



Points East

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

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My Heritage and Life in Shanghai

By Esther Isaac

Reprinted from Bulletin, *Igud Yotzei Sin*, 15 July, 2013

My heritage and life in China are intertwined as one and have remained a part of me throughout my life. Both my maternal and paternal families are of Baghdadian origin. They left Baghdad the country of their birth in the late 1890's, because of the many difficulties and pogroms during that period and decided to leave for Bombay, India. They remained there for a short period and then continued their journey on to the Far East, landing in Shanghai, China.

I was born and raised in Shanghai, China, the youngest of three sisters. My eldest sister Flori Enid Isaac Cohen presently lives in Israel. My second sister Rahma Isaac Rejwan resides in Toronto. My father, Jason Joseph Isaac was born in Hila, a little town on the outskirts of Baghdad (where the Prophet Ezekiel is buried – his tomb is a place of Jewish pilgrimage). My father is the son of Hacham Yosef Isaac and Farha Nissim Isaac. My mother, Mozelle Toeg, was born in Baghdad to Farha Shalom Toeg and Hacham Aboodi Toeg, whose family lived in Baghdad for centuries, as did many of our ancestors, dating back to the period of the Babylonian exile.

The first actual recorded name of the Toeg family is that of Hacham Mordechai Toeg, which takes us back about ten generations. The name Toeg, as we were given to understand, is another version of Tweick, which comes from the word "Torque" (a necklace of twisted metal), the golden chain of high office, given to one of our distinguished ancestors by the ruling Sultan or Caliph of Baghdad. Exciting as this may sound; I personally am impressed and proud of the more humble side of our family history, which was so rich in good deeds.

My mother had two older brothers, Aslan Toeg and Isaac Hayim Toeg. The family moved from Baghdad to Bombay, and it was Isaac Hayim who first ventured from Bombay to the Far East in the early 1900's, and he brought over the rest of the family at a later date.

My father's family also travelled to Shanghai in the early nineteen hundreds. His uncle, Eliyahu Itzhak, known as Hacham Eliyahu Hazan served for several years as the Hazan of both the Ohel Leah Synagogue in Hongkong, and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue in Shanghai, located on Seymour Road. The Ohel Rachel was built in 1920 by Sir Jacob Elias Sassoon in memory of his wife Rachel. In 1935, upon retiring, Hacham Eliyahu travelled to Israel where he

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Protected Persons? The Baghdadi Jewish Diaspora, the British State, and the Persistence of Empire

By Sarah Abrevaya Stein

Excerpted from the *American Historical Review*, February 2011

More than the presence of some 100 Taoist monks and priests, the performance of Chinese orchestras, the exchange of mourning gifts, the burning of paper figures in celebration of the spirit of the deceased, the kowtowing of visitors before pictures of the family, the draping of the funereal garden in white silk, the arrival of more than 3,000 gifts and 5,000 mourners—more, even, than the astonishing facts of Silas Aaron Hardoon's fortune, prominence, or cosmopolitan history, it was the wax effigy of the dead man with chopsticks in hand at this ostensibly Jewish funeral that riveted the international press. When he died in the summer of 1931, Hardoon was called the richest foreigner in Shanghai, with an estate estimated at \$150 million. Like other young, entrepreneurial Baghdadi Jewish men of his generation, Hardoon had made his way to China by way of India in the late nineteenth century. In Calcutta he worked for the mercantile firm of David Sassoon and Company, a global operation owned by a Jewish family of Baghdadi origin that dealt in silk and cotton and monopolized the legal and highly lucrative transshipment

of opium. In Shanghai Hardoon would live sixty years, amass a real estate empire in the city's International Settlement, meet and marry Liza Hardoon (née Luosi Lirui and known by her Buddhist name, Luo Jialing)—a Eurasian Buddhist who may or may not have been the illegitimate daughter of a French Jewish father—adopt eleven children of diverse backgrounds, form deep ties with local Chinese politicians, merchants, and the educational elite, serve as life president of Beth-Aaron Synagogue, sit on the councils of the Shanghai Municipality, French Concession, and International Settlement, and, shortly before his death, will nearly the entirety of his fortune to his wife.

The eventful life of Silas Aaron Hardoon did not end with his death, in the wake of which there surfaced a series of claimants on the family estate: distant cousins—if they were cousins at all—carrying the Hardoon name and dwelling in Baghdad and across the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora, including Shanghai and Calcutta. The trials that followed, conducted in His Britannic Majesty's Supreme Court in Shanghai, pondered a complicated legal question: whether Hardoon's estate—and Hardoon himself, as a long-time resident of Shanghai, one-time Ottoman subject, British Protected Person, Baghdadi émigré, and out-married Jew—was subject to Chinese, British, Jewish, Iraqi, or private international law.

What was so absorbing about Hardoon's death and the contro-

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FROM THE EDITOR

It's said that every cloud has a silver lining and, although I am loathe to look for any good that may hide in the COVID pandemic that has clouded lives worldwide, I will say that it forced the usually frenetically-paced Wendy Abraham to slow down and focus on transforming SJI's website into something new and wonderful.

Dr. Abraham, Wendy, to those of us who've worked with her since SJI's founding or before – has been working on building a new website for SJI intermittently since at least March 2019 but really dug into her project in the past year, this despite losing her mother to the coronavirus after moving back to New York to take care of her, and is now about to move to Las Vegas to take care of her nonagenarian father. Somehow, in the midst of all this, she found the time and energy to complete the project. You can see the results when you visit www.sinojudaic.org. I encourage you to do so. She did an incredible, wonderful job! Thank you, Wendy!

This issue features several articles and book reviews dealing with the Baghdadi Jewish community of Shanghai, a group that often is overlooked, sandwiched as it is between interest in the Ashkenazi Jewish refugee communities and the Kaifeng Jewish community. Flori Cohen, of the Igud Yotzei Sin, alerted me to the fine article by her sister, Esther Isaac, detailing her life as one member of this elite group and Prof. Sarah Abrevaya Stein discusses their status under British protection. Both are fascinating articles. Two terrific book reviews round out our focus on this community.

With this issue, we welcome in the Year of the Ox and with it hopes for the new Administration in Washington D.C. and also for an end to COVID-19/20/21.

Anson Laytner



Points East

Anson Laytner, Editor

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Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

I appreciate the inclusion of part of Peter Beinart's "A New Cold War Threatens Chinese Americans" in the last issue. Recently, a Chinese colleague and friend who was doing research at Harvard returned to his institute in China earlier than planned because of the highly charged atmosphere against Chinese in the U.S. He is in folklore studies, hardly a field of strategic consequence! It is little different in Canada. I know Chinese academics who have retired here because their children are in Canada and are now talking of returning to China.

The Western animosity towards China is analyzed as due to religious/ideological reasons in my new book, *Chinese Religion and Familism: The Basis of Chinese Culture, Society and Government* (Bloomsbury 2020) in the 2nd half of Chapter 7 and the 2nd half of Chapter 8. There is another new book that is a brilliant analysis in depth of the multifaceted situation between the United States and China that has been very well received, and I could not recommend it more highly: *Kishore Mahbubani, Has China Won?: The Chinese Challenge to American Primacy* (Public Affairs, 2020).

But one also must keep in mind American and Canadian racism. The very fact that Chinese are labelled "yellow" and Natives are labelled "red" should be sufficient indicators. Have you ever seen a yellow Chinese or a red Native American? The rhetoric applied to African-Americans in the U.S. has been also used against Chinese. North Americans of my generation were influenced by the "Fu Manchu" novels and the movies based on them, where Chinese are called "Yellow Monsters" whose sole goal in life is to "rape a White woman." In the 19th century, Chinese were lynched in the western part of the U.S.

Jews should be understanding of this racism as they suffered similarly; Jews were lynched by the Klu Klux Klan in the American South. I was brought up in Baltimore, and I only knew Jews. Christians of any age did not associate with Jews. I had never associated with non-Jews until I went to the University of Chicago (whose undergraduate population was 80% Jewish at that time because Chicago was the only university of its caliber that did not limit the acceptance of Jews to a very small quota). At my first faculty position at Indiana State University, I found that Jews were not considered white; Jews there were understood to be of an intermediate color between Caucasians and Blacks and treated accordingly. (I was denied tenure because I was Jewish: "We do not give tenure to your kind.")

Similarly, where I live now in Victoria, BC, a century ago Chinese were not allowed to attend public schools or be buried in the cemetery. Jews who have not forgotten recent history should appreciate what the

Chinese in North America today are going through.

Jordan Paper

In the Field

• Exhibit on Austrian Jewish refugees in Shanghai

The Jewish Museum Vienna is presenting an exhibit on Austrian Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

Ferdinand Adler will be one of the figures featured in this exhibit, which will run until 18 April 2021. Visit <http://www.jmw.at/en/exhibitions/little-vienna-shanghai>. For more information and photos, go to <https://www.facebook.com/AdlerProject>.

• Shantou University Welcomes Prof. Xu Xin

Bev Friend writes that Xu Xin is on his way to Shantou University to teach for next six weeks where he will teach a course "Jewish Culture and the World Civilization" for undergraduates and another "Hebrew Literature and Its Impact" for graduates, as well as lecturing on various topics. Xu also notes that, back in 2015, a Hong Kong businessman, Li Ka Shing, donated profits he made in investing in Israel to the Israel Technion conditional on the Technion building a campus of the Technion in Shantou, which is his hometown. The Technion then signed an agreement with the Provincial government of Guangdong to jointly build a school, Guangdong Technion-Israel Institute of Technology (GTIIT). Li has donated over 80 billion Chinese yuan to Shantou University through his foundation. Since little was known about Israel in this new Institute, Prof. Lin, Vice President of Shantou U, invited Xu to teach and lecture annually on Jews and Israel, in order to lay a base for understanding of Jewish people and the State of Israel. The annual program is now in its fourth year.

• Shanghai Refugees Museum Update

Many thanks to Bev Friend, Flori Cohen and Steve Hochstadt for recent information about the new opening of the Shanghai Refugees Museum: According to Sina.com news, on December 8, 2020, the newly renovated and expanded Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum reopened. The museum was first opened in 2007 in the old building of Ohel Moshe Synagogue. The expansion project was launched in 2017, which allowed the museum to acquire more space. Now with over 4,000 square meters (from the original 1,000 square meters), the exhibits have also been expanded from 150 pieces (groups) to over 1,000 pieces. Multi-media technologies are also used to provide visitors with a more immersive experience." For more information, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2393633830932600/permalink/2533816100247705/> and http://m.kankanews.com/n/1_9599616.html.

• Irene Eber's Life and Work Examined

Song Lihong (Department of Religious Studies and the Glazer Institute of Jewish and Israel Studies, Nanjing University; Harvard Yenching Institute Visiting Scholar, 2020-21) has written a working paper on the late Irene Eber (1929-2019), professor of East Asian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a long-time affiliate of the Fairbank Center of Harvard. Eber, who was arguably the scholar on the intercultural and transnational encounters between Jews and modern China, was also a Holocaust survivor who wrote an inimitable memoir, *The Choice: Poland, 1939-1945*. Song's essay, sitting on the intersection of China studies, Jewish studies, and Holocaust studies, examines the nexus between Eber's Jewish identity and her academic vocation, and discusses how this tormented scholar made a variety of personal and academic choices and managed to repair the self in this world of imponderables. His paper may be read at <https://www.harvard-yenching.org/research/trauma-and-transcendence-the-shadow-of-the-holocaust-on-an-israeli-sinologist/>.

