

中國-猶太學院

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The Sino-Judaic Institute is a non-denominational, non-profit, and non-political organization, founded on June 27, 1985, in Palo Alto, California, by an international group of scholars and lay persons, to promote friendship and understanding between the Chinese and Jewish peoples and to encourage and develop their cooperation in matters of mutual historical and cultural interest. Its objectives are:

- 1) The study of the ancient Jewish community of Kaifeng and assisting its descendents 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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EXCERPTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SJI MANAGING BOARD MEETING SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, JUNE 27, 2010

Board Members Present: Anson Laytner, President; Arnie Belzer, Vice President; Steve Hochstadt, Treasurer; Ondi Lingenfelter, Secretary; Wendy Abraham, Archivist and CIO; Ronald Kaye, Board Member

1. Situation in Kaifeng

Hochstadt recently visited Shanghai, Nanjing and Kaifeng and gave talks at academic institutions in each city. He reported that the university programs in those cities appear well supported but also recommended that SJI continue to support them. He also visited the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum (in Hongkou, Shanghai) and thought we should consider supporting it. We also want it more accessible to Chinese visitors. We decided that, in order to fund it, we need to look into reporting and PRC regulations concerning non-profits.

Hochstadt also visited the Jewish descendants in Kaifeng. Eric Rothberg (a 24 year-old from Minnesota) was teaching Hebrew there at Yisilie school and studying Asian studies at Henan University. Shi Lei is away a lot with his travel business and not that present in town. Faculty in Jewish Studies at Henan U maintains a distance from the descendants. The descendants would like Jewish texts translated from Hebrew into Chinese. Internally, the descendants are grouped into roughly six fluid and overlapping factions/groups

Abraham, who had visited and interviewed some descendants in the 1980s, wrote their oral history and donated transcriptions to the Hoover archives, suggested a reunion of descendants in their grandparents' honor, many of whom contributed to her oral history, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the oral histories.

Concerning the Yisilie School (YSL): Timothy Lerner, by all accounts an American messianic Jew, continues to maintain a strong presence in Kaifeng and returns there regularly. On the positive side, Lerner set up the school and did a good job in organizing the community and beginning their education with weekly meetings on Shabbat, offering Hebrew classes and celebrating holidays. Gradually, Rothberg learned more about the backers of the school, that the Hong Kong branch of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among Jews

SUKKOT IN KAIFENG, CHINA

by Eran Barzilay

My name is Eran Barzilay. I came to China six months ago, because I wanted to travel for some time and, during that time, to find a good place to study the Chinese language—I had already studied Chinese during my B.A studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

During my travels, I met Or, an Israeli who traveled for more than two years in China, and he told me about his great experiences in Kaifeng. I kept thoughts of Kaifeng in my mind for some time, and I eventually went to see what was so special about this place. I can say that it took me less than one day to understand what it was all about.



The thing that is so special about this city is its Jewish community. From the first day I arrived in Kaifeng, this community treated me like I was one of their sons, and I have become part of this wonderful family. Two weeks after I came here and met this community, I decided to stay and study at Henan University, so that I could stay in Kaifeng and keep on with what I began here. A few days after I first arrived, I became their teacher of Hebrew and Judaism.

As for the holidays, I celebrated Sukkot with them, and I can tell you for sure that it was one of my best holidays ever. As I wrote in my journal, "if you came all the way to China and only met this amazing community and celebrated Sukkot with them, then it was all worth it".

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SJI MEMBERSHIP

Table with 2 columns: Country, Total. Rows include United States (185), China (22), Israel (14), Canada (11), England (8), Australia (6), Germany (2), Japan (2), France (1), Indonesia (1), South Africa (1), Switzerland (1), Taiwan (1).

TOTAL: 255

FROM THE EDITOR

If there ever are historians who choose to study the back issues of Points East, they will be able to trace certain major events, like the establishment of China-Israel relations or the TianAnMen massacre, through our pages. They will also occasionally be able to trace events in the lives of our leading members, Prof. Xu Xin's aneurism and miraculous recovery for example. Now I will add one of my own.

This issue is coming out late because my wife, Merrily, was dying of ovarian cancer. Sadly, she passed away on October 24th. With my time freed up from caregiving and work and worrying, I was finally able to edit Points East, volume 25, #3.

Perhaps it was coincidence but this was also the first time in 25 years that I had to scramble to find enough material to fill the issue. Usually I have more articles than I can use. So, this issue may be a little sparser than usual but—just so you don't complain—the previous issue was humongous by our standards.

Anson Laytner

"The Jews of Kaifeng"
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Points East

Anson Laytner, Publisher

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

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FINANCIAL REPORT AVAILABLE

SJI members interested in receiving a copy of the annual financial report should send a self-addressed envelope to: Steve Hochstadt, Treasurer of the Sino-Judaic Institute, Illinois College, 1101 W College Ave., Jacksonville IL 62650.

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BOOK NOOK

Through the Jade Gate to Rome: A Study of the Silk Routes during the Later Han Dynasty 1st to 2nd Centuries CE (Paperback) by John E. Hill. Booksurge, Charleston, SC (Booksurge is now renamed Createspace and owned by Amazon.com), 2009. 714 pages.

