chance or is it prophetic that the last line of the Moshe Leah Scroll photograph reads, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm”?

Word Separation and Letters Missing in Words

Sometimes the most obvious things can be easily missed but can be most telling. The word “ready to save me” was no scribal error because twice in the Moshe Leah scroll the word is clearly divided, but not at all in the Qumran text. A great deal of expertise is required to know how to separate one Hebrew word from another when the words are all sandwiched together. In the Moshe Leah Scroll, there is clearly wide spacing between words. Yet in both the Milik and Trever photographs of the Qumran Great Isaiah Scroll there is little or no separation between words and the text looks like an unbroken string of Hebrew letters. In Trever’s book, *The Untold Story of Qumran*, he says that when he first saw the Great Isaiah Scroll its most unusual script was so difficult to read “that I could not make out any consecutive words.”

After the first official transcriptions of Dead Sea Scroll texts in 1950, including the Great Isaiah Scroll (1Q Isa), the Dropsie College Hebraist, Professor Joseph Reider, that same year (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. xli, July) found numerous transcription errors by scroll scholars, because the Qumran Great Isaiah text is so difficult to read. He also found, as other scholars observed, that the scribe of the Great Isaiah Scroll did not know Hebrew very well, and that may explain why the scribe could not separate the Hebrew words, as the scribe of the Moshe Leah Scroll was able to do. This ability to know how to separate words requires an excellent knowledge of the very unique Scroll spelling. All scholars of Kaifeng Jewry agree that for at least the past several hundred years, Kaifeng Jewry no longer knew Hebrew. Thus the Moshe Leah Scroll, originally brought from Kaifeng, had to have been written when both the Hebrew language and the unique style of writing and spelling were still in use.

Further analysis of the Trever and Milik

photographs does not show the use of a “yod” for God in Isaiah 38:20, that appears in the phrase “All of God’s days”, in the Moshe Leah Scroll. Also in this verse, there is an additional word, “living” or “living one”, which appears in the Moshe Leah Scroll, but not in the Qumran Isaiah scroll. Secondly, Professor Fisher found that a Hebrew “hey” was missing in the Milik photograph in the words “praise you,” but is present in both the Trever and Moshe Leah photographs. Thirdly, Fisher also found problems in the spacing of letters: in the phrase “father to sons,” the letters run together in the Trever and Moshe Leah Isaiah Scrolls, while the Milik photograph shows that the words do not run together but are clearly separated. Fourthly, in the Milik photograph, the first two letters of “plucked up” (Isaiah 38:12) run together, but in the Trever photograph they are clearly separated. These differences suggest that the scribe of the Moshe Leah Scroll did not copy from the Dead Sea Scroll photographs.

Thus, the examination of the Moshe Leah Scroll photograph raises very serious questions about the integrity of the photographs of the Qumran Great Isaiah Scroll of Milik, Trever and others, where at times the shape of the letters, margins and of the sheets of the scroll do not match.

A number of scholars have seen these very troubling differences. Near Eastern archeologist and Fulbright scholar, Dr. Peter W. Pick, has noted that, “A comparison of the same sections of the Great Isaiah Scroll photographed by Trever, Milik and Schweig showed marked differences....Discrepancies also appear when comparing the Trever and Japanese publication of the Great Isaiah Scroll. Scholars rely on the authenticity of the photographs for research. These serious discrepancies in the reproduction of the scroll...call into question the originality of the scroll and photographs and the curatorial staff of the scrolls.” Dr. Leslie, in his article of 1992 in *Points East*, was the first to identify the fact that the photographs of the Dead Sea Scrolls did not match.

The Meaning of Red Ink and Christian Holy days

Another discovery that has cast doubt on the date of the Dead Sea Scrolls is the appearance of red ink. The term “Red

Letter Day” comes from the Christian usage of red ink to mark holy days, such as Christmas and Easter. For example, red ink was used on illuminated medieval calendars and manuscripts, highlighting words and letters.

So why, then, is there red ink on the Dead Sea Scrolls, a supposedly pre-Christian text? And not just red ink—but Western numbers written in red ink. Scholars had use of the color photographs of the Isaiah scroll, published by Dr. John C. Trever, since 1972, but oddly the red ink went unnoticed until recently.