• Holocaust Book Published in China

Dina Gold's book, *Stolen Legacy: Nazi Theft and the Quest for Justice at Krasenstrasse 17/18*, Berlin, has recently been translated into Chinese and published in China. It is available across multiple platforms, including the largest online sales outlet, Taobao.

• An Interesting Essay

"*Rebels in Biblical and Chinese Texts: A Comparative Study on the Interplay of Myth and History*," by Aryeh Amihay and Lupeng Li, in *Religions* 11, 2020. This article considers the relationship between myth and history in both biblical and Chinese literature, while seeking to broaden the endeavor of the comparative method in biblical studies. Two examples are offered: (1) the story of Moses's call narrative and his relationship with Aaron in Exodus in light of the story of Xiang Liang and Xiang Ji in the Shiji; (2) the story of Saul and David in 1 Samuel compared with the story of Dong Zhuo and Lü Bu in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/11/12>.

• Have a Little Faith

On November 23, 2020, Faith Goldman presented the story of her late husband, Robert Goldman, at the Brooklyn Public Library. Called "*Our Journey on a Slow Boat from and to China*," the zoom presentation went worldwide. Faith also was contacted by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem regarding her story "The Appreciation or Not of the Sweet Potato," which has been selected for a forthcoming book entitled *Lessons from the Shoah*. Faith notes that she starts all her presentations with a very over-ripe sweet potato.

• Steve Hochstadt Zooms at Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute at Webster University hosted a zoom talk by SJI secretary/treasurer Steve Hochstadt based on his book *Exodus to Shanghai: Stories of Escape from the Third Reich*. It will be held on February 20th, 2021 and was accessible both to those residing in the United States and in China. For further information go to: https://webster-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Pf6RoqfkQRyzqNLU1lin5Q

• The Shalom Show's China Programs

Richard Peritz, producer, host and founder of the Shalom Show, has, over the years, offered a number of shows dealing with Jews and China, mostly focusing on the Shanghai refugee experience. These shows are available on YouTube and links may be found on Bev Friend's China Judaic Studies Association Facebook page.

• Facebook News

The Facebook group Shanghai Internees WW2 Group was created in June 2020 and changed its name to Shanghai Internees and Jewish Refugees Group 1945 in July 2020. Its purpose is to help survivors from Shanghai's internment camps as well as survivors and families from the Jewish Ghetto to reach out and make contact.

Dr. Bev Friend created the China Judaic Studies Association Facebook page in 2010 for to help promote and support the study of Judaism in China. It is primarily (but not entirely) composed of copies of the emails she regularly sends out.

And, lest we forget, there is our own Sino-Judaic Institute Facebook page, which currently posts...absolutely nothing...

Book Nook

The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties That Helped Create Modern China

by Jonathan Kaufman. Viking \$28; Little, Brown £20. 384 pages

Reviewed by Alex Smith

Excerpted from *SupChina Weekly Briefing* <https://supchina.com/2020/07/02/a-fresh-look-at-the-1930s-jewish-refugee-in-the-last-kings-of-shanghai/>

When I was living in Shanghai in the mid-2010s, two very different landmarks became constant tour stops as I played guide to visiting friends and family: the 1920s throwback Fairmont Peace Hotel, and the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, housed in an old synagogue in Shanghai's Hongkou District, once known as the Shanghai Ghetto.

Jonathan Kaufman's latest book, *The Last Kings of Shanghai*, provides an engaging history of how the iconic hotel and the Shanghai Ghetto came to be.

Kaufman traces the interconnected histories of two entrepreneurial families: the Sassoons, once known, due to their wealth and influence, as "the Rothschilds of Asia" — a term Kaufman notes the Sassoons themselves considered somewhat of an insult, since the Rothschilds were mere nouveau riche — and the Kadoories, depicted as the Sassoons' less connected but determined distant cousins.

Forced to flee a Baghdad that was increasingly hostile to Jews in the late 1820s, the Sassoons moved their business empire to British India. The Kadoories would eventually follow suit, hoping to gain employment from their distant relatives. Their respective pursuits of fortune and opportunity would eventually take branches of both families to Shanghai, a port city increasingly controlled by foreign powers desperate for access to trade with China.

With their direct links to opium production in India, the Sassoons were quick to find success in China by securing a monopoly on the country's opium trade. While Britain's agreement to curb and eventually cease Indian opium exports to China in 1907 dealt the Sassoons a solid blow, the family's investments across textiles, ports, banking, and perhaps most notably, Victor Sassoon's investments in Shanghai real estate, including the Cathay Hotel (now the Fairmont Peace Hotel), solidified their place among the world's elite.

While wealth initially proved more elusive for Elly Kadoorie, who began apprenticing for the Sassoons as a 15-year-old in India and later in Hong Kong, the family would also come to amass a fortune. After cutting his teeth in the rubber stock trade, Elly established himself as a successful financier, made key investments in Hong Kong electricity company China Light and Power, and, along with his two sons, built luxury hotels and properties in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Writers, both Chinese and foreign, have tended to either romanticize Shanghai's past for its glamor and cosmopolitanism or emphasize the violent colonial scramble for access to Chinese markets that saw Chinese denigrated to second-class citizens on their own soil. Kaufman manages to straddle both sides of the colonial-cosmopolitan coin, and, in doing so, illustrates how complicated the figures that shape history can be.

While Kaufman details the glitzy parties that brought together people from various nationalities hosted in the Cathay and the Kadoorie's Majestic, he also notes from the beginning that both families, despite living in Shanghai across generations, remained grossly out of touch with the rest

of Chinese society and were, in many ways, agents of British imperialism. Kaufman details the tactics the Sassoons employed to outcompete rivals in the opium trade, which wreaked havoc on the lives of many ordinary Chinese, and points out that while the Sassoons were well aware of the perils of opium, their actions never seemed to weigh on their moral conscience, or indeed prompt any self-reflection whatsoever. Even supposedly progressive members of the family, such as Rachel Sassoon Beer, who became the first female editor-in-chief of a British newspaper, took pains to defend the family's role in the trade generations later.

Similarly, Kaufman shows how both families' luxurious hotels not only contributed to the physical Westernization of Shanghai's landscape, but also stoked resentment among the local population over the increasing inequality between Chinese and foreigners. In one brief but powerful scene, 卞 卞 Xùn, now considered perhaps the founding figure of Chinese modern literature, was forced to walk up seven floors of the Cathay Hotel to visit a British friend after being ignored by the elevator operator. And while this resentment and the subsequent communist movement would ultimately lead to the demise of both families' Shanghai fortunes and the end of their time on the mainland, Kaufman avoids giving it his full attention. In fact, Chinese citizens only appear in the book as peripheral characters, something Kaufman acknowledges in the preface and justifies on the basis that this itself reflects just how removed these families were from their Chinese peers.

Yet while Kaufman never attempts to downplay his subjects' colonial legacies, he complicates them by focusing on both families through the lens of their Jewishness, a theme that Kaufman has covered extensively over the years. Although the two families came to be incredibly wealthy and forged intimate ties with those occupying the highest echelons of British society, in the context of rising anti-Semitism, their Jewishness prevented them from perhaps ever truly belonging to it (and in many ways, there is an unusual subalternness to these otherwise wealthy elites — the two families never really appear to wholly belong anywhere). In fact, despite having a British wife and children, Elly Kadoorie was repeatedly barred from acquiring British citizenship and, for a long stretch of time, was effectively stateless. The Kadoories would spend the last years of Elly's life imprisoned by the Japanese in Shanghai's Chapei internment camp.

What really grants the two families a degree of redemption, and forms the most engaging part of the book, is the story of how both Sassoons and Kadoories played key roles in establishing Shanghai as a temporary refuge for some 18,000 Jews fleeing Europe.

Kaufman depicts how despite their rival

hotel empires, the Sassoons and the Kadoories worked together to convince the Nazi-aligned Japanese authorities, who controlled much of the city, not to expel the new arrivals, who at this point were arriving in the hundreds every week, and to treat them on a par with the city's other foreign nationals. Victor Sassoon, Elly Kadoorie, and his son, Horace, provided housing, schooling, and food to refugee families, with Victor opening up one of his luxury skyscrapers to serve as a reception center for new arrivals while a kitchen in the building's basement provided them with thousands of meals each day, and rallied high-profile Chinese intellectuals and politicians to protest the German government's anti-Jewish policies. One family even recalled spotting a German sign as their boat arrived in Shanghai that read: "Welcome to Shanghai. You are no longer Jews but citizens of the world. All Shanghai welcomes you."

While this is not the first book to provide a detailed portrayal of the Shanghai Jews, it is likely the most accessible. Like any respectable history written for a general readership, Kaufman ensures his readers' attention by neatly weaving in salacious asides about playboy hotelier Victor Sassoon's sex life and family factional infighting as he traverses generations of history.

Similarly, Kaufman steers clear of the impulse of many English-language accounts of Chinese history to provide any sort of grand diplomatic narrative. Instead, he paints an accessible character-driven story of the people who played a role in the creation of modern Shanghai, and how broader political developments in turn shaped their own fate.

Kaufman observes that up until the 1980s, the history of these Shanghai dynasty families and their rampant capitalism had been largely erased from official narratives in China. In an effort to legitimize the return to market capitalism, and as former Shanghai refugees gained international prominence and sparked a mini tourism industry around the former settlement area, this history has proudly regained its place in the official narrative, albeit with the notable omission of the role that Japanese officials played in allowing Shanghai's intake of refugees in defiance of their Nazi allies...

Alex Smith is a writer and researcher from Aotearoa, New Zealand. She has a Master of Arts in East Asian Regional Studies from Columbia University. Prior to moving to New York, she worked as an analyst at the New Zealand Treasury, where she focused on justice sector policy and the annual budget.

Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews: A Collection of Biographical Reflections, by Masie J., Meyer, author and editor, with a Forward by Irene Eber. Hong Kong: Blacksmith Books, 2015, 479 p.; US \$22.95. CDN \$29.95.

Reviewed by Jordan Paper

2020 saw the publication of an excellent biographical study of the Sassoon and Kadoorie families by Jonathan Kaufman, *The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Dynasties the Helped Create Modern China*. An even more fascinating and informative study of the Baghdadi Jews in Shanghai is Dr. Maisie Meyer's book.

The author herself is a Baghdadi. Aside from the introductory in-depth "Overview of the Baghdadi Jewish Community of Shanghai," the work consists of 26 biographies of members of the community from the mid-18th to through the mid-20th centuries from all walks of life. Some of the biographies are written by the author and some by descendants. Many include autobiographical material, as well as family photographs.

The biographies of the first generation to reside in Shanghai cover far more than Shanghai, as they include information on the entire Baghdadi diaspora: the reasons for leaving the Ottoman Empire, and their lives in India, Hong Kong and Shanghai, when it changed from a small fishing village to become a center for foreign trade with China due to the treaties in the aftermath of the Opium Wars. The Baghdadi Jews were at the center of this trade and in associated banking, as well as real estate developers building the major grand hotels and apartment buildings; some become immensely wealthy in the process. Their magnificent mansions became the center of Shanghai social life for other wealthy foreigners.

Although this generation of Baghdadi Jews were multi-lingual, they did not learn to speak Chinese as their Chinese business associates did not want them to, probably fearing they would then be cut out of the trade. Instead, due to their residence and business experience in English controlled India and Hong Kong, they spoke English, which became the lingua franca for international trade. Their love of English culture led many to seek British citizenship, and education for their children in English style schools and in England, and for some, successful entry into British politics and upper-class social life.

