



Three Jewish Characters

Two-Gun Cohen: A Personal Reminiscence

By Ruth Corman

Excerpted from the Jerusalem Post, 14 April 2021

My husband, Charles, was related to the only Jew, probably the only Westerner, to become a general in the Chinese Army – known as “Two-Gun Cohen” – who played a historic part in China’s abstention and the UN’s recognition of a Jewish state in 1947.

In 1961 Charles’s mother, while staying at the King David Hotel Jerusalem, had to call the house doctor. Dr. Cyril Sherer arrived and, serendipitously, they discovered they were cousins! Cyril, a Londoner, lived many years in New Zealand but was now in Jerusalem. It was he who told the family about their illustrious cousin.

Moishe Abraham Mialczyn was born 1887 in Poland. Two years later, his family emigrated to London’s East End. His name was changed to Morris Abraham Cohen. School did not interest him, but he loved street life, markets and particularly the boxing clubs, where at age nine ‘Cockney Cohen’ won his first bout. Fortunately, his father never knew about it even after his nose was broken! He also worked for a glazier. Moishe went out at night breaking windows for the glazier to repair the next day. A perfect partnership.

At 13, he was arrested for pickpocketing and sent to a reform school. Run on military lines, they learned carpentry, gardening and English. After three years he left with no future plans. His father, Yossef, worried, called a family council and decided to send Moishe to Canada to work on a relative’s farm. He remained there just long enough to master skills with dice, cards and guns from Bobby, a local cowhand. These became very useful in later years.

He played cards for a living, then moved to selling real estate in Edmonton, beginning a life long association with the

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Jakob Rosenfeld: A Jewish Doctor in Revolutionary China

By Ronen Shnidman

Excerpted from <https://www.timesofisrael.com/how-a-jewish-doctor-helped-form-backbone-of-revolutionary-chinas-medical-system/12> August 2019

China recently celebrated the 92nd anniversary of the founding of its People’s Liberation Army (PLA) with events at Chinese embassies around the globe...a military that boasts over 2 million servicemen today. That’s a far cry from the mere 20,000 troops it started with back in 1927.

Dig a little deeper into the history of the controversial military that has come to be ranked as the third most powerful in the world, though, and you will find the more passive story of a Jewish doctor who helped resuscitate the Communist-controlled New Fourth Army during the 1937-1945 war with Japan, and its struggle against the country’s ruling Kuomintang nationalists.

Jakob Rosenfeld won’t ring much of a bell among Jews in Israel or the Diaspora. Rosenfeld’s final resting place, a small plot with a modest gravestone in the Kiryat Shaul cemetery on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, isn’t often visited, and it probably wouldn’t occur to anyone that the man buried there was once the quite-influential health minister of the PLA’s 1947 provisional government.

However, since Sino-Israel diplomatic ties were reestablished in 1992, Chinese delegations stationed in Israel have gone to this grave with a bouquet to pay their respects every year, not unlike the Jewish custom honoring a loved one’s *yahrzeit*.

Part of the reason for this tribute may be Rosenfeld’s close wartime colleague, New Fourth Army commander Chen Yi.

After the war, Chen would go on to be-

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Nat Rabin: A Jewish Musician-Gangster in Shanghai

By Jordyn Haime

Excerpted from the South China Morning Post (Hong Kong), 29 August 2021

At a board meeting of the newly formed Taiwan Jewish Community in 1981, then-president Yaacov Liberman brought a matter to the table: a friend from his days back in Shanghai was down on his luck. He was in his mid-70s, didn’t have much money and his health was deteriorating. He needed meals and a safe place to stay.

His name was Nathan Rabinovitch, alias Rabin, but sometimes he just used the name “Nat”. The community was able to house Rabin and give him meals at the Jewish centre in Taipei for a few days before finding him a room with the Little Sisters of the Poor, a Catholic elderly care home outside Taipei.