“There appears to be a two-digit numeral at the top of the scroll. ... The color might be called ‘red.’ The numeral appears to be ‘23,’” wrote Dr. Fredric C. Putnam in a 2005 scholarly report. Putnam, formerly an Old Testament professor at the Biblical Theological Seminary in Hatfield, Pennsylvania, was among many scholars to confirm the discovery of both the red ink lettering and the Western number on the Isaiah Scroll. But not all scholars saw the number exactly the same way.

“I can see the dot (between the 2 and 3),” said the late Dr. Al Grove, academic dean and Old Testament professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, in Glenside, Pennsylvania. A dot was used in medieval times to indicate that the 2 and 3 were numbers, not letters. Turning his attention to the red ink on words within Isaiah 53, Professor Grove first observed that red ink appears “only on the suffixes” in the words “afflicted” (Isaiah 53:4) and “our peace” (Isaiah 53:5). Since then, more red ink has been found on the Isaiah 53 Qumran color photographs. The discussion turned to the red ink blot in the right margin by Isaiah 53.3, which looked like spilled blood. “It could be (dated) late, in and of itself,” Professor Grove said.

Further, Professor Putnam wrote, “Your editor’s (David Crowder, then investigative reporter for *The El Paso Times*) interpretation of the red ink stain in the margin (representing the shedding of the ‘blood of Jesus’) is not unreasonable and even possible.” Many clergy use Isaiah 53 in their Easter sermons because this Old Testament prophecy predicted the suffering and death of Jesus the Messiah.

A few scholars have just begun to note

<http://covenant.idc.ac.il>

[The original title of this article: “A Group of Jewish Descendants from Kaifeng Want to Migrate to Israel, but Their Identity is in Doubt” was published in 21st Century World in Chinese and on the internet at: <http://www.sina.com.cn/c/2002-08-06>.

As the Chinese title indicates, this article is written for Chinese audiences, and the text follows Chinese reporting practices that differ considerably from reporting style in the West. To make the article more reader friendly for Western readers, the translator made some structural changes, eliminated many repetitions, duplications and redundancies, while remaining true to the original article..]

Among a group of people studying Hebrew at the Foreign Language Institute at Nanjing University was Zhang Xingwang¹ a teacher from Kaifeng with a small black cap called a *kipa* covering his head. Zhang said that he does not have a great knowledge of the Jewish tradition, but he wears the *kipa* in search of spiritual sustenance. Because of this search, he is very attentive when he follows the instruction of the Hebrew teachers.

At the invitation of Professor Xuxin, Director of The Jewish Cultural Studies Department at Nanjing University, Chinese students, historians, teachers, scholars and other interested parties came from all over China to attend a summer program of Israel cultural studies. He also invited several descendants of the Jews from Kaifeng and a Jewish professor and his wife to teach Hebrew and Jewish culture...

According to Zhang Xingwang, there were 618 descendants of the Kaifeng Jews, some of them had left, scattered in Uruguchi, Lanzhou², Xian, Chengdu, Shanghai, Nanjing, Shenzhen and other cities.

In the past, these Jews marked “Jews” as their nationality in the census. In 1952, two Jewish delegates from Kaifeng went to Beijing to represent the community at the celebration of the National Day³ and were received by the leadership of the Central Committee. A few years ago at the time of the census most of the people changed [nationality] to “Muslim” or “Han”.⁴ Zhang Xingwang was obviously

not pleased. He said [that the Jews] were obviously not Muslims or Han Chinese, so why ask them to change their nationality? It is unreasonable that they cannot get such recognition.

With illegal emigration – the family stretches the boundaries.

When the reporter asked Zhang Xingwang about the family who had already immigrated to Israel, he responded without hesitation: “They are different from us, we are patriots”. He also admitted that there were Kaifeng Jews who ran away illegally but this was a matter of purely individual behavior. He also said that just because this family name was Jin, it does not mean that we study Hebrew for the pleasure of the Jin family. “First we are Chinese, but because we have Jewish bloodlines, we are Chinese with Jewish characteristics. We teach this to our children, that first of all of we love our country.”

Outsiders need to understand that this is a sensitive issue. Zhang Xingwang, illustrated this point: “We were the little birds in the forest, without worries and concerns. Later as the cats [hunters] became numerous, we saw the guns’ fowling pieces and ran. Now, many people are looking for us both from China and abroad.” He repeatedly stated that the majority of the Kaifeng Jewish descendants are patriots.

According to Zhang Qianhong⁵, the head of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Henan University, in addition to the *Jins* [who already emigrated] there were the *Zhangs* and the *Lis* who had wanted to immigrate to Israel in the 1990s. However, only the three members of the Jin family were successful; they moved to Finland and their uncle Jin Guanzhong remained in Kaifeng.