1. Reviewed by Alfred J. Andrea, Emeritus Professor of World History, University of Vermont

This book arrived several days ago, and I devoured it in a single sitting, despite its 689 pages, largely composed of thoroughly researched notes and an extensive (and comprehensive) bibliography. An annotated translation (with accompanying Chinese text) of the second-century CE Hou Hanshu, also known as the "Chronicle on the Western Regions," this important source from the period of the late Han Dynasty contains highly detailed accounts of such far-away lands as India, Parthian Persia, and even the Roman Empire. To my amazement—and I have spent over 4 decades studying cultural interchange across the so-called Silk Road—it describes a Roman embassy to the Han court that was dispatched by Emperor Marcus Aurelius (r. 161-180) and arrived in China in 166, by way of Southeast Asia.

This source is so important that I intend to incorporate excerpts from it in the forthcoming 7th edition of The Human Record, Volume I. Quite simply, undergraduate students of world history need to become acquainted with it and the rich body of new insights that it offers any and all who are interested in the long-distance interchange that occurred across Afro-Eurasia more than 1,000 years before Marco Polo.

John Hill's scholarship is likewise a wonder to behold and enjoy. His detailed and always informative notes are a pleasure to read, and the book should serve as an example to all of how one properly goes about translating and presenting a primary source to a mixed audience. It can and should be purchased and read not only by every professional scholar who focuses on the Silk Road and related phenomena but also by any interested person who wants to know more about the Silk Road during its first great period of efflorescence. Happily, in this day of greatly inflated book prices, its modest price puts it within easy reach.

2. Reviewed by Dr. Raoul McLaughlin, Belfast.

I highly recommend this study to anyone who wants to have a greater perspective on the Roman Empire and gain a better appreciation of ancient civilization. This book is a highly authoritative and very readable account of the ancient world that connected China and Rome...

For the academic or serious amateur whose interests lie in the difficult and controversial areas of Central Asia during the Former Han and Later Han, this is an utterly indispensable volume. The author has translated the "Chronicle Western Regions" chapter of the Hou Hanshu (History of the Later [or Eastern] Han dynasty) in a Chinese text with translation format for the first 59 pages of the volume (even page number in Chinese odd page numbers in English) for a total of 28 pages for each language. The translation reads well and seems at first reading very well considered and thoroughly useful. But what follows is astonishing! Self-described in an extremely subtle

understatement as subtitle on the cover, as "An annotated translation of the Chronicle of the 'Western Regions in the Hou Hanshu," The author provides his reader with nearly 600 pages of some of the most thorough documentation, comparative analysis and appendices, I have ever read! For two weeks of nearly constant work, comparing the text with my own notes and learning vastly from the author's erudition, I have had one of the most satisfying intellectual experiences of recent decades. The richness of the intellectual fabric from which the book is woven is a nearly exhaustive survey of the literature and relevant documents. Simply stated, if anyone is interested in any aspect of inner Asia during the period for ca 200 BCE to ca 200 CE, you literally cannot avoid this book!

About the author: John E. Hill was born in Montréal, Canada in 1943 and raised in Port of Spain, Trinidad. In 1964, he moved to Australia and graduated as a Registered Psychiatric Nurse in Sydney, 1967. Hill lived for more than three years in India and has travelled extensively in Asia. He is an independent scholar, fascinated by the exchange of peoples, cultures, religions and trade between Asia, Europe and Africa since his youth. He began this book in 1979 while living in India and continued gathering information, communicating with historians and other specialists around the world ever since. He now lives on a remote property in tropical far north Queensland, Australia, over 300 km from the nearest traffic lights—but he does have email: wynhill2@bigpond.net.au.

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The Best Years of Her Life

by Dave Bender, Hao Fangjia
excerpted from *Xinhuanet*, 5 May 2010

Sarah Ross, a 96-year-old Jerusalem citizen, is eyewitness to the birth of two modern nations, both led by ancient peoples: China and Israel.

She grew up as a Jewish refugee in Shanghai during World War II, and has lived in Israel since 1948.

Sarah's experiences symbolize a hardy connection between the two countries. On the walls and in the cabinets of her tidy, simple home, her extensive collection of Chinese furniture, wall-hangings and paintings, vases and small statues embody her memories of life in Shanghai.

Sarah sits in her wheelchair and watches the dimming of the day from her bedroom window. She wears an embroidered green satin Chinese robe, which reminds her of her days in Shanghai.

"The best years of my life I spent in China, because people accepted us in a very friendly way," Sarah recalls, smiling, of her early years.

Sarah and her family moved to China from Russia in 1915 when she was one year old. Her father was a horse-breeder and trainer, a skill that helped the family to settle and prosper in their new home.

Ross grew up in Harbin, a city in north-east China, where she met and married her husband, a Russian Jew born in Harbin. After that, the couple spent an event-filled decade in Shanghai until they moved to Jerusalem.

"Some of her statues have been chipped and broken over the six decades, but she keeps them anyway. They are like old friends to her, who have shared the same travails.

"You see, it still is very beautiful," she says as she gently handles a tiny, cracked blue-glazed lion, "they are just old, like me"...

"In China, we lived safely," Sarah summarizes the war years. She notes that the Chinese welcomed the Jewish refugees, and that she and her family felt at home in her adopted country.

Shanghai took in 30,000 Jewish refugees who managed to escape the Nazi onslaught - more than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India combined.