The following generations' biographies and autobiographical statements comprehensively document life in Shanghai for children, youths and adults in the foreign concessions, under the Nationalist government before the Japanese invasion, under the Japanese occupation, under the return of Nationalist control, and subsequently under the Communist party, by which time all had left for countries in Europe, the Americas and Australia.

Because of the many descriptions of life in Shanghai, rather than a feeling of repetition there is a thickness to the descriptions

that offer far more than a single biography could – it is like seeing a documentary covering over a century in time. Especially rich are the descriptions of Jewish life, of the several synagogues they built, of the Jewish schools and youth organizations, and particularly of the aid given to the refugees fleeing the Nazis, as Shanghai was the one place where they could enter (at that time) without visas. Many details are provided of this period of Jewish history. This was also a time when the Baghdadi Jews interacted with the Ashkenazim, which is fully described, along with Baghdadi ritual practices, marriage customs, kashrut, Sabbath practices, etc.

Because of these thick descriptions, although I have been studying Chinese history and contemporary life for many decades, I learned far more about the history of Shanghai, its lifestyles, and modern Chinese economic history from this book than I had before. I also learned about Baghdadi Judaism.

With the end of the American embargo, Shanghai replaced Hong Kong as the financial center for Chinese foreign trade. As London will no longer be the financial center for European trade with Brexit, and due to the past two U.S. administration's anti-Chinese policies, New York may eventually be bypassed by other countries as the global financial center, Shanghai may eventually become the financial center of the world. Thus, it is fascinating to have an inside view on how these Baghdadi Jews were at the foundation of Shanghai's financial institutions, as well as the life of foreigner's in Shanghai prior to the mid-20th century.

There are many other fascinating tidbits to be gleaned from this book. For example, my research focus for the past two decades has been on Chinese Judaism. There is mention in the book of other Jewish centers (which were in all the major seaports) aside from Kaifeng (p. 193). With regard to the Kaifeng Jews, there is mention of the delegation that went to Shanghai in the 19th-century to seek support from the Baghdadi Jews there (p. 233-34). I had not known that two of these Kaifeng Jews remained in Shanghai and were employed by one of the Jewish financial firms (p. 257) and worshiped in one of the Jewish synagogues (p. 196). A Kaifeng Jew also went to Shanghai in 1929 to improve his Hebrew and knowledge of Jewish practices (p.90-91). The Baghdadi Jews did not question the Jewishness of the Chinese Jews as contemporary Jews do today and fully accepted them as fellow Jews.

In summary, for anyone interested in Judaism and/or modern China, this book is an easy to read rich source, let alone a fascinating reading in and of itself. I could not recommend this book more highly, especially as the author's lauded slightly earlier *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai* is now out of print.

Briefly Noted

China's Rise, US Opposition and the Implications for Israel

By Shalom Salomon Wald

Downloadable from http://jppi.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Chinas_Rise_US_Opposition_and_the_Implications_for_Israel2020.pdf

The Trade War launched by President Trump, China's reaction, and the coronavirus crisis have trained a spotlight on the strength of world's second largest economy and its global impact. Along with most of the world's nations, Israel's relationship with China will be deeply influenced by US concerns and fast-moving global security and business interests.

China's Rise, US Opposition and the Implications for Israel, a new paper written by Shalom Salomon Wald, Senior Fellow at the Jewish People's Policy Institute (JPPi), was prepared just prior to and during the initial virus outbreak and goes far in providing both historical and present-day analyses of why the world's second largest super-power would behave as it has. Amb. Dennis Ross, JPPi's Co-Chair, wrote the comprehensive introduction.

Wald explains why China is focused on re-establishing its rightful role in the world, commensurate with its economic weight, yet he does not hide that some of China's trade policies and intellectual property conduct have triggered much antagonism.

Wald offers perspective for what he sees as deep US concern regarding China as a rising threat and why Israel, caught in the middle of these two economic giants, must be able to maintain its economic and technological relationship with both. Wald compares the relative strengths of the two societies to see which is more likely to win the competition for technological primacy.

Wald offers a set of specific policy recommendations for what Israel and the Jewish people should do to prepare for tensions that accompany the rise of China, US opposition to China, and US concerns over Israel's China links.

These recommendations relate to Israeli policies, the approach of Jewish organizations in regard to both the US and China. Among them:

- Israel has to better coordinate its China policies. It needs a coordination mechanism in the Prime Minister's Office that can set priorities. What does Israel need from China? Also, Israel should strengthen a recently created panel to examine foreign investment proposals. Israel should train and employ more China experts than it currently has.
- Moreover, Israel should engage in regular dialogue with other countries, as well as with American Jewish organizations to brief them on Israel's policy dilemmas.
- US: Israel should reassure the US that it understands its concerns and knows how to protect its own security. It should pro-

pose that the US create a federal "clearing house" to agree on US interests in regard to Israel's relations with China.

- Israel's interest in China has always been more than commercial. It is part of its long-term survival strategy of building support in important countries bordering the Muslim world. Israel should ensure that its interests are not in conflict with US policy goals in the Middle East, and make every effort to encourage intersecting interests.
- China: China's policy makers are currently interested in discussing the Middle East with Israeli professionals. Israel should explore how to initiate and frame such dialogues. Israel must ask China for more "reciprocity" in economic and political relations. Reciprocity is a key concept of Confucian philosophy.
- Israel should caution China that its Iran policy has the potential to escalate tensions between Israel and Iran, including the danger of a direct confrontation that would damage Chinese interests.

Dr. Shalom Salomon Wald, a JPPi Senior Fellow since 2002, has also written *China and the Jewish People, Old Civilization in a New Era* (2004); *Rise and Decline of Civilizations: Lessons for the Jewish People* (2014); *India, Israel and the Jewish People: Looking Ahead, Looking Back 25 Years after Normalization* (2017) as well as many policy papers and other Institute publications. Before moving to Jerusalem, he specialized in Science and Technology Policy at the Paris-based OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development).

JPPi is an independent policy planning think tank. The mission of the Institute is to ensure the thriving of the Jewish people and the Jewish civilization by engaging in professional strategic thinking and action-oriented policy planning on issues of primary concern to world Jewry.

A Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945): History, Theories and the Chinese Pattern

By Pan Guang

Amazon (\$105.87 hardcover; Kindle purchase \$99; Kindle rental \$18.63)

Reviewed by Bev Friend

I remember meeting Pan Guang about 30 years ago, visiting his home in Shanghai and having him join Xu Xin to lead us on a tour of the Hongkou district where many Jews were housed during the Holocaust. He told us that what had sparked his interest was when he was a child and Jews suddenly appeared to live in his neighborhood. As suddenly as they arrived, they later disappeared. Who were these people? The answer to this question became the impetus for his fine scholarship. It was a privilege to meet him and explore the past together as we toured the area.

Pan Guang is Walter and Seena Fair Professor of Sino-Jewish Studies; Professor and Director, Center of SCO and B&R Studies at SASS; Dean, Center of Jewish Studies

Shanghai (CJSS); and Senior Advisor, Chinese Association of Middle East Studies.

Amazon Book Description: This book comprehensively discusses the topic of Jews fleeing the Holocaust to China. It is divided into three parts: historical facts; theories; and the Chinese model. The first part addresses the formation, development and end of the Jewish refugee community in China, offering a systematic review of the history of Jewish Diaspora, including historical and recent events bringing European Jews to China; Jewish refugees arriving in China: route, time, number and settlement; the Jewish refugee community in Shanghai; Jewish refugees in other Chinese cities; the "Final Solution" for Jewish refugees in Shanghai and the "Designated Area for Stateless Refugees"; friendship between the Jewish refugees and the local Chinese people; the departure of Jews and the end of the Jewish refugee community in China. The second part provides deeper perspectives on the Jewish refugees in China and the relationship between Jews and the Chinese. The third part explores the Chinese model in the history of Jewish Diaspora, focusing on the Jews fleeing the Holocaust to China and compares the Jewish refugees in China with those in other parts of the world. It also introduces the Chinese model concept and presents the five features of the model.

Some Day We Will Fly

By Rachel DeWoskin

Viking Books for Young Readers (2019)

From School Library Journal

When Lillia's mother disappears as they are about to leave Poland for Shanghai, fleeing persecution because they are Jewish and caught up in World War II, Lillia, her father, and her younger sister are forced to leave without her mother. They settle into a new life in Shanghai, but Lillia remains haunted by the mystery of her mother's whereabouts and the whole family struggles with their new, precarious position. Refugees in a land divided in its own ways by class and race, they each must cope with loss, poverty, and displacement. As the family's circumstances worsen, Lillia must decide how far she will go to help her father and sister. The historical setting and explorations of disability and interracial relationships add interest to the story. However, the number of different plot elements means that no single point is developed fully, leading to some difficult-to-believe moments and some underdeveloped relationships. Nevertheless, readers will be left with a story detailing poverty, failure, and strength. References for further reading add additional depth and credibility to the setting. VERDICT Grounded in historical details and unflinchingly portraying refugee life, the novel takes World War II fiction in a new direction.—Zoë McLaughlin, Michigan State University

"DeWoskin explores a rarely depicted topic. . . A beautifully nuanced exploration of culture and people." -Kirkus Reviews.

Middle East, *continued from page 1*

was one of the founders of the Sephardic Porat Yosef Yeshiva in Jerusalem. He was also a teacher of the former Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel, Rav Ovadia Yosef.

The early history of the modern Jews in China is closely related to the history of the Sassoon family, also known as the 'Rothschilds' of the East. It commences in the middle of the 19th Century, when the Treaty Ports were declared open to foreign trade. David Sassoon, who settled in Bombay, India in 1832, established a firm dealing mainly in cotton, tea and silk. In the pre-Treaty Port days, he traded with Canton in South China, but when the Treaty Ports opened up, he decided to expand and extend the interests of his growing empire by sending his sons to establish branches in China. Thus Elias David Sassoon came to China in 1844 and founded branches of the David Sassoon Company in Shanghai, Canton and Hongkong. He was an extremely successful businessman, who furthered the Sassoon interests in China. In 1867 he left his father's firm and opened up his own branch in Shanghai and Hongkong, under the name of E.D. Sassoon & Company, which in the Far East came to be considered as a synonym for mercantile and banking power.

The Sassoons in the 19th Century were extremely religious and encouraged young Jewish men to enter their employ. These youths received the necessary training and experience at the Sassoon offices in Bombay. Those who displayed business acumen were sent to China as clerks or managers. Thus the first nucleus of Jews in Shanghai was either Sassoons or those in their employ. It furthermore meant that the descendants of Sassoons and former Sassoon employees constituted a large section of the former Sephardic Community of Shanghai.

In 1857 the Jewish Community of Shanghai came into official existence in a special general meeting of the members of the new synagogue known as Beth-El. Some time later, leading members of the community, headed by D.E.J. Abraham and S.J. Solomon, founded the Sheerith Israel Synagogue for the more strictly orthodox members of the community. David Sassoon also presented a cemetery to the local Jewish congregation, located on Mohawk Road, which was used until 1919.

By this time various Jewish employees of the Sassoon undertakings, like Mr. S.A. Hardoon, branched out establishing their own firms. In 1927 Silas Hardoon presented another beautiful synagogue to the community of Shanghai – the Beth Aharon Synagogue.

The Sephardic Jews came to Shanghai when it was still an undeveloped city on the banks of the Whangpoo River. This city was selected because of its geographical posi-

tion, as the natural outlet for Central China. With great foresight they bought land at unbelievably low prices, established banking and commercial undertakings and, by the beginning of the 20th century, became business leaders of the Eastern metropolis.