Zhang Xingwang expressed his disappointment that the Kaifeng descendants cannot immigrate to Israel legally: “We would like to go to see Jerusalem, too.” He explained that intermarriage between Jews [in Kaifeng] and Han Chinese was quite common. The descendants of the Kaifeng Jews followed the patrilineal descent in China, and therefore could not immigrate because in Israel the matrilineal descent is followed. “Had the Kaifeng community followed the matrilineal descent, then they would have not encountered any problems. The Jewish commu-

nity in Spain had a 300 year-old history; they also celebrated Passover, but were not even aware that they were Jews. Only after scholars realized that they were of matrilineal descent, they could immigrate. Jewish blood cannot be forgotten.”⁶⁶

Zhang Xingwang explained the value of the Jewish presence in China: “The Kaifeng Jewish community has an impact on the world. They often receive Jews from foreign countries and from Israel. The Israelis consider the Jews of Kaifeng especially important, because it serves a testimony to the friendship between China and Israel. We are saying that the Chinese people are good toward the Jews; they do not discriminate against the Jews. Living circumstances in Kaifeng are favorable, and the Jews can survive and flourish for another thousand years.” In conclusion, he said, “it is not important whether or not the government recognizes us as Jews, nor is it important that the census cannot be changed, what is important is that we feel that we are Jews in our hearts. Neither this nor the next generation will forget that we are Jews.”

But the young generation of Jews has a different view of their Jewish identity

At the Hebrew school [in Nanjing] was another female student, majoring in International Relations at the Elousi Mosque.⁷ Her name is Shi Han, a second year student who used the summer vacation to go to Nanjing University to study Jewish culture. Although her [maternal] grandfather was a representative of the Jewish descendants at the Beijing [festivities] in 1952,⁸ she has no deep historical affiliation to Judaism and her interest in this class is mostly curiosity. “I rarely mention that I am Jewish; only when classmates come over to my house and ask about the few books and the pictures in the house, I tell them that I am a descendant of Jews.” When the government allowed [the Jews] to test for their DNA in the 1980s, the proof came back that she had the same DNA traces as an Iraqi Jew. She has no understanding of Judaism and even less of the Bible. But when she was asked about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, she said: “Of course we are on the side of Israel.”

The Jin family obviously went one-step further [in their quest] of their ancestors’

that the red ink in Isaiah 53 was written over by black ink on the Great Isaiah Scroll. Others have seen green ink and other colors. Upon looking at the published color photos from Qumran Cave 4, University of Pennsylvania librarian and archaeologist Dr. John Weeks cited that, in addition to black ink, "I can see letters printed in red, as well as green or blue ink."

According to Dr. Hayim Sheynin, the former head reference librarian of Philadelphia's Gratz College and an internationally-known Hebrew paleographer of medieval manuscripts, green ink first appears in the 11th century A.D. Just as Jews borrowed the use of red ink from the Christians, they also borrowed the use of green ink from the Arabs. Dr. Sheynin stated in an interview that he has seen Western numbers in red ink on Hebrew manuscripts that were written by the 16th and 17th centuries, as well as wording in red ink by the 15th century, a trend that occurs only in non-biblical texts.

In addition, after seeing the Chinese characters, Western numbers and other anomalies on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Sheynin stated in a later interview, "In comparison to Hebrew culture this is foreign...it is not a Hebrew practice. What you are showing me of these signs...are not Jewish practices of the writing of the Bible, or of post-Biblical texts." Also, after carefully comparing the photographs, he stated that the Moshe Leah Isaiah text is definitely not a copy of either the Milik or the Trever photographs of the Qumran Great Isaiah Scroll.

In addition, rabbinic law forbade red or colored ink for biblical manuscripts. A senior Dead Sea scholar acknowledges that Jewish law would probably not allow the red ink found in the texts. For texts that supposedly predate the birth of Christianity, the presence of colored inks is too hard to ignore.

The Dating of the Moshe Leah Scroll

The Hebrew paleographer, Dr. Emanuel Silver, dated the Moshe Leah Isaiah Scroll to the 2nd century A.D. This would make the scroll over a thousand years earlier than the Qumran Isaiah Scroll, which contains many Masoretic vowel points and Western numbers dating it to be-

tween the late 10th century and the 13th century.