Sarah would have had numerous occasions to meet many people from around the world in her role as an agent of photography studio.

She gained practical experience at the photo agency, skills that would serve her well in the near future.

After the war ended, Sarah and her husband began working as photographers.

The couple continued their nascent careers after moving to Israel. In a lucky stroke, both were soon hired by the Israeli government to photograph events at

the presidential residence.

They photographed the first five Israeli presidents. "It was very, very interesting. They are people who are now like a legend," Sarah says.

Her photos show a panoply of world leaders that visited Israel, both in war and peacetime. Many of the pictures catch the officials at ease and at unrehearsed moments, a sign of Sarah's photographic skill.

Sarah recalls one occasion soon after she began taking photographs. An official watching her covering an event was impressed by her abilities behind the lens and asked, "Hey, newcomer, where are you from?"

"I am from China! From Shanghai!" Sarah smiled and proudly replied.

Her Chinese connection again came to the fore when she was tasked with photographing the first Chinese ambassador to Israel, Lin Zhen. She says her heart was pounding in expectation.

"I was happy, and I told my husband, 'I am going to take that photograph,'" she recalls, showing off a personal photo of her and the ambassador, encased in an ornate frame in her living room.

When she later presented Lin Zhen with the photos, she wrote on the back of one of them, "I never dreamed that, after 30 years, I would photograph the ambassador of the country where I happily lived all my life!"

Readers: Visit our improved and greatly expanded website: www.sino-judaic.org.

SJI Members: Email info@sino-judaic.org to receive the user name and password needed to access the "members only" section.

IN THE FIELD

◆ Update from Center of Judaic and Chinese Studies at SISU

Prof. Fu Xiaowei reports that the Center was approved to be the one of the few key institutes of the University and is working closely with the School of International Relations to start its Israeli studies program, the partner being the Department of the Interdisciplinary Program at Bar Ilan. It is part of CIAI (China Israel Academic Initiative) launched by Carice Witte, President of Yale Alumni Club in Israel. Prof. Fu further reports that, since the Center is now in the school of International Relations at SISU, they plan to focus on Middle East Studies, with an emphasis on Sino-Israel and Sino-American relations. The school will be the first to train undergraduate students in this orientation and it intends to send students to Israel for short-term training or for advanced studies in international relations, such as Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University.

The University library decided to set up a section for Jewish/ Israeli books and has ordered a group of books amounting to 84800RMB, including the Encyclopedia Judaica. SJI's grant was used to buy books or reference materials that the library failed to buy through its usual channel.

The Center and the Sichuan Arts and Literature Publishing House have agreed to co-publish a series of Jewish culture under a translation program that has been funded by Rabbi Marvin Tokayer. The first four books are *Resurrection: The Power of God for Christians and Jews* by Kevin J. Madigan and Jon D. Levenson, *The Slayers of Moses: The Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literary Theory* by Susan Handelman, *Answers to the Questions about Jewish Culture* by Ruth Wisse, and *Kabbalah and Criticism* by Harold Bloom. Lastly, Prof. Fu's translation of I.B. Singer's *In My Father's Court* came out in April.

◆ Prof. Xu Xin's Triumphant Return

Prof. Xu Xin, now fully recovered from his aneurism of several years ago, is making a major tour of the United States and a bit of Canada too. His visit is being arranged by the China Judaic Studies Association and his schedule to date is as follows:

- Chicago area, October 27 – November 7
- Michigan, November 7 – 9
- Ohio, November 14 – 17
- Toronto/Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, November 21 – 29
- Rhode Island, November 30 – December 3
- New York and New Jersey, December 4 – 18
- Boston, Massachusetts, December 19 – 22
- Washington D.C., December 24 – January 3
- Colorado, January 4 – 9
- California, January 10 -18
- Florida, January 19 -20 & 27
- Tennessee, January 23 – 25
- Seattle, Washington, January 29 – 31
- Pennsylvania February 7 – 10
- Kansas February 17 – 18
- Washington D.C., February 1 – March 15. Fellow at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

For more information, go to: <http://www.oakton.edu/user/~friend/chinajews.html> or contact Beverly Friend at friend@oakton.edu

◆ Shi Lei Returns to America

Kulanu again is sponsoring a lecture series by Kaifeng resident Shi Lei, who will present the fascinating story of the Kaifeng Jews - including current developments — to U.S. audiences between February 15 and March 7, 2011.

His schedule, as of Oct 15, 2010, is as follows:

- February 15: New York – 92nd Street Y
- February 17: Broomall, PA – Temple Shalom
- February 20: Harrisonberg, VA – Beth El Congregation

- February 25 and 27: Glencoe, IL - Congregation Hakafa
- March 1: Los Angeles, Cal State, Norridge

For further information, visit <http://www.kulanu.org/china/kaifengtour2011.php> and for updates, go to: <http://calendar.yahoo.com/YYY,661a65/srt,0/kulanuevents/?v=2&t=1296547200>

◆ Tibi Talks

SJI Board Member Tibi Weisz was interviewed by the Jewish Times Asia. His interview (Sept 2010) is online: www.jewishtimesasia.org

◆ Shanghai Jewish Tombstones

Dr. Harvey Rosenwasser, self-described as Ruth Rosenwasser's husband, of Key Biscayne, Florida alerted former SJI president Al Dien of the existence on Youtube of a video of Dvir Bar Gal's Jewish tombstone project. The URL is: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yczEW9feT_M

◆ First Seminar for Chinese Educators Opens at Yad Vashem, Israel

Some twenty Chinese educators are participating in a 2-week seminar at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies that opened October 4, 2010. The first of its kind seminar brings together participants from China, Hong Kong and Macau, for in-depth study of the Holocaust and how to teach it in the classroom.