The Sassoon and Hardoon interests were extremely important in the field of realty. The interests of the Hayim family began to play an important role in the public utilities sector, whilst the Kadoorie interest, besides maintaining their hold on the world famous Malaysian rubber, continued to expand in other directions.

The Sephardic Jewish Community during these two decades grew both in importance and in numbers. Some of the prominent leaders of the community, aside from the Sassoon, Kadoorie and Hardoon families, there were several other prominent families. To name a few: David E.J. Abraham, who married a member of the Sassoon family, the Hayims, Aaron Moses who married Flora Sassoon, Maurice Dangoor who married Sybil Moses, in addition to the Shahmoon, Sofer, Toeg, Ezekiel, Cohen, Jacob, Levy, Hillaly, Benjamin, and Reuben families. The list goes on, with each and every family leaving their mark on the saga of the Sephardic Jewry in Shanghai – each having an interesting tale of their own.

The luxury in which these very wealthy families lived is a fairy tale – sprawling mansions, with huge lawns, tennis courts and countless servants and governesses for their children. One of the most renowned homes is that of the Kadoorie family, known as Marble Hall, because the interior ballrooms and beautiful staterooms were built mostly of marble. This was a mansion beyond description with vast acres of lush lawns. On the outside it resembled the White House; it was a palatial building as grand a home as any to be found in Europe. As a young girl I remember visiting this home with all its glory and splendor.

These families were members of the most elite clubs in Shanghai, and owned stables with their own horses – my uncle, Isaac Hayim Toeg, owned a racehorse that went by the name of Camanche. They went on paper hunts and played polo matches. Most of them also owned luxurious summer homes and houseboats. My uncle had a houseboat named Flora, and sometimes sailed to Hangchow with family members and close friends. During summer they travelled on ships of the famous Empress Line to Japan, holidaying in the popular mountain resort of Rokosan, as well as the cities of Kobe and Osaka among others. My family travelled on the Empress Line to Japan practically every summer.

The new generation of Sephardic youth born in Shanghai in the early 1920's and 1930's, formed an amateur dramatic club, producing many plays. They had their own

musical band known as the 'Calef' Band of Shanghai. The young men also formed their own football team called 'The White Stars' football team and played in various matches with other local teams.

It is of the utmost importance to stress that in spite of all the wealth attained, and the comforts in which we all lived; we never for a moment forgot those less fortunate. The deeds of charity by our community were countless to all in need, not only for members of the Sephardic Community, but also for those of other Jewish communities in Shanghai.

My uncle, Isaac Hayim Toeg, was one of the young men brought to Shanghai in the employ of the Sassoon family. He arrived in Shanghai from Bombay in 1908, together with his mother Farha and his sister Mozelle (my mother). His father, Aboody, and brother Aslan followed soon after with the rest of the family. Some years later he left E.D. Sassoon & Co., and with others, set himself up as a broker in the Shanghai Stock Exchange. It was through his smart business acumen and speculations in the stock market, that he became very wealthy. He then formed his own company – Builders and Traders Ltd., an import-export firm, and a few years later, together with his nephews Ezekiel and Ezra, sons of his older brother Aslan, established his company Woodcraft Works Limited dealing, primarily in lumber, parquet floors, doors, etc.

Both my mother and uncle were married in 1930. My uncle Isaac Hayim married Grace Toeg (his brother's eldest daughter) and my mother married Jason Isaac. The family always remained very united, and during the early years of World War II, lived together in the large four-storey Toeg residence, situated on 430 Seymour Road, close to the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, and the Shanghai Jewish School, also on the same street.

With my uncle's four children, Flora, Rebecca, Joseph and Aslan, we had an eventful childhood, being that the Toeg home was the center of the Sephardic Jewish Community and relief operations during the years of World War II, as well during the period after the takeover of Shanghai by the Communists in the Spring of 1949.

Shanghai had many schools: The Shanghai Public School for Girls, The Shanghai Public School for Boys, The Thomas Hanbury School, and The Shanghai Cathedral School, all with a very high standard of education, under the British Matriculation system.

We took the life we lived for granted and imagined it would go on forever. But the turn of events is what shapes history, and all of our lives were affected by it. With the start of World War II, a new chapter was about to begin for rich and poor alike – the struggle for survival.

During those difficult years we can all be proud of a Sephardic Community that remained united in the face of all odds, staunchly preserving its religious practices and never faltering, no matter the danger.

Going back for a moment to 1937, the year the Sino-Japanese war broke out, the Japanese conquered Manchuria and the conflict spread during the years to follow. By 1939 they had reached the gates of Shanghai, and even though there was a great deal of chaos in the city, the International District of Shanghai was respected as such, and remained intact.

When Hitler's Nazi regime began its persecution of the Jews of Europe, close to twenty five thousand Jews were granted visas by the Chinese authorities and were able to find refuge in Shanghai, most of them having arrived between 1938 and 1939. [Ed. the actual number is about 18,000] At that time there were about 43,000 foreigners in Shanghai, out of which about 6000 were Jews. A monumental effort had to be made to absorb that great a number of people.

The Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities, who had a great history of their own, joined hands in a mission to save the lives of our brethren who had endured the unendurable, and to lend them a helping hand in every way possible. Donations and help flooded in from all directions. Soup kitchens were started and food was prepared and cooked by both communities in huge canteens for all the newcomers until such time they were able to make their own way.

The horrors of Europe were a nightmare that stunned our Jewish communities beyond belief. Many in the community took in children in order to ease their trauma and to give them a comfortable life until such time their parents were able to once again care for them. I recall the Abraham family taking in a young boy by the name Egon, and the Toegs took in a young girl called Cecile; my mother adopted a boy name Hans and a little girl. The Kadoorie family provided a synagogue and school for the new comers, known as the Kadoorie Synagogue and Kadoorie School, located in the Hongkew area of Shanghai.

In 1941 Japan entered the [world] war and attacked Pearl Harbour. This was the beginning of the war in the Pacific region. When Japan joined the Germans in the war against the Allies restrictions were placed on the population. At the insistence of Germany, the Jews who arrived from Europe were confined to Hongkew, and were not permitted to leave the area without a permit.

Shanghai was subjected to bombing raids by Allied warplanes. The international section of the city was no longer respected and all British, American and other Allied

citizens were considered enemy nationals and were interned in Japanese prisoner of war camps. Around this period all foreign schools were closed, synagogues taken over, and food was rationed. Our world had turned upside down.

Amongst those interned in Japanese prisoner of war camps were many leaders and members of the Sephardic Jewish Community, as well as some members of my family, since they were granted British citizenship whilst living in Bombay, India. They suffered the same fate as all other British, American and Australian nationals. The rest of us who had Iraqi, Greek or other foreign passports had to wear armbands with a different color for each country, indicating that they were considered enemy subjects but to a lesser degree. The concern for our people interned in these camps was great. No one really knew what the Japanese were capable of and those interned endured great hardships.

My mother, Mozelle, who headed the Jewish Women's Benevolent Society, and Maurice Dangoor, who was at that time President of the Sephardic Jewish Community, together approached the Japanese authorities in order to request permission to send kosher food parcels to all Jews interned in the various camps. Permission was granted and the Toeg home was turned into a relief centre for both those Jews who were interned, as well as for other less fortunate members of our community who faced hardships and could not make ends meet.

The library of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue was preserved in the Toeg home, as well as some of our precious sefer Torah scrolls. When our dearly beloved David E.J. Abraham passed away in the POW camp where he was interned, through great efforts permission was granted for a Jewish burial and his body was brought to the Toeg residence for religious rites before burial.

It should be mentioned that each time one had to visit the Japanese Headquarters for whatever purpose, it was at the risk of their own lives, being that these official offices were the targets of Allied bombing raids. The air raids took place at all times of the day or night. When sirens blared, (the more sirens, the larger the raid), bombs fell at random, whilst anti-aircraft guns peppered into the sky. Yet danger never seemed to deter the members of our community who placed duty before themselves.

On August 15, 1945, the first news arrived that Japan had surrendered to America. The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, though tragically taking a great toll on the civilian population of Japan, finally brought the Pacific War to an end. Prior to that event it was rumored that all other foreign enemy nationals, such as us, Greek nationals, and others, were also to be interned. Thank

God we were spared that fate.

Soon after American and British forces landed in Shanghai, and all prisoners were freed from the POW camps. China was once again under the control of the Nationalist Government regime of President Chiang Kai-Shek. For a short while Shanghai prospered and life went back to normal.

However, a new episode soon took its place in history, once again shattering our lives, and became a dreaded reality. The Chinese Red Army under Chairman Mao Tse-Tung now openly began their fight against the Nationalist regime in China, advancing from the North. Fighting intensified and the effects soon began to be felt in Shanghai.

Foreigners, and mainly the Russians who knew too well the impact of Communism, began to leave Shanghai, as well as from other cities in China. Many from the Sephardic community also left Shanghai for America, England, Canada, Australia and elsewhere. In 1948, after the creation of the State of Israel, the desire to immigrate to our homeland was great. There were always strong ties between China Jewry and the Jewish homeland, known then as Palestine. Young men and women from both communities were very active in the Betar Youth movement, and left China to join the fight against the Arabs for Israel's Independence.

There were still some of us, however, who decided to remain in Shanghai and who were present when the Chinese Red Army advanced on the city in May 1949. As the fighting intensified we could hear the sound of heavy artillery and gunfire growing closer with each day. One evening it suddenly seemed that all hell had broken loose. Shanghai rocked with explosions. The ground shook beneath us and the night sky was ablaze for as far as the eyes could see. It seemed like the world was coming to an end. No one knew what was happening, and it was not until the next morning that we discovered that the arsenals in Shanghai had been intentionally blown up by the Nationalist regime so as not to let it fall into the hands of the Communists. Two days later the army of Mao Tse-Tung entered Shanghai with hardly any resistance from the Nationalist army. Only sporadic firing was heard as the city fell into the hands of the Chinese Communists.

While we came through physically unscathed, we were unaware that this was the beginning of the end of our community, and that of all other foreign communities in Shanghai, the majority of whom left Shanghai in 1948-49, prior to the Communist takeover. Amongst the first to leave were the Russian Jewry, since having come to China from the Soviet Union, they knew only too well the true meaning of Communism. They had lived through it and had

managed to escape. To believe as we did at first that this was merely a local change of regime, which would not have any major impact on the lives of foreigners, British and American alike, was extremely naive and a complete misconception.

The devastating power of Communism had been grossly underestimated. The systematic imposing of endless new laws and restrictions strangled businesses, and those businesses that could not survive were methodically taken over. Many lost all they had.

We were amongst the very few foreigners who remained in Shanghai till the mid 1950's. After most of our family had left Shanghai, my mother made every effort to protect the interests of all concerned at great risk. Unfortunately, it was all in vain. During the last few years of our stay under Chinese Communist rule, the horrors I observed with my own eyes and the oppression to which we ourselves were subjected is a nightmare I can never forget.

By late 1949 there was a drastic decrease in the foreign population of Shanghai. The Shanghai Jewish School held its last graduation ceremony. There were only six students left in the graduating class, among whom, were my sister Rahma and my cousins Flora and Rebecca Toeg. This prestigious school, which was run by the Sephardic Jewish Community, and once had an enrolment of about 600 Jewish students, who proudly wore their blue and white uniforms with the emblem of the Star of David, was soon to close its doors.