A Mysterious Metal

One of the best-kept secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls has been the discovery of metals in the black ink. That finding was buried in unpublished results and was **not** unearthed until 1996.

The presence of metals further points to the Scrolls being of medieval origin. A scroll scholar tells us that, in the time of the Scrolls, ink was made from natural ingredients: lamp black, honey, vegetable gum and oil. Scientific testing of the scrolls in the early 1950s found silver, manganese, iron, and other metals in the black ink used on the Scrolls.

Scholars tried to downplay the discovery of these metals by saying that some of them, like copper and lead, were byproducts of leaching from a bronze inkwell. Yet silver, manganese and iron are not components in the making of bronze. The 1990's test on red ink detected the metals strontium and titanium. The presence of metals also contradicts the scholarly claim that the writers of the scrolls used Dead Sea water for ink. According to a chart in a scientific study of the Dead Sea salt water, there was no titanium in the water. Scholars tell us that ink spiked with metals came from a time later than the Dead Sea Scrolls were supposedly written.

Others tests revealed that cinnabar, a metal, was the prime element used in much of the red ink. Yet in biblical times, cinnabar was extremely expensive. Only King Herod could afford it for use as paint—and the authors of the scrolls called themselves "the poor" (a Christian term).

Cinnabar was not commonly used for ink in the Middle East until almost 1,000 years later. Scholars assume that the cinnabar on the Scrolls came from Spain but it was invented by the Chinese for ink. Arabs put metal in ink and probably borrowed the manufacture of cinnabar ink from the Chinese and made it very inexpensively.

Also, metals are corrosive on leather. After just 200 years, they begin to eat through the inked area. Many medieval texts with iron- or cinnabar-based ink have holes in the manuscripts where the ink was used. But from the color photos, there are no holes in the Dead Sea Scrolls in the areas

of the cinnabar red ink, which suggests the process had not yet started—and pinpoints the scrolls on a much shorter timeline.

Carbon-14 Dating and Silk

The advent of carbon-14 dating has been a monumental leap in historical analysis.

Proponents of the original dating of the scrolls have pointed to carbon-14 findings as validation, but the issue is not that simple. Other carbon-14 tests have yielded more modern dates. In addition, the process itself has been called into question.

A little noticed "correction" in *Biblical Archeology Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1995) revealed that the carbon-14 date on linen from Qumran, Cave 2 was from 13th or 14th century A.D. and not the original published B.C. dating. (Also unmentioned from the fragment they tested: The Qumran linen had a border of silk—another connection to China.) Moreover, Greg Doudna's 1998 treatise "Dating and Radiocarbon Analysis" from *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years* notes that scholars in the 1950s routinely brushed castor oil onto the texts to improve the visibility of the writing. But castor oil comes from seeds that contain modern carbon, which would give "an erroneously young radiocarbon date," and lend itself to a younger finding. Doudna paints a picture of young scholars applying the oil "oblivious to the havoc this process might be creating for future radiocarbon dates." This was not the only substance brushed on the scrolls. A number of other substances, including "British Museum Leather Dressing," were also applied to the scrolls.

It is not known if one of these substances, old oil, was applied to the scrolls. If it were, it would have affected the carbon-14 dating immensely. Indeed, an article in *Radiocarbon* (2001) noted an experiment in which scientists brushed old oil onto a French medieval manuscript, and the result yielded a carbon-14 date ranging from 90 B.C. to 20 A.D. The authors note the inability of completely removing "repeated treatments of oil" as the scrolls circulated among scholars, a "situation of saturation" that would give an erroneous carbon date.

Scroll paleographers originally dated the

scrolls from the Wadi Murraba'at Caves (which are part of the Dead Sea Scroll corpus) as no later than 135 A.D. However, carbon-14 research from noted Cornell University professor, Dr. James Weinstein, revealed dates of 585 A.D. and 660 A.D. for textile material found in one of the caves. In addition, a nearby-buried piece of linen from the same cave was carbon-14 dated at 1285–1310 A.D. The differences are too great to ignore. Nor can we overlook the fact that one of the silk pieces had a medieval inscription woven into it.

In 2004, two scientists and a Dead Sea Scroll scholar re-examined the carbon-14 and paleographic results arrived at by scholars. They concluded in their report (entitled "Redating the Radiocarbon Dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls" in the 2004 scholarly journal *Dead Sea Discoveries* that, "when taken as a whole, the C14 dates showed that neither paleography nor C14 dating is a sufficiently precise tool to contribute conclusively to the debate over the accurate dating of the scrolls."