Dr. Lihong Song, of Nanjing University's Institute of Jewish Studies, helped organize the trip of Chinese educators on the Chinese side.

While at Yad Vashem participants tour the Holocaust History Museum, Valley of the Communities, and other sites at Yad Vashem, and have the opportunity to hear from top educators and historians about various topics related to the Holocaust.

Anti-Semitism, the 'Final Solution', the Allies and the Holocaust, the Righteous Among the Nations, the uniqueness of the Holocaust, and Yad Vashem's pedagogical approach to Holocaust education and presentations of specific educational resources, will be among the issues presented during the seminar. Participants will also meet Holocaust survivors and tour Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other areas in Israel.

See related article "Yad Vashem Seminar for Chinese Scholars" in this issue, page 5.

TO THE EDITOR

I am interested in helping my daughter find information about her great grandparents on her father's side, who lived in Harbin. According to her grandmother, Eva Krongouz, who was born in Harbin in 1921, and came to the United States in 1948, her father, Jacob Krongouz died in Harbin in 1938 or 1939. Is there a way to find out if he is buried in Huangshan Jewish Cemetery? If he is not there, what happened to the gravesites of the people who were not moved to the new cemetery site? Are there records existing of birth, marriage, death and immigration? I know that Jacob Krongouz came to Harbin from the Ukraine in approximately 1910. He met and married his wife, Leah Levitsky in Harbin. Also buried in Harbin are Peretz Leitsky and his wife, Pessia, the parents of Leah Levitsky. Anyone with the Levitsky or Krongouz name were probably relatives and information would be most welcome. Eva Krongouz (Elizabeth McCoy) is currently living in Los Angeles and has fond memories of her years as a child and young woman living in Harbin.

Thanks you for any help you can give in guiding us on our search for roots in Harbin.

Sincerely,
Rita Elegant
ritaelegant@gmail.com

Excerpts SJI Managing Board Meeting, June 27, 2010

(continued from page 1)

supported it and that there was some Christian proselytizing, but not much. Rothberg thinks that Lerner succeeded because he could get children of descendants to Israel for a better life. He managed to get a group of Kaifeng women to Israel with the help of Finnish fundamentalist Christians.

Shi Lei has distanced himself from YSL, but hasn't organized meetings himself or revived his school group.

Because of Christian and Messianic ties, Rothberg split off from YSL and set up a separate school. Most of the YSL group went with him and it is now hoped that this school, Beit Tikvah, and Shi Lei's group will begin working together.

Recommendations:

1. That SJI continue funding educational work in Kaifeng and specifically the Beit Tikvah School based on annual grant requests and progress reports. (The same would apply to Shi Lei's group.)

2. That SJI partner with other Diaspora Jewish organizations (Kulanu and Shavei Israel) to encourage the groups in Kaifeng to work together, and to try to send young descendants to Israel for visits on Birthright Israel trips.

3. Finding a replacement teacher for Rothberg must be an SJI priority if Beit Tikvah School is to flourish and serve as a serious alternative to Lerner's activities. This is a priority for SJI. We set ourselves the goal of finding a Chinese-speaking, Jewishly-knowledgeable Jew who can teach and lead the descendants, to live in Kaifeng and study at Henan University. If that proves too difficult, then locating someone who could teach them via Skype.

4. That SJI establish official liaisons with the Kaifeng community. Since Abraham and Lingenfelter both are proficient in Chinese, they agreed to write Beit Tikvah contacts in Chinese and keep the Board apprised of the situation there through their correspondence.

2. New Ideas

Abraham proposed SJI provide some funding to the Home of Hope Orphanage that will be opened in Kaifeng by a charity that already has several orphanages in China. The orphanage is sorely needed as AIDS crisis has hit Henan especially hard. Her idea is that the orphanage would hire a number of Kaifeng Jewish descendants and SJI funding would be used to cover their salaries.

Although Home of Hope is run by a Christian group, Abraham expressed confidence based on her contact with them that they are not doing missionary work but are motivated by the desire to serve. She suggested SJI look into getting support for ongoing orphanage work from a number of foundations and from Jewish families who have adopted Chinese children. She thought that \$10,000 annually would enable the orphanage to hire, train and support 5 descendants as orphanage staff.

This sparked a brainstorming session, whose ideas included: sending a few of the descendants to Shanghai for the Expo, sending young descendants on Birthright Israel trips, working with the Joint Distribution Committee to get Jewish holiday items donated to the descendants, and contacting American Jewish World Service about having a volunteer placed in Kaifeng.

However the idea of convening an international conference on Jews and Jewish Studies in China generated the most enthusiasm. The kernel of the idea is to bring scholars and students from all the Jewish studies programs in China together with their counterparts from around the world. It was suggested that SJI fund 7 scholars from China to come and present—one for each of the 7 Kaifeng Jewish surnames.