Members of the Jewish community visited him each week to keep him company until he died, in 1985. Rabin became the only Jew known to have been buried in Taiwan, one of the few Jews known to have come to Taiwan from mainland China in 1949, and one of the first Jews to have lived on the island.

But, even after his death, he remained a mystery among those who had helped care for him: no one knew much about what the old man, who died surrounded by attendant nuns, had got up to during his days in China. He had boasted about his previous life, and made some wild claims: he had been a good friend of American gangster Al Capone and had great riches, he said, but how much of it was true, no one knew.

He was in Taiwan alone, no wife and children, no family. Even the few researchers who have stumbled across Rabin in their work have been left scratching their heads trying to figure out who he really

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FROM THE EDITOR

We are publishing the final issue of Points East volume 36 just as we begin the Jewish year 5782. Shana tova – here’s to a good new year however you reckon it – our world certainly needs it!

This issue focuses on the stories of 5 individuals: a general, a doctor, a gangster, a scholar and a rabbi/businessman; 3 whose articles were planned and 2 whose articles came about unintentionally and definitely sadly, after their deaths occurred in recent weeks. They were characters one and all, a reminder that each of us is unique and that we create our own life stories as we proceed through our lives. In keeping with the Jewish High Holy Days, which have just concluded, we are urged (or we should urge ourselves) to make our lives worthwhile so that when we die we will have left our world a little better, adding to its blessings, if only for a short while. 4 of the 5 men we highlight did just that.

The number of Jewish refugees that Shanghai took in around the time of World War II continues to confound scholars, who continually challenge the escalating and inaccurate number. Dan Ben-Canaan, the noted Israeli scholar who has made Harbin his home, takes a whack at this problem in the current issue, summarizing a recent online controversy.

Lastly, Jordan Paper pens a furious rebuttal to the article in our previous issue in which the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), an umbrella American Jewish organization, denounced China’s Uighur policy. Sadly, this is Paper’s last article for Points East. Paper died unexpectedly in early September at 82 years of age. To the end he remained a constructive and critical reader of Points East, ever vigilant to detail our perceived misperceptions of China’s government and its policies, but also offering sage advice regarding China’s stance on foreign religions and minorities to the Sino-Judaic Institute. He will be missed on both counts.

If you haven’t already done so, please take a look at our updated and much improved website, now at www.sinojudaic.org. Kudos again to Wendy Abraham for all her hard work in making this dream a reality.

Anson Laytner

Points East

Anson Laytner, Editor

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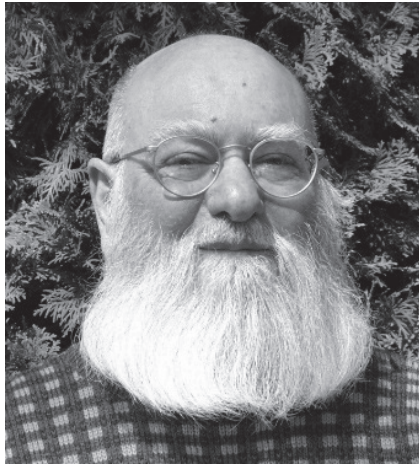
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In Memoriam Jordan David Paper



3 Dec. 1938 – 2 Sept. 2021

By Anson Laytner

When not being mistaken for Santa Claus, Jordan Paper was recognized as a major scholar of comparative religion, with particular expertise in Native North American religious traditions, mysticism, and the religions of China.

Born in a traditional Jewish household in Baltimore, Maryland, Jordan's intellectual curiosity led him to rebel against his upbringing and to explore the spiritual traditions of other peoples, but he continued to wrestle with the meaning of Jewish identity all his life. During the course of his life, he had intense experiences in several different disparate religions, which deeply influenced his studies.