The early 1950's were the final chapter for our community in Shanghai. On January 23, 1951, the wedding of my eldest sister Flori to Isaiah Myer Cohen took place at the beautiful Ohel Rachel synagogue. This was the very last wedding to take place at this synagogue. Because of the strict restrictions imposed at that time, permission had to be requested from the Communist authorities for any gathering of more than 12 people. No function of any kind was allowed to take place without the presence of the Communist police. Hence armed police stood guard both during the wedding ceremony in the synagogue and at the reception, which took place in the main auditorium of the Shanghai Jewish School.

Soon after, in 1951, the Jewish School closed its doors for the last time, and the closure of the Ohel Rachel synagogue followed in early 1952. My sister, Rahma, and I, as well as Moses Cohen, my sis-

ter's brother-in-law, and other members of the Sephardic community, were present on that sad day when the last of our sefer Torah scrolls was removed from the Holy Ark in the synagogue, and a huge picture of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung was then hung over it. The members of the Sephardic Jewish Community who observed this tragic moment in our history, stood by in stunned silence, completely numb. There was not a pair of dry eyes. This was indeed the end of a Golden Era!

I left Shanghai in the spring of 1952, traveling alone as a young teenager to join members of our family already in Israel. My mother, who was not yet permitted by the Chinese authorities to leave Shanghai, insisted that I go ahead as there was reason to believe my safety might have been in jeopardy. It was a three-day journey by train from Shanghai to Canton in the south of China. This is another harrowing experience I recall so vividly to this day.

There were a few foreigners aboard the train and each of us was locked in our own compartment with armed guards parading back and forth in the corridor. Communist propaganda blared from loudspeakers day and night throughout the journey. Upon arrival in Canton we were taken to a hotel for an overnight stay, where we were once again locked in our rooms.

The next morning we were driven to the border crossing between Canton and Hongkong. A little narrow bridge divided the two sides. At one end stood the Chinese Communist guards, at the other end the British army. Before being allowed to proceed across the bridge, our documents and exit permits were checked once again. To our horror, some people were turned back by the Chinese guards. As soon as I was given the signal to go ahead, I walked trembling across the bridge, from oppression to freedom!

In recent years, upon my return to Israel in 1994, I succeeded in organizing the Sephardic Division of the Igud Yotsei Sin – Association of Former Residents of China. This division consists of former members of the Sephardic Jewish Community of Shanghai presently living in Israel, the USA, England, Canada, Australia and South America; and emphasis was placed on research and documentation of our history.

The Sephardic Jewish Community of Shanghai played an important and prominent role in the history of China Jewry. We owe it to our parents and grandparents to preserve our

history, so rich in deeds and values. We also owe it to our children and grandchildren so that they should be aware and proud of their heritage.

Since those days I have traveled extensively and have lived in several countries, but never have I forgotten my roots, and I will always cherish the very special memories of my life in Shanghai, China.

In summarizing, I want to add a few words of my visit to Shanghai a couple of years ago with my sister, Flori, and several of our children and grandchildren. A memorable trip down memory lane. As we touched down in Shanghai I was so excited and emotional at the reality that I had finally returned to the country of my birth, to the people and land I loved so dearly. I could not believe my eyes at the remarkable changes that had been carried out. Shanghai now has large freeways, countless high rises; beautiful new buildings, and especially unrecognizable was Pudong, which in my time was nothing but flat land. Today with its tall TV Tower, new hotels, tall apartment blocks and more was an amazing sight. Most important to us was the fact that we were able to find our home on 430 Seymour Road (now Shanxi Rd), where seventeen Chinese families now lived. They obligingly showed us around and wanted to hear our story. I still remember my Shanghainese and we were able to converse and they were happy to hear our tale.

Before leaving for Shanghai we sent in a request to the Chinese authorities asking for permission to visit the Ohel Rachel synagogue on Seymour Road. We informed them that we wanted to show the family where my sister was married in 1951, we sent photos and copy of a newspaper article of the wedding – in short we were granted permission – the visit there was an extremely emotional one for each one of us – we described our history to our children and grandchildren, how we used to go there every Saturday with our family, on the High Holidays and on all the Jewish holidays. It is difficult to describe what we experienced that day upon entering the Ark and blessing the one Torah scroll, thinking of the days of old when this Ark contained so very many beautiful scrolls in gold and silver cases, and some covered in velvet.

We spent the rest of our time touring around the city, visiting our schools, the Lyceum theatre, the ex-French concession, the Ste. Mary's Hospital where we were born. All in all we had a fabulous visit 'Home'!

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From Berlin, continued from page 1

versy unleashed by it? Beyond the sensational quality of his life, the legal debates that followed his death became a test case for questions that reverberated through the Baghdadi, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Jewish diasporas in the early twentieth century, particularly in the wake of the First World War and the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. As the empire gave way to nation-states and mandates, how was the significant population of extraterritorial Jews in colonial and semi-colonial settings—émigré merchants and their families residing in entrepôts in India, Asia, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean Basin—to be legally defined by the state? What place, and what political allegiances, would they seek for themselves once their extraterritorial status came into conflict with evolving national and international legal norms? In the British Empire, specifically, what did it mean to acquire and lose the status of Protected Person: how would this process affect individual Jews or their communities?

Roughly three decades of scholarship on the intersection of colonialism, post-colonialism, and legal cultures and on the related notion of legal pluralism has yielded crucial insights into the complexity, plurality, and significance of these interrelated phenomena to the shaping of the modern world...

Despite its increasingly embattled status, the category "British Protected Person" was a live and essential political class for many Baghdadi, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Jews of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This title, roughly akin to "protégé," placed its holders outside the dyads of colonial subject or naturalized citizen, colonizer or colonized, Eastern or Western, European or Occidental, even Sephardi or Ashkenazi, rendering them intermediary figures of imperialism whose legal status shifted over time and from place to place. In this shifting, the story of Jewish Protected Persons is evocative of that of other liminal subjects of empire, including translators, missionaries, midwives, and native bureaucrats, whose histories significantly complicate our understanding of power relations in the colonial arena.

The testamentary battle over the Hardoon fortune also points us toward the intersection of various environments of modern colonial encounter—Ottoman, Iraqi, Indian, as well as British and Chinese. At the moment the Hardoon trial unfolded, in the early 1930s, the Ottoman Empire was no longer extant, but the British Empire was in the midst of an expansionist moment, a time of active and multi-vec-tored extension in the Middle East and in East and Southeast Asia (as elsewhere). And yet, when it came to the malleable

legal identity of the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora, these two empires (Ottoman and British) were live and mutually informing. Ironic as it might first appear, in the course of the legal struggle over the Hardoon estate, representatives of British interests defended the enduring integrity of certain legal categories born of the Ottoman context—in particular, the notion that after his death, Hardoon could be viewed as a British subject because, decades earlier, his father had been granted British protection while living in India as an Ottoman subject. This legal opinion, offered first by the Foreign Office and subsequently upheld by the court, went against the tide of British consular and foreign policy in East Asia, on the one hand, where, as of 1906, Baghdadi Jews were increasingly being denied or stripped of their protection; and in early interwar Iraq, on the other hand, where many Jews traumatized by the First World War and fearful of Iraq's postwar fate sought but were denied British naturalization.

In undermining these general trends, the Hardoon trial proved three

Important things about Jews, British law, and informal imperialism in the interwar period. First, the status of a wealthy individual Jew—and the money he promised to deliver to the state in the form of an estate tax—could influence the rigidity or direction of British policy, or indeed undermine it altogether. Class was a mottling factor that differentiated the state's treatment of individuals within and across discrete diasporic groups. Second, the spaces through which the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora moved in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries continued to inform its members' legal status as the twentieth century unfolded, even though growing numbers of this diasporic body had themselves never set foot in these spaces (in the case of Baghdad, the Ottoman Empire, Iraq, India, or Britain), or after certain of these spaces had ceased to exist (in the case of the Ottoman Empire). Third and finally, while by the interwar period the British Foreign Office sought to decouple the categories "British Protected Person" and "British subject," there remained occasions on which it was useful for both the state and the court to view these as co-terminous entities. Thus, just as the British Empire continued to reinvent itself in the early decades of the twentieth century, so too did the essentially colonial category of British Protected Person persist into an era ostensibly marked by the global drift toward sovereignty and the associated nationalization of individuals.

Shanghai was a dynamic and divided city in the early decades of the twentieth century. A treaty port, administratively it was divided into three sectors—the Chinese Municipality of Greater Shanghai, the International Settlement, and the French

Concession—each with its own government, laws, and authorities. Although the city was majority Chinese, a diverse European expatriate community (and especially the British) held sway over its rule, with Baghdadi Jews, by and large an affluent population of real estate holders, tentatively accepted among them.

At its height, the Baghdadi Jewish population of Shanghai likely numbered around 800. Scholars tend to refer to this population as "Sephardic," though in fact they had no historic ties to the Iberian Peninsula (Sepharad in Hebrew) and spoke no Judeo-Spanish; nor, until the early twentieth century, did they consider themselves Sephardic. "Baghdadi" is also convenient shorthand. This term tends to be applied to any Jewish descendant of Ottoman Mesopotamia, even though a portion of this émigré population had roots in other regional trading entrepôts, especially Basra and Muscat. Moreover, like "Sephardi," "Baghdadi" is a category that likely was not employed by Baghdadi Jews prior to the early twentieth century, when this diasporic population encountered poorer, Ashkenazi Jewish émigrés from the Russian Empire in places such as Shanghai. Until roughly the 1860s, the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora, though multilingual, relied principally on Judeo-Arabic as a language of commerce and quotidian culture and upon Hebrew as a language of rabbinic high culture; over the course of the next decades, as the number of "Baghdadi Jews" born in South, East, and Southeast Asia and across the British Empire increased, the business records, personal correspondence, and newspapers circulated by this diasporic community appear to have gradually reverted to or were first penned in English.

As in other commercial hubs of the Baghdadi, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Jewish diasporas, in Shanghai the Baghdadi Jewish population lived in political limbo in the late nineteenth and the earliest years of the twentieth century, having inherited what was essentially an early modern legal order. These Jews were admittedly Ottoman subjects by dint of birth. However, because the Ottoman Empire had no extraterritorial treaty with China that might ensure its subjects' protection, here (as in port cities in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean) émigré Jewish merchants were entitled to French protection by virtue of capitulations dating to the sixteenth century. Some sort of foreign protection was crucial to this largely mercantile population. Serving as a protégé of the French, American, or Italian consulate, or as a British Protected Person, provided distinct advantages: relief from some taxes and tolls, paperwork that eased intra- and extra-regional travel, a measure of legal protection, and a rather more amorphous but clearly important sense of political se-

curity. Concrete benefits also existed for the government that extended such protection, for it could encourage mercantile relationships with the home country and result in considerable donations and duties to the state, particularly after the execution of a deceased merchant's estate. In her study of the Baghdadi Jewish community of Shanghai, Maisie Meyer has suggested that British protection promised maximum social capital for this community, arguing that its members were allied with Britain aspirationally, politically, and linguistically. This claim may overstate the case. Baghdadi Jews were hardly monogamous in their quest for official status, but instead shifted allegiances between foreign powers as suited, first and foremost, their interests, the prevailing political climate, the ebb and flow of markets, and the whim of individual bureaucrats who had the power to approve or deny their protection. Haroon himself rotated between the French and British in Shanghai, representing both, at one time or another, on local political councils. For this, the story of Haroon and of the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora more generally was closely tied to that of the British Empire, through whose territories this individual and population cycled.