Continued Investigation Needed

Although it has taken more than 25 years, Leo Gabow's "discovery" of the Moshe Leah Scroll has led to a major contribution to Dead Sea Scroll research.

Scholars still disagree about the age of the Dead Sea Scrolls and further research is needed. But an overwhelming number of scholars have come to the same conclusion: the Moshe Leah Scroll is not a forgery.

Because of Moshe Leah Scroll's striking paleographic similarities to the Dead Sea Scrolls, the obvious conclusion is that the Dead Sea Scrolls would have to be dated after 500 A.D.—at the earliest.

It would be in the best interest of those scholars who believe in the antiquity of the Dead Sea Scrolls either to discredit the authenticity of the Moshe Leah Scroll or to refute the similarities between the two texts. The ball, as is said, is in their court.

A New Hypothesis

The presence of non-Hebrew words in the Dead Sea Scrolls also suggests a different place of origin for the scrolls.

In the summer of 2005, I was researching the meaning and dating of a Persian

word written in Hebrew letters found on the Qumran War Scroll and, later, also found on the "Son of God" text. I telephoned-interviewed Dr. Ammon Netzer, professor of Iranian Studies at Hebrew University, who said that this Persian word (spelled nun, het, shin, yod, resh in Hebrew) means "prey, or the act of catching prey." He also dated this word on the War Scroll as "...no earlier than third or fourth century A.D....as a Middle Persian word." He dates this same word with its unique ending on the "Son of God Text" from "600 to 900 A.D." and as "early new Persian."

In 1958, an article by Abraham Poliak in *Jewish Quarterly Review* revealed that he had found on this same War Scroll another foreign word "Togar," meaning "Turk." He tells us, "We cannot explain how the word 'Togar' [referring to a people] appeared in the scroll unless we assume that it was composed in a very late [medieval] period."

In addition, several foreign words or theologically foreign concepts have been found on the Qumran Isaiah Scroll, such as the Christian phrase, "Mother of God" (Isaiah 7:11). The Isaiah Scroll text reads "from the mother" written "mem, aleph, mem," although the normative Hebrew text is written "mem, eyin, mem." My Christological finding was not unusual. It dovetails with that of Dr. William Brownlee who, in his classic work, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible*, tells us that the Qumran scribes made numerous "deliberate alterations of the Hebrew text in order to produce the desired messianic interpretation."

Another foreign word on the Isaiah Scroll (Isaiah 7:25, between lines 15-16) is the word "shul." The Yiddish word "shul" did not exist before the medieval period. It means "synagogue" in Yiddish. The word can also mean "skirt of a robe" in Hebrew, but both words are out of context in the sentence. In a May 12, 2005 scholarly report, Dead Sea Scroll researcher Fred Miller confirmed my discovery, as had other Yiddish scholars. It has also been discovered that the calligraphy on the first letter of the word "shul" uniquely matches a late medieval text found in China.

There is also another foreign word that would point to the Khazars, a people who had the largest Jewish empire the world has ever known, stretching across five

former Soviet republics. They founded Kiev in the 10th century and were Turks, initially from Chinese Central Asia, who originally wrote in runic script. This may explain why there are traces of runic script on the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Chinese and Hebrew on the Dead Sea Scrolls were written poorly, as if they were the second language of the writers of the scrolls. Hebrew, Chinese and Persian were second languages to the Khazars, because they spoke a Turkic tongue.

There is another amazing clue to the possible true authors of the Scrolls. Kevin Alan Brook's 1999 book, *Jews of Kazaria*, tells us significantly that "Rabbi Nissim in 1096" wrote that the 17 congregations of the Khazars went into the "wilderness of the nations" after they were defeated. The exact same phrase "wilderness of the nations" is used in the War Scroll (1Q 1:1:2). Khazar history states that they hid their Hebrew texts in a cave near Mt. Seir (also called Mt. Edom, near the Dead Sea)—which is very far from Khazaria.

The Khazars migrated west into countries such as Romania, Germany and Spain during the 12th and 13th centuries. The ruins of their capital, Itil, were recently discovered in 2008. As they traveled, they adopted Yiddish as another one of their spoken languages.

The Khazars may also have migrated eastward towards China where, as has been proven from artifacts found near the Caspian Sea, they had extensive commercial dealings with the Chinese. There was a major trade route between Europe and China going right through Khazaria. Interestingly, the Chinese in China called the Jews "Blue Hat Turks."

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