Paper studied first at the University of Chicago and then at the University of Wisconsin where he earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in Chinese Language and Literature. He taught at Indiana State University, York University and was a visiting professor at Ching-I University (Taichung, Taiwan). It was there, while both were teaching at Providence College, that he met Li Chuang, whom he married in 1974. Returning to Toronto, he resumed teaching at York becoming a full professor there. Upon becoming an emeritus, he and his wife moved to Victoria, BC in 2000 where he continued to write and teach. At the time of his death, he was Professor Emeritus of Humanities and Senior Scholar, Faculty of Arts in the Religious Studies and East Asian Studies programs at York University (Toronto) and Associate Fellow, Centre for Studies in Religion & Society at University of Victoria (Brit-

ish Columbia).

Paper was a scholar of diverse interests. His specialties covered 12 different subjects, and his 14 books cover 9 different topics in several different fields. He was a prolific academic writer, penning some 106 books and essays, excluding review essays and reviews. These include: *Chinese Religion and Familism: The Basis of Chinese Culture, Society, and Government* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020); *The Theology of the Chinese Jews (ca. 1000-1860)* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2012); *Native North American Religious Traditions: Dancing for Life* (Westport, CT.: Praeger, 2007); *The Deities Are Many: A Polytheistic Theology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005); *The Mystic Experience: A Descriptive and Comparative Analysis* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); *Through the Earth Darkly: Female Spirituality in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Continuum, 1997); *The Spirits are Drunk: Comparative Approaches to Chinese Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); and *Offering Smoke: The Sacred Pipe and Native American Religion* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press; co-published with Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1989) [2nd printing: 1994]. He edited *The Chinese Way in Religion* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press, 1998) among other volumes. His articles and presentations are too numerous even to begin to mention here. A full listing through 2012 may be found at <http://www.yorku.ca/jpaper/>.

But these accomplishments are but a partial description of the man.

While at York University, Jordan—I called him Prof. Paper back then—tried to teach me classical Chinese. He let me stay for a week or two by myself at his island cabin north of Toronto so that I could “find myself”. Although we lost contact when I graduated and traveled to China, Israel and America for schooling, we reconnected after he moved to Victoria and he sought me out because of my involvement with the Sino-Judaic Institute. A self-proclaimed addict to writing, he was far and away the most substantive contributor to *Points East*. I was honored when he asked me to write a postscript for his book *The Theology of the Chinese Jews*. Writing “What Western Jews Can Learn from the Kaifeng Jews” helped me to formulate much of how I came to think about God and Judaism. Still later, he suggested that we collaborate on putting together a collection of essays that became *The*

Chinese Jews of Kaifeng: A Millennium of Adaptation and Endurance (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2017). I was always struck by his graciousness and professionalism and how, despite his much greater learning, he treated me as his equal. More than that, he came to call me his or younger brother to his or elder brother—in Chinese, of course (“didi” and “gege”).

I loved Jordan's prickly, academic, nit-picking attitude; his love of good food and drink (preferably Scotch) and a good smoke (cigars); his oversized personality. Another good friend, whom he also met at York, Rabbi Dr. Aviva Goldberg, called him a brilliant, eccentric, stubborn, loving, generous human being. We both tried to help him navigate his love/hate relationship with Jewish tradition and we both often challenged his near 100% justification of the Chinese government's policies. (See his final piece rationalizing the Chinese government's treatment of the Uyghurs in this issue of *Points East*.)

Raised in the port city of Baltimore, Jordan carried his deep love for the sea and travelling on ships throughout his journey across life and the globe. In the merchant marine and with his wife, Jordan visited many countries and was particularly drawn to the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. I'm told that he loved hiking, camping, and traveling, especially by sea; that he loved fishing and eating fish, but not catching them; that he was a fanatic about weightlifting and that he was proficient in kendo, archery and laido (3 Japanese martial arts). His daughter, Leila, mentioned that he loved nifty electronic gadgets and specialized tools for fishing and that he took his childhood obsession with electronics – particularly cameras and radios – to the end of his days. Rabbi Goldberg remembered that he loved movies to the point that, while living in Toronto, he went probably once a week to see them, specifically on Tuesdays when they were cheaper and more often than not by himself.