While French protection was accessible to Haroon and his peers as a result of centuries-old capitulations brokered with the Ottoman Empire, British protection was a rather younger institution. Created in the late nineteenth century, this category was availed by Royal Prerogative to people and places located outside the crown's dominions that Britain had nonetheless promised to protect. It was accessible to Baghdadi Jewish émigrés such as Haroon because, in the late nineteenth century, Britain and France had agreed that Britain would extend protection to all Baghdadi Jews employed by David Sassoon and Company and other British firms operating in South, Southeast, and East Asia. With the passage of the British Protected Persons Order of 1934, this category would be reinvented again—this time to refer to persons who did not possess any other nationality but who belonged to British protectorates or to United Kingdom-mandated or trust territories other than Palestine and Transjordan. By then, the class had functioned elastically for several generations. Once Jewish merchants (and in some cases their families) were labeled Protected Persons, British consular agents in South, Southeast, and East Asia could and often did take a further step, registering them in local consuls as British subjects of the United Kingdom, colonies, and dominions. This despite the fact that technically British Protected Persons were not British subjects; indeed, they would not be mentioned in British legislation concerning citizenship until the passage of the British Nationality Act of 1948, which labeled all

British "subjects" of the United Kingdom or crown colonies "citizens," formally excluding Protected Persons from this category. Prior to the delineation of these categories, casual interpretation of the notion of protection was not favored only by British officials in Asia, and nor were Jews the only beneficiaries. At least since the late nineteenth century, British authorities had voiced discomfort with the tendency of local consulates in the Ottoman dominions to "register as British subjects, persons who are not so by British law," a strategy that some feared would "some day [cause] some serious trouble" for the state.

When it came to Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews, an individual's viability as a British subject or Protected Person could often be traced back to the colonial laboratory of India. Although precise statistics evade historical record, it appears that many, if not most, of the Baghdadi Jewish families living in Shanghai in the early twentieth century had come to China by way of India; and it was in South Asia that family patriarchs tended to receive the naturalization or protected status that would be handed down to subsequent generations (at least temporarily, for reasons we will continue to explore). This trend dated to the early 1870s, when the still-young Baghdadi Jewish population of India began to lobby aggressively—and by and large successfully—to be considered by the British state as European, white, and loyalist. As Joan Roland has shown, this ambition had much to do with the Baghdadi Jewish population's desire to be distinguished from the so-called "native" Jewish community of western India, the Bene Israel, whom immigrant Baghdadi Jews viewed as religiously impure and racially inferior; it also resonated with the ebb and flow of British imperial policy and the shifting ambitions of the Indian nationalist movement. These intra-Jewish communal struggles in India, and more specifically the British naturalizations they produced, echoed elsewhere in Asia decades later, as British authorities traced a Baghdadi Jew's viability as a naturalized Briton or British Protected Person back to patriarchs' registration in India a generation or more earlier.

The case of the Ezra family is illustrative of this late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century bureaucratic pattern. Three generations of men, women, and children in this Baghdadi Jewish family received permission from the British consulate in Shanghai to add their names to the passport of the family patriarch, Edward Ezra, who was naturalized as a British subject in Poona (present-day Pune) in 1872 and was granted his first British passport in Shanghai in 1918. By the third generation, when the situation attracted the wary attention of the Foreign Office, officials were still registering Edward's grandson Cecil Ezra as British, even though they ac-

knowledged him to be "the Shanghai-born son of the equally Shanghai-born son of an Iraqi father." The case of the Ezras demonstrates the importance of India as a nursery for Baghdadi Jews' naturalizations across the British Empire. It also indicates that, at least for a time, the status of British Protected Person appears to have been interpreted both by British consular agents conducting such registrations in China and by the Jews who acquired it as potentially coterminous with naturalization.

This "custom," in the words of the British Foreign Office's senior expert in Far Eastern affairs, F. A. Campbell, "has apparently, rightly or wrongly, existed for some time, [and] it was not thought necessary to disturb it." Such officially sanctioned laxity, and the culture of extranationality it engendered, would become anachronistic as of 1906. This process reverberated in Britain's overseas possessions and among the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Jewish communities that had long hitched their stars to British rule.

Consular laxity was to turn strict beginning in 1906, when the Ezras and other Baghdadi Jewish families like them found the political hospitality of British authorities in Shanghai tested and the side door to citizenship all but closed. Only a year after anti-alien legislation was adopted in Britain restricting migration, and perhaps in response to an accusation that American consuls in Shanghai, Canton, and Amoy had abused their juridical powers, the Foreign Office issued a China Order in Council that strictly instructed its consular agents overseas to cease renewing Baghdadi Jews' registration as British Protected Persons, particularly if they had inherited their status from a family patriarch without themselves having lived on British soil. This order was meant to close the loophole that had been available to consular agents and Jewish applicants—what one consular agent described as "a misapprehension as to the exact terms under which Ottoman subjects should in certain circumstances be given British Protection."

Whereas the registration papers of the Baghdadi Jewish community in Shanghai had once been renewed automatically, now each application was reviewed independently, and previous approvals were understood to offer no precedent.

The response was panicked and instantaneous. Beginning in 1906, intensifying during and after the First World War, and continuing for at least four decades, the British Foreign Office was peppered with letters from Baghdadi Jews residing in Shanghai who found themselves denied renewal of their registration papers, even, in some cases, after having received routine approval for decades or generations.

Children, wives, widows, and sisters proved particularly vulnerable to the contraction of administrative permissive-

ness, as their legal status rested on that of fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers, on whose passports or paperwork their own legal status was often recorded.

With respect to the Ezra clan, the Foreign Office determined that earlier extensions of British protection had been made in error, and future de-terminations of protection or citizenship could not be based upon them. Three generations of the extended Ezra family (including not only male applicants but also their wives and children) were thus told that they could not piggy-back on the Indian-based registration of the family patriarch. As one member of the British bureaucracy put it: "British nationality cannot be acquired by the mistake of any British Official, high or low."

Among those confronting the tightening of British law was D. Silman Somekh, who in 1906 appealed to the British consulate in Shanghai after his request for renewal of his registration was denied. Born in Baghdad in 1872, Somekh "was sent to Bombay for an English education" at age 17. After seven years in India in the employ of David Sassoon and Company, he followed the firm to Shanghai. "From the first time I came here I have been registered at the British Consul as a British subject," explained Somekh to the authorities. "For years past I have been a British Subject as my registration shows, [and] now to be told suddenly that I can be no longer is, to say the least, surprising."

The consulate viewed matters differently. Referring to Somekh baldly as "a Turkish subject," representatives of the crown concluded that he was "registered in error as a British subject." The resulting verdict: no longer an employee of David Sassoon and Company, Somekh could no longer have British protection extended to him. Utilizing a strict interpretation of the legacy of Ottoman capitulations, the consulate determined that Somekh, "in common with other Ottoman subjects...should look to the French Consul-General for Protection."

It was true that applicants for British registration could turn to the French for the paperwork they required, but this belied the complexity of the relationship between the Baghdadi Jewish émigré community in Shanghai and the British state. Extended as it sometimes was for generations, the status of British Protected Person marked the Baghdadi population racially and economically, framing elite members of this community as white, European, and bourgeois—part of the power structure in a city intricately organized around the presence of state powers. The conceptual value of protected status transcended Shanghai, resonating with the circuitous histories of Baghdadi Jews themselves. One thinks of Somekh in this regard, and the striking fact that he had traveled from Baghdad to India to "receive an English education"—a decision, one suspects, made not of abstract

Anglophilism nor merely on economic grounds, but out of the desire to cannily utilize an imperial order.

Somekh was not alone in voicing desperation to the British consulate. After the British authorities threatened to attenuate protection over Simon Abraham Levy and his infant son, Levy—a native of Cairo who for six years had served David Sassoon and Company in Hong Kong—described himself as "surprised and pained," and protested that since my boyhood I have been associated with the British authorities and have lived in a British Colony for a number of years and am imbued with British ideas [and so] you can understand how hard it must be for me to be told that I can no longer enjoy the protection of HBM [His Britannic Majesty's] Government and that I have now to seek protection of another power when my sympathies are entirely British.

Nissim Jeremiah, a Baghdadi-born Jew who had "enjoyed the hospitality of His Britannic Majesty's kind protection" during thirty years' residence in Hong Kong, put things rather more tersely after his request for registration was denied by the British authorities in Shanghai: he felt himself, he wrote, to be "a lost man." These were strategic statements, to be sure. But the authenticity of their message notwithstanding, they hint at the urgency with which Baghdadi Jews confronted a shifting political landscape. To those whom it benefited, British protection remained a coveted category well into the twentieth century, quasi-legal though this category may have been.

The 1906 China Order in Council restricting Baghdadi Jews' access to British protection might have faded in importance over time, with Jewish applicants in search of paperwork and the consuls in charge of granting it finding ways to circumvent the rule. Instead, global politics intervened to calcify it. The First World War, the violence and deprivation that accompanied it, and, in the wake of the war, the confusion and anxiety that attended the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire pushed many Jews in and from the region (and especially in Iraq) to seek British protection and naturalization: they, like other residents of the Middle East, were also keenly sensitive to the elevated importance of passports and official paperwork in the interwar world. Although this story is too expansive to do justice to here, one example is striking: in May of 1919, more than fifty prominent Baghdadi Jews, including the president of the Jewish Law Committee and the acting chief rabbi and president of the Religious Council, submitted a request for naturalization to Edwin S. Montagu, secretary of state for India. Bemoaning what they saw as the total "lack of unpreparedness" in Iraq for self-administration and fearing

the creation of a government in Iraq led by Arabic-speaking Sunnis, the co-signers requested that they be "taken under the shield of the British Government and considered true subjects of His Majesty, holding themselves prepared to accept all obligations and rights of true British citizens," adding that they were "confident that their [Jewish] brethren in all Iraq will formulate the same desire." The applicants' request was swiftly denied. Had it been approved, legal precedent would have been established, permitting a broad swath of Jewish applicants—including, of course, those in Palestine—to follow suit, a situation that the British hardly wished to invite.

With the number of requests for protection or naturalization by Baghdadi Jews in and outside of Iraq soaring, the British authorities in London intensified their scrutiny of applications by Baghdadi Jews in Shanghai and East Asia more generally, bringing to them a skepticism born of both administrative confusion and anti-alien sentiment. Thus, for example, some in the Foreign Office falsely assumed that the Aliens Act of 1914 mandated that the children of British subjects naturalized in India could not inherit their father's or grandfather's legal status, rendering earlier instances of naturalization (as one representative put it) merely "of local effect"; a few years later, the Foreign Office advised its representatives in the region that "no Ottoman subject engaged by a British firm in China should be accorded British protection unless he has a claim to such treatment on some other ground," a thinly veiled reference to Baghdadi Jewish employees of the offices of David Sassoon and Company.

Similarly, while beginning in 1925 it seemed possible that Iraqi Jewish émigrés could ground their requests for paperwork in a treaty signed by Britain and the five-year-old state of Iraq that promised Iraqis (as defined by Article 8 of the Iraqi Nationality Law) British consular and diplomatic protection, this possibility was undercut by a subsequent Order in Council that called for more strenuous review of applications for the necessary paperwork...