There was discussion of the best venue, both in the US and China. We decided to move forward on organizing the conference in the Bay Area. Possible host institutions are: University of San Francisco, Ricci Center; University of California, Berkeley; and Stanford University. Abraham has contacts at USF and she agreed to approach it first. After deter-

on ships that took them across the Sea of Japan to the island nation.

Most would then go on to the port cities of Kobe and Yokohama and try to arrange passage onward.

'Sugihara has been praised around the world and is held in very high esteem, but Mr Sugihara's great actions were supported by various individuals working unseen, in his shadow, and I'd like Mr Osako's experiences to be known,' said researcher Kitade.

The messages on the photos given to Osako are in languages that reflect the Nazi advance through Europe: German, Polish, Norwegian, French.

Kitade said the images left a strong impression on him.

'It was 70 years ago, so the people in the pictures may no longer be alive, but if possible, somehow I'd like to find even their families and show them,' he said...

Papers Contributed to First Young Scholars Forum on Jewish Studies

The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai hosted a "Young Scholars Forum" on August 15-16, 2010 in Shanghai. The following papers were presented by scholars from a variety of Chinese Jewish Studies programs.

Persian Empire's Policy on Yehud and Its Impacts

By Meng Zhenghua, Lecturer, Department of Religion Studies, Nanjing University

On Jewish Women and Moneylending in Medieval Europe

By Zhang Shuqing, Professor, Department of History, Ludong University

A Study of Jewish Education in German Jewish Enlightenment Movement

By Zhang Ligang, Associate Professor, Department of History, Henan University

The Occupational Status and Economic Situation of Germany Jews in 1933

By Luo Henglin, Professor, Department of History, Hunan Normal University

On Judaism's Dilemma to Conversion

By Wang Yan, Lecturer, the Center of Judaism and Comparative Religious Studies, Shandong University

Grossman, Holocaust Literature and Jewish Identity

By Zhong Zhiqing, Associate Professor, Institute of Foreign Literature Studies, The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,

A Review of Zionism Movement in Harbin

By Han Tianyan, Associate Professor, The Center of Jewish Studies in Harbin

Russian Jewish Immigrants and Agricultural Settlements in Israel

By Xiao Hong, Assistant Professor, The Center of Jewish Studies in Harbin

A Comparative Study on the Perception of Zionism of BERLIN and AREBDT

By Sheng Wenqing, Assistant Professor, The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)

From "Insular Psychology" to "Insular Culture": An Analysis on the Social Psychology of Israel

By Feng Jihua, Assistant Professor, Institute of Western Asia and Africa, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

A Review on the Relationship between Israel and Turkey

By Liu Jun, Lecturer, College of International Studies, Yunnan University

Politics of Naming: Israel's Ideological Struggle over Toponym

By Wang Yan, Associate Professor, Department of Western Literature, Beijing Foreign Studies University

The Enhancing of Israel-India Relationship and Its Impact to

China's National Security

By Luo Ailing, Associate Professor, the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)

The Evolution of Anti-Semitism in Muslim World of Middle East

By Wang Zheng, Assistant Professor, the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)

The Jewish Community in Iran and the Iran-Israel Relationship

By Zhang Yinan, Research Fellow, The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)

The Kidnapped People: Arabian Elements of Palestinian Refugee Problem

By Yang Jun, Lecturer, Department of History, Shanghai University

ILAN PAPPE and His "A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two People", A Review on the New Historian in Israel

By Wang Jian, Professor, The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)

American Jewish Theology: A Marginalized Science On God

By Liu Ping, Associate Professor, Department of Religion Studies, Fudan University

Mordecai M. Kaplan and American Judaism

By Hu Hao, Lecturer, Department of History, Henan University

Conservative Judaism and Zionist Movement in U.S.

By Liu Jinzhong, Professor, The Department of Philosophy, Nanchang University,

On Left-wing Radicalism of American Jews

By Tang Lixin, Lecturer, School of Foreign Languages, Shenzhen University,

Why Jews Succeed in American Politics? A Comprehensive Interpretation

By Wang Shuming, Assistant Professor, The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS)



A Second Sugihara? Tatsuo Osako

excerpted from <http://i.dailymail.co.uk/>
18 October 2010

A former Japanese Tourist Bureau helper's 70-year-old diary has sparked an international search after it was discovered to contain photographs of supposedly Jewish men and women he helped escape the Nazis...

One of the photos shows a young man's monochrome portrait and although faded, it is still clear he had style. His hair is slicked down, eye arched, suit perfect with matching tie and handkerchief...

The photo, a gift to the man who helped him escape, is one of seven recently discovered snapshots that cast light on a little known part of the war...

'My best regards to my friend Tatsuo Osako,' the writing on the back of the picture reads in French. It is signed 'I. Segaloff' and dated March 4, 1941. His fate is unknown.

An effort is under way to find the people in these portraits or their descendants, all of whom are assumed to be Jewish. Personal photos of such refugees, who often fled with few possessions, are rare.

The photos were found in an old diary owned by Osako, who was a young employee of the Japan Tourist Bureau at the time, and died in 2003.

Akira Kitade, who worked under Osako and is researching a book about him, has contacted Israeli officials for help and visited the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

The museum said he handed them about 30 photographs that he is trying to identify, and received a list of over 2,000 Jews who received travel papers that enabled them to reach Japan.