Jordan is survived by his wife of 47 years, Li Chuang Paper, in their residence in Victoria, BC. His son, Eli Hsuan-Ming Paper, his twin grandchildren Gabriel and Isaiah, and his daughter Leila Hsuan-li Paper remain in Toronto.

I leave the last word to Li, who noted that Jordan had 3 loves: his research, China and his family.

Zichrono l'vracha – May his memory be for a blessing.

Did China Save 20,000 Jews During World War II?

By Dan Ben-Canaan

[Frank Joseph Shulman, Bibliographer, Editor and Consultant for Reference Publications in Asian Studies, maintains a mailing list of scholars who receive articles on subjects relating to China and the Jews. In the spring of 2021, an article shared by him sparked a furious controversy regarding the number of Jewish refugees in Shanghai. Respondents included Dan Ben-Canaan, Magnus Fiskesjo, Joshua A. Fogel, Tom Grunfeld, Charles Hayford, Steven Hochstadt, Barbara Hoster, Nathan Katz, Anson Laytner, Steven Levine, Nissim Otmazgin, Vera Schwarcz, and Ayelet Zohar. Prof. Ben-Canaan summarizes some of the discussion in the following essay. AL]

The Baal Shem said: "What does it mean, when people say that Truth goes over all the world? It means that Truth is driven out of one place after another, and must wander on and on." Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim*

An article in the BBC News – "Daily Newsletter" describes the Shanghai Jewish ghetto as one of the most extraordinary stories in Shanghai's history that took place in the neighborhood of Tilanqiao, which served as "a modern-day Noah's Ark" for Jews during WWII.

The article's title "How China Saved More than 20,000 Jews during World War II" was not only misleading, but presented an attempt to twist history with false claims.

The publication of the BBC article brought response from many scholars who have been studying the Jewish presence in contemporary China.

"China did not save the Jews no matter how many times the Chinese government repeats it". Japan was in charge of Shanghai and Harbin and it was the Japanese who decided their fate, wrote Tom Grunfeld of SUNY Empire State College. He concluded that "in the museum in Shanghai you would never know that there were any Japanese in China in the 1940s."

And Steven Levine of the University of Montana, wrote that there was more than enough damage done to the history of China by its own false narratives. "It should at least leave Jewish history alone" he said.

History has been, always, a matter for misinterpretations, misrepresentation, propaganda, and manipulation. In all cases, there are motives. In many we do not know the reasons for trying to create a new narrative. Sometimes we do discover what is behind the practice and can address it. But because history belongs to the past, what was there or was not, is open for "management". Jews were always subject of false

narratives for various reasons and the trend continues until this very moment.

As Margaret MacMillan wrote "We all live in history. Some of us make it, others are made — or broken — by it. Many of us read it. A few of us write it. Most of us try, at least fitfully, to make use of it, usually by ransacking the past for analogies to explain the present and to predict the future. And more than a few of us routinely botch it."

No, China did not save the Jews, not during WWII or at any other time. The weakness of the Chinese regime prevented it from doing anything on its own behalf let alone undertaking something for others. And during the Japanese occupation, first of Manchuria and Harbin and later Shanghai and other areas, it was trying to just survive.

As it happened, Harbin and Shanghai were a mere train stations where human cargo were moved from one place to another.

The 1930s saw several proposals to settle Jewish refugees in various places, among them Manchukuo, the Philippines, Australia and South America. None of these materialized.

One footnote of history regarding Jewish migration routes to China notes that the first choice of refugees was to sail to the far distant shores of the Philippines and not to Shanghai. Their admission, however, proved to be an aberration in Philippine immigration policy and dashed the hopes of potential Jewish immigrants. Thereafter, even amidst fierce Sino-Japanese hostilities, the open city of Shanghai replaced the Philippines as a Jewish "port of last resort."

In China, on 17 February, 1939, Mr. Sun Ke, the elder son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and Chairman of the Chinese legislative body, made a proposal to set up a settlement in Southwest China for Austro-German Jews who were fleeing from their countries.