Despite the hardening of legal and consular standards, British representatives could be swayed in favor of particular applicants or their families, with class and social status proving to be crucial credentials for would-be Protected Persons or naturalized Britons. Such was the case with the Elias family. Baghdadi-born brothers Reuben Bey Elias and Joseph Rahmin Elias moved to Bombay (in 1872) and Shanghai (in 1881) with their father, an employee of David Sassoon and Company. The Elias brothers registered at times with the French consulate (in 1881 and again from 1885 to 1905) and at times with the British (in 1882 and from 1905 to 1908). This pattern seemed to cause offense to neither consulate—indeed, each granted papers

to the brothers with the permission of the other—until 1908, when pressure was being placed upon British consular agents to view such situations as irregular. And yet the British consul general in Shanghai, Pelham Warren, hesitated before denying the brothers' request. "It appears to be my duty [to refuse] their application," he wrote his superiors. Warren's hesitation may have been based on his knowledge of the Eliases' special place in the fabric of Jewish Shanghai. Joseph Rahmin (known to the Baghdadi Jewish community as Yosef Rahamim) was, after all, a pivotal member of Shanghai's Baghdadi Jewish community, the only mohel and shoheit trained in Baghdad according to Baghdadi (or "Sephardic," as they were imprecisely known) rites. Perhaps it was for this reason that Warren viewed the Eliases' history sympathetically even though, on the face of it, it was technically no less controversial than Nissim Jeremiah's. Concluded Warren: "there are sufficient grounds to justify me...again renewing their certificates as British Protected Persons."

Not surprisingly, class also mattered. Along with his brother Elias Aaron and sister Sophie Aaron, Silas Aaron Hardoon had been registered as a British Protected Person since 1896, because their father had been naturalized in India some years earlier, as an employee of David Sassoon and Company. By 1907, the Foreign Office concluded that the Hardoon siblings "are not British Subjects and ought not in the first instance to have been registered as such [sic]." Aware that a revocation of a legal relationship with the crown would be damaging to the family, the Foreign Office agreed to recognize the siblings as British subjects despite their previous error "as an act of grace and favour." This was no selfless act of generosity: the British authorities were interested in ensuring that the British state would administer Silas Aaron's estate after his death, for should Hardoon cease to be classified as a British subject or Protected Person, "the loss to the treasury . . . would be very considerable." (Indeed, oversight of Hardoon's fortune eventually yielded the British Exchequer the sum of £500,000 in duties.) Strikingly, if money could buy protection for some, poverty could forestall it for others. When reflecting on the growing number of requests for registration by Baghdadi Jews, one British consul general mused with relief (and, possibly, scarcely concealed contempt) that the state was under little pressure to extend English law to the "considerable body of Sikhs" employed by the Municipal Police Force in China, "owing to the fact that they are not possessed of any great means, [and therefore] personal cases affecting them do not often come before the Court. The estates of those who die without relatives in China are remitted to India to be dealt with." To put it another

way, the British Foreign Office was highly self-interested in its consideration of registration requests.

Class could throw a wrench into the administrative cogs or grease the necessary wheels because individual consuls exercised great power in determining (and sometimes even writing or rewriting) British protection and naturalization laws on the ground, case by case, and according to their own understandings and predilections. More specifically, class could interrupt the general trend to deny Baghdadi Jews' subjecthood—an arrangement that aided some Jewish applicants in Shanghai and other colonial hubs across Asia and the Mediterranean. This built a great deal of fungibility into the system, for what privileges a consul could grant he could also take away, not only in an applicant's lifetime but even after the applicant's death.

Indeed, death did not necessarily conclude the story of an émigré Baghdadi Jew's legal status. One could, after all, be stripped of nationality postmortem if and when one's status was deemed retroactively illegitimate, or if and when one's child, grandchild, widow, or sister was told that he or she could no longer "inherit" this status. In part, the trials that surrounded the Hardoon estate were sensational for this very reason: because in weighing the proper means by which to disperse the estate, they evaluated the legal status of Baghdadi Jews in Shanghai—and, to a lesser extent, of Baghdadi, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Jews across the crown's colonies—in court, and before an international audience.

In September of 1931, seven members of the Baghdadi branch of the Hardoon family, represented by one who resided in Shanghai, submitted an Arabic-language petition to the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs. The document...[alleged that Silas Aaron Hardoon's will had been falsely made].

In June of 1932, the trial spawned by the Hardoons' petition began in Shanghai, in His Britannic Majesty's Supreme Court for China. It would last nearly nine months, drawing upon a battalion of witnesses and international legal talent, captivating and polarizing observers locally and beyond.

The counsel for the plaintiffs, who were joined at the last minute by a Bombay-based claimant on the estate, argued that according to Iraqi law, Liza Hardoon was entitled to either none or but a small fraction of her late husband's estate, and that in the absence of biological children, the remainder ought to be divided among Silas Aaron Hardoon's (ostensible) kin in Iraq. They justified this determination by submitting that Hardoon was beholden to the law of his domicile of origin: he was, they advanced, initially an Ottoman, and

hence an Iraqi citizen for the duration of his life and at the time of his death. His British naturalization, they maintained, had violated both British and international law...Having never dwelt on British soil, the plaintiffs maintained, Hardoon was never entitled to the naturalization he circuitously acquired; indeed, the granting of this naturalization impinged both on the laws of Iraq and on certain forms of international law...Given, furthermore, that the National Chinese Government had ruled in 1918 that when faced with a conflict of laws, the principle of nationality governed, the estate ought to be distributed according to Iraqi law—entitling Liza Hardoon to but a quarter of the inheritance and Silas Aaron Hardoon's next of kin to the remainder...

The arguments offered by the counsel for the plaintiff and the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs were, on one level, self-serving: all stood to gain financially should the Hardoon estate be granted to the appellants and thus be distributed in and taxed by the Iraqi state. And yet more than greed was at stake. All of these parties were also engaging a complex and delicate question that animated the Iraqi public sphere (and the region more generally) in the years after the First World War and the establishment of the British mandate, and, increasingly, as "independence" from the mandate neared: of who, precisely, was or ought to be an Iraqi, and how national identity should be understood to align with or diverge from religious and sectarian identities. These debates were far from abstract: they would determine who would be allowed to return to and remain in Iraq, who would be exiled from it, and where its boundaries should be drawn. Iraqi Jews were animatedly involved in this conversation; and for this community, as for so many others, this question was inflected by varied historical relationships to the Ottoman, British, and Iraqi authorities. Suffice it to say that at the moment the future plaintiffs in the Hardoon trial solicited the support of the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs (in September of 1931), Iraqi Jews were expressing widespread enthusiasm for the new, British-backed Iraqi regime—envisioning and (at least for the moment) successfully framing themselves as "Arab Jews" and full-fledged Iraqis. These sentiments inflected the demands of the Hardoon family, seeking as they were to bring an émigré back into the legal fold of the Iraqi and Iraqi Jewish body politic. It is all the more striking, then, that the Hardoon cousins' 1931 petition to the Iraqi government was balanced by comparable appeals by the same parties to the British high commissioner for Iraq. At the same time, both the government and the defense argued vigorously that [Hardoon] "must be regarded as a person to whom jurisdiction of His Britannic Majesty's Court extends." Curiously, the fact that

Hardoon's father had been naturalized in India did not prove the backbone of the defense. Instead, they based their claim on the Foreign Office's previously cited 1907 dispatch registering Hardoon as a British subject "as an act of grace and favour," and on the 1925 China Order in Council, which declared the category of British subject to include Protected Persons. What is more, they elaborated that Ottoman subjects who had been born in Iraq but were not habitually resident in Iraq were, in the wake of the Iraqi Nationality Act, obliged either to formally request that nationality or to forsake it; thus, by not pursuing Iraqi citizenship, Hardoon was announcing himself as British. Finally, the defense argued that British Protected Subjects residing in China "with knowledge and tacit consent of Chinese authorities would fall under British Courts' jurisdiction by sufferance."

The plaintiffs' accusations reached further into the legality of the Hardoons' marriage, probing the relevance of the pair's Jewishness—or lack thereof—to their national affiliation. Maintaining that there was no evidence that Liza Hardoon had converted to Judaism, the plaintiffs charged that a Jewish marriage between the pair could not legally have taken place—an argument substantiated by the lack of a ketuba (Jewish marriage contract). Given, further, that the Hardoons had registered their marriage with the British civil authorities only in August of 1928, the plaintiffs insisted that the pair were not legally joined, and that therefore Liza Hardoon had no claim upon Silas Aaron's estate.

The defense countered that the Hardoons' marriage had taken place when Shanghai's Jewish community was still young and when records were not maintained. In any case, they argued, Liza and Silas Aaron had long been accepted as a married couple by the community, the synagogue, authorities, and even the Jewish journal of Shanghai, *Israel's Messenger*, which had long referred to the pair as husband and wife. (This fact did not inhibit the journal from siding against Liza Hardoon as the trial progressed.) Continued Liza Hardoon's counsel: the Hardoons had provided philanthropic support to Shanghai's Baghdadi synagogue, they had brought their adopted children up as Jews, and (the controversy about the use of Buddhist rituals during the observances notwithstanding) Silas Aaron Hardoon's funeral had been overseen by the *Hevra Kadisha* (Jewish Burial Society). Finally, Liza Hardoon's counsel argued that the Hardoons' long history of cohabitation, and the associated "presumption of marriage which arises under English common law," was evidence of their union.

That the British court appeared to be deliberating on the extent of the Hardoons' individual and joint credibility as Jews caused what one observer called "intense

indignation" on the part of a faction of Shanghai's Jewish community. The editor of *Israel's Messenger*, N. E. B. Ezra, proved a particularly vocal and biting critic of the court's apparent foray into Jewish law. "Marriage by reputation is an unknown thing among Jewish and Muslim communities," he wrote. "Jewish opinion is not divided on this point." While technically Ezra was correct that Jewish and Muslim law did not sanction "marriage by reputation" (as British law did in certain circumstances), other observers were more invested in the production of new norms rather than the reassertion of traditional ones. Thus the Jewish Communal Organization of Shanghai, which the British authorities deemed "in a position to speak for Jews of British nationality," insisted that in all matters of personal law (including those pertaining to marriage, dissolution of marriage, inheritance, and wills), it was their preference to have the law of England extended to them...

One would expect plaintiff and defense to differ. And yet the range of opinions was breathtaking. ... Far from merely weighing the legality of his marriage or religious status, then, the trial that followed the magnate's death raised questions of broad concern. When it came to personal law, at what point did the authority of the Jewish community cease and that of the modern state begin? With respect to Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Jews specifically, was the state's respect for the legal authority of Jewish communities over matters deemed internal—long a hallmark of state policy in the Ottoman terrains—imperiled by the rising power of national legal systems (Iraqi as well as British) and the international codes that guided them? What or who had the authority to affirm the legality of identities—documents? individuals? the community? the state?

Judge Grain's judgment, which found in favor of Liza Hardoon, rested on three arguments. First, he opined that regardless of whether Hardoon was by birth Iraqi, he had chosen China as his permanent home...Hardoon had lived in China for fifty-seven years, leaving only once to vacation in Japan; he had purchased property in China, had been buried there, and had "had no intention of returning to Baghdad and in fact never went back, even for a visit, after he left it when a boy." Second, citing legal precedents that spanned the reach of the British Empire, Grain maintained that the sovereignty of China had granted Great Britain the right to administer its own law in its own courts, and more specifically that the testamentary estates of British subjects domiciled in China were to be governed and administered by British law. Finally, he suggested that as a British Protected Subject, Hardoon was British from the perspective of the law. ... On the basis of these arguments, Grain de-

termined Hardoon's will to be "good and valid," and found in favor of the defendant, with costs.