Nissim Ben Shitrit, the Israeli ambassador to Japan, says he has passed on the information to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, which tracks and honours victims of the Holocaust, and is optimistic some of the individuals can be tracked down...

The photos shed further light on the story of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat stationed in Lithuania who granted transit visas to several thousand Jews in the

early days of the war...

He was one of a handful of diplomats such as Sweden's Raoul Wallenberg and Hiram Bingham IV of the U.S. who used their bureaucratic machinery, often without their government's knowledge, to issue the paperwork that would get Jews to safety.

Dubbed the 'Japanese Schindler', Sugihara was honoured in 1985 by Yad Vashem as one of the Righteous Among the Nations, a high honour reserved for non-Jews who saved Jews at their own personal risk from the Holocaust, Hitler's destruction of six million Jews.

A short movie about him, 'Visas and Virtue', won an Academy Award in 1997. Museums at his home town and in Lithuania are dedicated to his memory.

In league with Jan Zwartendijk, a Dutch consul in Lithuania, Sugihara worked nonstop on visas for Jews in the months until Russia annexed Lithuania in August 1940 and he was forced to leave the country...

These transit visas enabled them to travel through Russia on the Trans-Siberian railroad, a harrowing journey over thousands of miles that could take weeks, into Japanese-controlled territory in Manchuria.

While the diplomat pumped out his visas independently, a much more organized and lesser-known effort was under way for Jewish refugees once they reached Japanese territory - which is where Osako enters the saga.

In 1940, the Japan Tourist Bureau, the country's main tourist agency, agreed to help Jews in the U.S. distribute aid money to refugees fleeing Europe.

This would allow them to fulfill immigration requirements and help them function once inside Japan.

The decision was made despite Tokyo's close ties to Germany; according to JTB records the company had the permission of officials in the Foreign Ministry and other agencies.

The bureau assigned workers to help refugees at various stages of their journey, and Osako, in his second year of employment, worked as an escort and clerk

recalled. "After this [conversion], I want to learn more about Israel — I want to learn more and more and more."

With the exception of their language classes, their studies have been in English, which they all speak fluently.

Their take on Judaism and on life in Israel is interesting. It's not the strictness of Jewish law that they find tough, but the leniencies. The fact that the halachic texts they are studying makes provision for situations when a laxer view of law can be taken is confusing. They don't feel slighted that they already feel a strong connection to Judaism but need to convert — they recognize that their forebears intermarried. They have no complaints about their treatment in Israel. One of the advantages of aliyah is the possibility of having a family of more than one child (they decry Chinese children as spoiled as a result of the one-child-per-family law). Though they don't fit the Sephardic-Ashkenazi mold, they think they will consider themselves Sephardic after they convert and ideally, several say, marry Persian-Jewish women. All want to serve in the army, and some have career plans. Xue wants to become a dentist.

But the most resolute statement comes in response to a question about food. Israelis are crazy about Chinese food, and there are Chinese restaurants everywhere, but these men keep well away. "In Israel, the Chinese [restaurants] are not like Chinese foods — they have to change the flavors for Israelis," Shi said. So what do they like to eat? In chorus, all the students replied, "Shwarma."

Nathan Jeffay is the Forward's Israel correspondent.

mining the host institution, other universities would be approached to act as co-sponsors.

3. Publications

Laytner mentioned two monographs that SJI might publish as part of a revived *Sino-Judaica* series:

- a) *The Theology of the Kaifeng Jews*, by Prof. Jordan Paper of Victoria, Canada
- b) *Jewish Religious Observance by the Jews of Kaifeng China*, by Rabbi Dr. Chaim Simons of Kiryat Arba, Israel

It was agreed that electronic publishing would be the preferred route to go since it requires little money upfront and books are published only on demand. Tibi Weiss of the SJI Board and Nathan Katz of Indo-Judaica were recommended to be consultants, given their experience of publishing in this arena. For peer review, it was suggested that we recruit academics such as Donald Leslie, Andrew Plaks and others.

It was agreed that *Sino-Judaica* should be i-published as a book on demand, with a 10% discount for SJI members. Hochstadt was designated Editor of *Sino-Judaica*.

4. Recruiting new members

SJI relies on its members to fund its ongoing projects so maintaining and increasing membership is essential.

- a) It was proposed to get a presence on Facebook and troll for potential members elsewhere online.
- b) SJI needs to connect with Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong Jewish communities to recruit new members.

5. Treasurer's Report

Hochstadt reported that in 2009, the Grants Committee recommended SJI funding for proposals by Fu Xiaowei and Cao Jian. The Board also agreed to fund Henan University's Judaic Studies program, Nanjing University's Institute of Jewish Studies and the China Jewish Studies Shanghai, as well as the Beit Tikvah School in Kaifeng.

Although SJI has sufficient funds to do this for a few years, at the current rate of expenditure, it will be broke in 10 years.

Conclusion: We need to raise more money in order to keep funding programs.

**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.**

Sukkot in Kaifeng China

(continued from page 1)



I'll try to explain why I wrote as such. First of all, as Jews, we celebrate Sukkot to remind ourselves of the time when we went out from Egypt, but hadn't yet entered the Holy Land. Like our ancestor's time wandering in the wilderness awaiting their arrival in Israel, I feel like the Kaifeng Jewish descendants are on a path toward Geulah, or "redemption." The second reason was that, although at that time we might or might not have been biologically related, we as Jews were all united into one family. The Kaifeng Jewish descendants seem to be growing more and more close to being an integral part of the Jewish people. The third reason was that, like the time when we were once all believers, having seen the great miracles that G-d made for us, there will come a time when we will return to that strong Emunah, or "belief," that our forefathers possessed.