The proposal, which never materialized, saw the settlement of Jews in the border region of Yunnan province. The plan was to settle 50,000 Jews on the border with Burma, and 50,000 on the border with Vietnam. There were economic considerations in Mr. Sun Ke's proposal, which were borrowed from ideas put forward by the Japanese and the notion that one can benefit from "Jewish money".

The plan, Sun Ke said, would relieve the pressure of arrivals that Shanghai was finding hard to bear, and it would also help strengthen China's relations with the U.S. and the U.K. These were the countries with the world's strongest Jewish communities and which China needed most in her life-and-death struggle with Japan.

According to Wang Jian, "We can see similarities between Sun's proposal and the Fugu Plan of the Japanese. Both saw

the global Jewish community as wealthy, powerful and talented – and a group to have on your side in the world war. Yunnan was, like Manchuria, a remote region rich in natural resources but sparse in population; neither China nor Japan had the capital to develop them – both looked to the overseas Jewish community to provide funds – just as Britain and France had introduced Indians, Chinese, Lebanese and other foreigners into their colonies in Africa, Fiji, and the Caribbean."

The plan never materialized. The only 'migrants' were 10 Jews who arrived in Yunnan in 1939 to work as drivers and in the provincial salt management bureau.

Japan's economy at the time was at a low point because of the war and they thought the Jews could help them. They had experience in the past with a Jewish banker from New York named Jacob Schiff who loaned them millions before the war. When a Japanese special group came to him again to convince him to lend money again, he threw them out of his New York office.

At one point, the Japanese proposed the establishment of a special Jewish area in Manchukuo, similar to Birobidzhan that was established by Stalin, where Jews from Europe could be settled – all for \$50 million American Dollars. Of course, this "idea" was rejected outright.

There is a correlation between the Soviet actions in regard to the settlement of Jews in a designated area and the formation of the same idea by the Japanese authorities in the 1920s. After all, Japanese army officers that studied in Moscow, brought upon their return home the beliefs put forward by the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which they acquired in the Soviet Union. Thus, at the same time, Japan, which now maintained control over Manchukuo, proposed the 'Fugu Plan'.

Another scheme to resettle European Jews in the 1930s was The Kimberley Plan; a failed plot by the Freeland League to resettle Jewish refugees in northwestern Australia before and during the Holocaust. With prevailing anti-Semitism in Europe, the Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonization, led by Isaac Nachman Steinberg, was formed in the United States in July 1935, to search for a potential Jewish homeland and haven. In late 1938 or early 1939, a prominent Australian pastoralist, Michael Durack, offered the League 16,500 square kilometers in the Kimberley region in northern Australia for considerable amount of money.

An opinion poll conducted later found that 47% of Australians opposed the scheme. Opposition was primarily based on con-

cerns that the settlers would inevitably drift away from Kimberley and begin migrating to the cities in large numbers, and flood the neighborhoods. The scheme was vetoed by the Australian government and Prime Minister John Curtin, with majority support, informed that the Australian government would not “depart from the long-established policy in regard to alien settlement in Australia” and could not “entertain the proposal for a group settlement of the exclusive type contemplated by the

Freeland League”.

Some forty years earlier, in the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, Theodor Herzl brought up the suggestion of establishing the Jewish national home in Uganda of all places. In his book *Der Judenstaat* he writes: “The Jewish question persists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers. Wherever it does not exist, it is brought in together with Jewish immigrants. We are naturally drawn into those places where we

are not persecuted, and our appearance there gives rise to persecution. This is the case, and will inevitably be so, everywhere, even in highly civilized countries...”

It is not surprising that along with Herzl’s proposal, all, including the Chinese, perceptions of Jews came out of stereotypical beliefs and anti-Semitism. And it is not odd that three of these proposals were formulated in the 1930s and were to be executed around 1939.