Although Judge Grain's verdict settled a round of claims on Silas Aaron Hardoon's fortune, in the long run it resolved neither the fate of the family estate nor the national status of Baghdadi Jewish émigrés in China. The British Foreign Office continued to field challenges to the distribution of Hardoon's fortune for some time, a fact that caused a British bureaucrat based in Baghdad to despair that there was "no evidence to show that [Hardoon's] relatives have not given up hope . . . in this contentious and somewhat sordid case." Most subsequent challenges to the estate came to naught...

Grain's judgment...seems to have had little effect beyond the Hardoon estate when it came to how the Foreign Office treated Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews who sought registration papers. As late as 1948, the national status of members of the Hardoon family, of Silas Aaron Hardoon himself, and of British Protected Persons in China of Ottoman descent more generally was still perplexing the British Foreign Office, prompting one British official to muse that "the whole question of BPPs [British Protected Persons] in China should be gone into. It is of considerable practical importance for the Consular Office in Shanghai and elsewhere in China and the present position seems alarmingly vague." Many officials in the British Foreign Office hoped that the notion of the British Protected Person would be rendered legally more precise; others maintained that the state required a whole new way to classify this body of individuals. One bureaucrat offered, "[British Protected Persons] are really protégés in the true meaning of the French term. I have found no term that satisfies me, but I suggest 'a person enjoying British protection.' I think this is a term which could be put on a passport." Although the United Kingdom had given up its rights to extraterritoriality for non-diplomatic persons in China five years before these notes were penned, the vexing liminality of the Baghdadi Jewish diaspora lingered on for the state, evading terse, legal, and even what some felt to be duly British categorization.

Baghdadi Jews were hardly the only protégés who acquired, lost, or negotiated for the status of British Protected Person in China (or elsewhere). Nonetheless, as the twentieth century unfolded, Baghdadi Jewish applicants for protection or naturalization, who once might have been afforded more latitude, seemed to stick with increasing persistence in the craw of British officials, particularly those in London. Why this should be so is difficult to say with precision; studying this group comparatively (relative to Armenians, say, or the aforementioned Sikhs employed in Shanghai's Municipal Police who were the butt of a

consul general's humor) might yield more definitive conclusions in this regard. But a number of preliminary theories arise. Perhaps the relatively small number of Baghdadi Jewish émigrés made them a visible target of increasingly punctilious bureaucrats. Perhaps because many of these Jews were wealthy, they (and, more pointedly, whatever estates they might generate) were less easy to dismiss than other Protected Persons dwelling in China with whom they could be compared. Perhaps because their émigré path stretched through India, their legal status, which reflected multiple colonial histories, was particularly difficult to parse. Or perhaps when the First World War came to its bloody end and the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were carved into mandates, émigré Baghdadi Jews seeking protection from the British state threatened, from the perspective of the officials who held the power to grant or deny their requests, to set a dangerous legal precedent that reached far beyond the boundaries of Shanghai or East Asia, into mandatory Iraq, Palestine, and beyond.

Whatever the causes of their vexatious stature, Baghdadi Jewish émigrés in East Asia were caught in an extended multigenerational struggle for legal clarity with the British state. All of this played out in court and before an international audience in the various testamentary battles that followed the death of Silas Aaron Haroon.

Twice in the 1930s, the British Supreme Court in Shanghai determined that Silas Aaron Haroon was a Briton. And yet the conditions of his post facto naturalization at the hands of the court were nothing if not colonially conditioned. Haroon was, after all, the son of a father born in Baghdad and naturalized in India, himself Ottoman-born, a British Protected Person (a status extended in violation of British law), a sixty-year extraterritorial resident of a treaty port city, and not even a one-time traveler to Britain. The British Supreme Court did not misread Haroon's history. Rather, the judgment emanating from this authority provided evidence of the enduring and extraordinarily fungible nature of British Protected Person as an ambiguous but nonetheless significant legal category of the early twentieth century. This category has been neglected by scholars of Jewish, British, colonial, and legal studies heretofore, but understanding how it was extended, revoked, petitioned for, and transformed promises to deepen—and, no less, to intertwine—our historical understanding of modern Jews, evolving norms of international and national law, and the reshaping of European imperialism in the wake of the First World War.

While Haroon is as idiosyncratic a historical character as one could imagine, the principal question that arose in the aftermath of his death was salient for Britain and Iraq, for international legal observers, and for extra-

territorial Baghdadi, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Jews living in Aleppo, Java, Shanghai, Tripoli, and beyond. Could an ambiguous legal category of identity inherited from the colonial era survive a time of ostensible global nation-building? What the Haroon testamentary trials indicated was that well into the interwar period, the status of British Protected Person, rather like European imperialism itself, could be selectively renamed and recast, serving at one and the same time as a stepping-stone to citizenship for certain holders of wealth and connections and a mark of dispossession for others.

Perhaps it does not strain the limits of interpretation to say that in this regard, these phenomena were not so very different from the effigy of Silas Aaron Haroon that so captivated the international press in the wake of this man's extraordinary funeral. Then, as now, there was something compelling and complex about a substance (wax), status (protégé), and political project (imperialism) that was eminently malleable, capable of being reconstituted and remolded, assuming ever new faces and hybrid cultural forms, shifting its shape without ever altogether melting away.

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A Tianjin / Kaifeng History Mystery

In issue 341 of the Bulletin, the publication of Igud Yotzei Sin, the late Alex Auswaks recalled when several Jews of Kaifeng came on pilgrimage during Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur to the Tianjin synagogue and that seating was arranged for them in the front row as a mark of respect. This probably happened between 1939, when the Tianjin synagogue was built, and 1949, when the Tianjin Jewish community largely dispersed. Since the Japanese army occupied Tianjin between 1937 and 1945, it is unlikely to have occurred during that time. So, who were these pilgrims and when exactly did they visit? If anyone has a clue, please respond to Anson Laytner at laytner@msn.com.

Finding Adler: A Musical Mystery

Finding Adler was produced by the CBC's Sharon Wu and The Current's Liz Hoath. Originally published on 18 June 2018, CBC Radio. Last Updated: 6 August 2018. Reprinted from *Bulletin*, Igud Yotzei Sin, #419, September 2020.

The name Adler has been in the back of Fang Sheng's mind since he was a child.

It was the name of a Jewish refugee who fled to Shanghai to escape the Nazis. He was a musician who had a lasting influence on Fang's family, and China's musical culture.

But his story has a touch of mystery.

"At first I couldn't even find Adler's first name, it was only after a long and deep research did I find out that his first name was Ferdinand," Fang told CBC's Sharon Wu, in her documentary *Finding Adler*.

Fang's father and uncle lost both parents soon after Japan invaded China in 1937. They grew up in an orphanage in Changzhou, 200 kilometres northeast of Shanghai.

One day in 1946, a group of Jewish refugees showed up to teach them music.

These musicians were among 20,000 "Shanghai Jews" from Europe, drawn there as it was one of the only places that didn't require a landing visa.

One of them was Ferdinand Adler, a violinist from Vienna. Fang's father, Ming Liang Sheng, was 12 years old at the time. He was placed in Adler's class with 10 other Chinese orphans. Fang's uncle was put in another class with a Jewish cellist. The siblings were part of the generation who later became the backbone of China's classical music scene.

"My father, mother and brother are all professional musicians," said Fang, who moved to Canada more than 20 years ago. He lives in Toronto where he works as an interpreter.

Ming Liang still lives in Beijing, and turns 86 this year.

"We were just a bunch of poor kids, he was the concertmaster for the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra," Ming Liang said.

Every weekend in 1946 and 1947, Adler would get on a train travelling from Shanghai to Changzhou to teach at a makeshift music school set up inside a temple.

"I felt there was no language barrier at all," Ming Liang remembers of his first violin lessons 70 years ago. "He used his hand to show me how to position each of my fingers on the strings. It seemed this was a natural way to teach and learn violin."

After the Sino-Japanese war ended in 1945, civil war broke out and tension escalated quickly. In 1947, Adler abruptly left China.

"I have so many questions [about him]," said Fang. "How did he flee Europe? What was his life and career like before he had become a refugee? After 1947 he left China — what happened to him?"

In February 2017, Fang created a Facebook page, called The Adler Project, to try to answer some of those questions. He posted the only photo of Adler he owns: an old black-and-white picture of the teacher and his class, taken right after their last lesson.

Ferdinand Adler with his Chinese students in 1947. Standing second to Adler's left is Ming Liang Sheng, Fang's father, who was 13 at the time.

Fang hoped he could find people connected to the Shanghai Jews community, or at least find some pointers as to Adler's whereabouts. But the page didn't lead to any clues.

In August that year, however, Fang saw a headline that made him jump off his chair. An Austrian woman had met with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, to tell them about her father's past with the Orchestra.

His name was Ferdinand Adler.

The online article included a photo of Christina Adler, holding two pictures of her father playing violin.

"I was very surprised but very, very excited, I thought that my search is seeing the light of dawn," Fang said.

Immediately he reached out to the orchestra for Christina's contact information, but he received no response.

Then months later "the most amazing moment" arrived. It was a simple "Like" on the Facebook page from a man named Paul Rosdy.

"I noticed that he went to the Vancouver Film School. At first I thought he was Canadian," Fang remembers. He got in touch with Rosdy to see if he had any information. It gave him the breakthrough he needed.

Rosdy, a filmmaker in Vienna, had made a documentary about the Shanghai Jews twenty years ago: The Port of Last Resort. He had come across Adler's story, and found his daughter Christina. Rosdy was able to give Fang her contact information, and the lead he needed to answer all of his questions.



A meeting with the past

Kufstein, a picturesque town in western Austria, has been home for Christina Adler since she was seven. On March 25, Fang travelled there to meet her.

Sitting side-by-side, the pair compared their fathers' collections, bringing seven decades' worth of memories to life through hundreds of pages of photographs, concert brochures, clippings and letters. Simone Telser, a family friend, acted as translator for Christina. "You are the best proof of this — because before that she hasn't heard about her father teaching orphans at any point," she told Fang.

When they compared the images, they noticed the similarity in these pictures of their fathers, taken decades apart. Fang's father Ming Liang was always proud of his posture, which he referred to as 'The Adler Posture.'

Christina helped Fang pull together the missing pieces of Adler's life story, and why he had so abruptly disappeared.

Christina was born in Shanghai in 1945. But as Civil War in China escalated, her parents decided to return home to Vienna. "I was only two years old," Christina said. "I myself cannot remember Shanghai at all, but my mother always said that the time in Shanghai had been the best time of her life."

Life in post-war Vienna was difficult, especially for artists. Bouncing between auditions, rehearsals and concerts in order to

make ends meet for the family, Adler was clearly burning out. After a heart attack at a concert rehearsal in 1952, he died. Christina was only six.

The next year, Christina and her mother Gertrude moved from Vienna to Kufstein, to live with Christina's aunt and her family. She's lived there ever since.

Connected by music

Fang brought a little surprise for Christina. Unzipping a small case, he reveals a violin. His father bought the instrument in the 1950s. It was the very first violin Fang played, in his first music lesson when he was seven. "I've been practicing a little piece before this trip and hope to play for you now," said Fang, who hasn't performed since he was 15. He played Love's Sorrow, by one of the most famous classical violinists of his time, the Jewish Austrian Fritz Kreisler.

"I'm so touched, after more than 70 years people are still caring and sharing the memory of my father," Christina said.

Fang feels lucky to have rediscovered a missing part of his family's history, and find the person who made music such a part of their lives.

"I think music is in there throughout," he said. "It represents what we are working hard towards, it represents what we believe in."

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