Thus, for me, the celebration of this holiday was particularly special, because it did not just mean observing Sukkot with a regular Jewish community. On the contrary, it meant feeling the sparks of Geulah of an ancient Chinese Jewish community that yearns to return to the faith of its ancestors. Those sparks of redemption had a great affect on me, as we observed this holy convocation together as a community.

Yad Vashem Seminar for Chinese Scholars

by Yair Ettinger
excerpted from Haartez, 6 October 2010

Yad Vashem is hosting its first-ever seminar for Chinese Holocaust scholars, who toured the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem yesterday and said China should be prouder of its role in saving Jewish lives...

The delegation, composed of China's leading Holocaust scholars, includes teachers and lecturers.

Several of them voiced admiration for Feng Shan Ho, the Chinese consul in Austria in the late 1930s, who was the only foreign diplomat of the period who granted entry permits to virtually anyone able to make contact with him.

At times Ho even violated instructions issued by his own country. Thousands of desperate Jews took up the offer, and his efforts saved the lives of between 20,000 and 30,000 people.

"This is part of history, not only of the Jews, but ours as Chinese," said Wanda Huang, a schoolteacher in Hong Kong. "Many Chinese people don't know about this. We need to be more proud about it. Dr. Ho took a stand, he was proactive."

Yesterday's visit was part of Yad Vashem's first seminar for Chinese scholars. The two-week program includes meetings with survivors, tours of Israel and more.

The Holocaust was long a neglected subject in China's state education system, but as the country relaxed its curriculum in recent years, schoolchildren and post-secondary students have become more informed on the subject than ever before.

"Schindler's List" is now a popular film in China, and the country's libraries offer an array of Chinese-language books on the systematic destruction of European Jewry.

This year saw the release in China of the animated film "A Jewish Girl in Shanghai" (also screened at the Jerusalem Film Festival), which tells the story of a friendship between two girls, a Chinese girl and a Jewish refugee.

"We try to reach them about the individual's relationship to the society in which he lives, about racism and prejudice, and the Holocaust plays a part in that," said Huang. "Students read Anne Frank's 'Diary of a Young Girl.' Our position is that if some injustice or act of violence is going on around them, they should take action."

The initiative to hold the seminar in Israel came from Prof. Glenn Timmermans, an associate professor of literature at the University of Macau. "In my years in China, I understood that Chinese students know nothing about the Holocaust," he said. "How can one understand the 20th century without knowing about the Holocaust?"

On one of his visits to Israel, Timmermans convinced Yad Vashem authorities to include a seminar for Chinese teachers among the dozens of workshops it holds annually for international guests. Funding ultimately came from Sheldon Adelson, the American casino tycoon who also has considerable investments in China.

Timmermans says Chinese people exposed to the Holocaust are more likely to identify with the victims, but they tend to do so by comparing it with other historical events, such as Japan's 1931 invasion of Manchuria or its 1937 massacre of Chinese civilians in Nanking.

"We have to be very careful with comparisons," he said. "On the one hand we talk about the universality of the Holocaust, and on the other we present it as unique."

One of the organizers of the visit is Jong Je Ching, a Beijing-based researcher who wrote her 2005 doctorate, a comparison

of Hebrew and Chinese postwar literature, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"Recent years have brought changes to China. The Chinese are starting to confront their own traumas from the Japanese conquest. That didn't happen in the past. Now, on the margins, one can see people dealing with issues that aren't linked directly to us, like the Holocaust," she said. "The Chinese can and want to know more about historical truth. The atmosphere is freer."

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SJI Members: Email info@sino-judaic.org to receive the user name and password needed to access the "members only" section.

An Interview with China's Ambassador to Israel

excerpted from *YNetnews*

China's Ambassador to Israel Zhao Jun encounters the same question time and again. During visits to his homeland he is asked what it's like to serve in a country known as a world power with 200,000 residents.

"I explain to them that Israel only has seven million residents – barely a small town in China," he says. "They find it hard to believe. I understand them. News doesn't change all the time in China like it does here – every hour. It took me time to get used to it as well."

After three years in Israel, Zhao is in love. He recently asked his supervisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing for another extension, although his term is scheduled to end soon. He wants to stay here at least one more year.

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He spent Yom Kippur at the Kfat Shmaryahu synagogue near his residence. No, he didn't fast, but felt the need to express his solidarity.

"I am China's ambassador in Israel. I love Israel," he says in Hebrew, adding that he would gladly study Hebrew but can't find the time.

Didn't you have any prejudice against Israel?

"When the supervisor informed me that there was an available position for an ambassador to Israel, I immediately said yes. He said, 'Think about it for one night; consult your family.' I told him there was no need. I am interested in the position. Like others, I thought it was a country constantly in a state of war. (

"When I arrived here I discovered a wonderful country. What captured my heart was the residents' friendly attitude. The friendship between Israel and the Chinese people has been going on for over 1,000 years, including during the Holocaust when Jewish refugees were given shelter in China although China was in dire straits, under a Japanese attack."

On Tuesday, September 28, China marks 18 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. The Chinese, like the Israelis, view this number as a symbolic milestone. "For us it symbolizes happiness and prosperity," the ambassador explains. (

A festive gala dinner was to be held at the Beit Shean amphitheater in the presence of President Shimon Peres. This location was chosen, among other things, in honor of former politician David Levy, who lives in Beit Shean and served as foreign minister when the relations with China were first established.

Zhao says he is working with the Israeli Foreign Ministry on preparing Benjamin Netanyahu's upcoming visit to China, where he says the prime minister is expected to be welcomed warmly.

"You might not know this," he says, "but we in China admire you and your Jewish mind, which has brought many Nobel

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prizes. The free China was established in 1949, one year after Israel, but we view what you have achieved as a miracle. We are brothers, almost twins. We admire you for creating miracles for 62 years."

Undoubtedly, the greatest success in China and Israel's relations is the trade ties. In the past 18 years, trade relations have been extended and have grown from \$42 million to \$6 billion.

"Israel contributes greatly to China in agricultural affairs, an important and significant field in China," Zhao says. "These days more than 20 universities have established ties with Israeli universities; nearly 20 Chinese universities have signed twin city agreements with Israeli cities; and the first Confucius Institute opened at Tel Aviv University in 2007.

"All these are signs of good relations. We have learned a lot from you. The Chinese government sees the importance of developing the relationship between China and Israel, and is willing to advance mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries and two governments."

How can the cooperation between our two countries be strengthened? "Israel is proud of its advanced science and technology, while China enjoys the advantage of natural resources and spacious lands. So we have a lot to share in order to reach winning solutions."

Where will we be 10 years from today?

"China welcomes investments from Israel. By the end of 2009, Israel set up 292 projects for investment in China, estimated at \$220 million. The volume of trade grows every year. The diplomatic ties will also grow tighter. Three of your presidents and three of your prime ministers have already visited China. We believe in and support integrating the Israeli mind in the Chinese market in order to generate those same miracles you have created in this small country. History has taught us that we are true friends."

Kaifeng Students in Israel

by Nathan Jeffay
excerpted from *The Forward*, August 11, 2010
<http://www.forward.com/articles/129951/>

A year ago they were living by the bank of China's Yellow River. Now, the seven yarmulke-and-tzitzit-clad young men, sitting in central Jerusalem and chatting about their lives, are Israel's keenest yeshiva students.

It is the end of July, the day after the Fast of Av, when every yeshiva halts for summer break — but this group won't stop...

They have already earned their place in history, as the first group of Kaifeng men to ever study at an Israeli yeshiva. But they want to convert to Judaism as soon as possible and, under the Law of Return, exchange their visitor visas for aliyah visas and make their move to Israel permanent. Their study program is preparing them for conversion tests...

In the past decade, some descendants of Kaifeng Jews have become increasingly interested in their heritage — partly because of a more liberal atmosphere in China, partly because the Internet has allowed them to access previously unavailable information about Judaism, and partly because Jewish individuals and organizations have visited them. There are about 1,000 people in Kaifeng who are aware of their descent from the Jewish community, and a core of 35 who have, for the past five years, been meeting for meals and prayers on the Sabbath.

One organization that visited Kaifeng was Shavei Israel ("returners to Israel"), a Jerusalem-based not-for-profit that exists to strengthen ties between Israel and descendants of Jews, including the Marranos and the Bnei Menashe of India. Back in 2005, it arranged temporary visas for three Kaifeng women. These women moved to Israel, converted and made aliyah, prior to which only a single family from the community had come. The seven young men form Shavei's second group.

"We cannot and must not turn our backs on them, regardless of whether they choose to make aliyah or remain in Kaifeng," the group's chairman, Michael Freund, told the Forward. "Either way, they deserve a chance to learn more and to engage their Jewishness, just like any other Diaspora Jewish community."

The latest arrivals spent their first six months in Israel on Sde Eliyahu, a religious kibbutz in the north of the country. They took Hebrew-language classes in the morning and worked in the afternoon. For one month, they then lived in an apartment in Jerusalem and studied at the Machon Meir yeshiva. And since the beginning of July they have been studying in a program that Shavei compiled especially for them at Hamivtar yeshiva in Efrat, which is headed by the founding rabbi of New York's Lincoln Square Synagogue, Shlomo Riskin. After such intensive preparations for conversion, all of Israel's local rabbinate — even the strictest ones, which in recent years have controversially contested some conversions — are expected to accept the students' Jewishness.

The students' relationship to Judaism varies: Some only learned of their heritage during their teens; others grew up in families that always avoided pork, and with grandparents that tried to inculcate something on Jewish tradition. Wang Yaacov, 24, is amused by the widespread assumption that he took on his last name in Israel. "My grandfather found it in the Chumash," he said.

The parents of all the students are happy that their children are in Israel, "because in the Bible it says from every different country, all the Jews will come back here," 22-year-old Xue Fei said.

Most in the group grew up without making the connection that modern Israel was the Jewish state. For 23-year-old Shi Yuguan — who simply goes by Shai in Hebrew — this discovery was a relatively recent one. "About six or seven years ago, I found out that there are many Jews in Israel, so Israel is a place where many, many Jews came together. So after this, I started to find out more about Israel," he