In Memoriam Rabbi Dr. Ephraim Ferdinand Einhorn



1918 – 2021

By Don Shapiro

Reprinted from <https://www.facebook.com/taiwanjewish/> 14 September 2021

Together with his many friends and admirers around the world, the Taiwan Jewish Community is mourning the passing of its beloved Rabbi, Dr. Ephraim Ferdinand Einhorn, who died Sept. 15, 2021 – three days after his 103rd birthday – after an extended illness. He will be buried in the Segula Cemetery in Petah Tikva, Israel.

Dr. Einhorn was a man of many parts – religious leader, scholar, linguist, businessman, and public-diplomacy “envoy.” People meeting him for the first time and presenting him with a business card would be surprised to receive a pack of as many a dozen cards in return.

There were also many chapters to Dr. Einhorn’s long life. Born in Vienna, he was a child prodigy who managed to talk his way into being accepted successively at leading yeshivas in Italy, Belgium, and England despite being underage. He graduated from the Etz Chaim Rabbinical Seminary (Tree of Life College) in London, where he was a star student.

During World War II, he taught children who had been evacuated to the

countryside and then served as Rabbi for a London congregation during the Blitz, taking refuge in air raid shelters at night. After the war he served as head of the World Jewish Congress’s Information Department for Great Britain and then as a Rabbi in pulpits in Toronto, Canada and various U.S. cities.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, he took on a series of sensitive, sometimes clandestine missions to various Arab countries in North Africa and the Middle East to try to assist Jews wrongly accused of crimes or otherwise facing religious discrimination.

In the 1960s he turned his hand to business, establishing the World Patent Trading Co. in New York, specializing in buying up and commercializing patents for innovative products and processes developed by scientists.

He later moved his center of operations to Prague to seek worthwhile patents in the whole of Eastern Europe...Apparently suspecting Einhorn of espionage, the Czech government expelled him in 1972. After working for a local company in Kuwait, he came to Taiwan in 1975 as part of a trade delegation and decided to stay. The focus of his business shifted to developing innovative items to serve as corporate promotional giveaways.

At the same time, he began officiating at Shabbat and holiday services in a succession of Taipei hotels to serve Jews living in the city’s downtown and visiting Jewish businesspeople and other travelers.

In the early 2000s, the Tienmu-based Taiwan Jewish Community where I had served as president in effect merged with the Einhorn minyan, then based at the Ritz (later Landis) Hotel.

He was an inveterate joiner, participating actively in a host of community organizations, including the American Chamber of Commerce (which in 2016 made him a lifetime honorary member), the European Chamber of Commerce, the American Club (where he would preside over his own table for brunch each Sunday), and the Rotary Club, where he was an avid member and longtime editor of the En-

glish-speaking branch’s newsletter.

He also had a knack for making a wide circle of friends, and delighted in showing off photos of himself posing with cabinet ministers, mayors, and other dignitaries. But those contacts also led to substantive results, as he was able to help Taiwan’s foreign ministry bolster its connections with such countries as Poland and Lithuania.

Into his nineties, Einhorn was in vigorous health. I marveled at seeing him scurrying across a hotel lobby, the constant bag full of documents and photos in hand. And for many years an Einhorn religious service was sure to include lengthy digressions in which he would recount stories from his days as a yeshiva student or troubleshooter in Arab countries...

But what was most valuable in the Rabbi’s remarks was his repeated emphasis on the importance of always learning and questioning. One of his favorite aphorisms was that “the beginning of wisdom is to realize how much more there is to know.”

He also believed deeply that while the body would ultimately give way, the soul is immortal. He often compared the soul to a “chip” that provides the body with software. That faith must have been comforting to him in his last years when he was largely confined to a wheelchair and had difficulty speaking, but was still mentally alert and came to Shabbat services each week without fail.

The Einhorn legacy is that he touched and inspired so many people over the decades. These include both Jews and non-Jews such as his fellow Rotarians, Taiwanese interested in Judaism who often attend our services, and countless classes of National Taiwan University students who heard his annual lectures.

I am among the many people who feel that my life has been enriched by having known and learned from this remarkable man.

Dr. Einhorn is survived by his longtime companion Eugenia Chien, daughters Daphna and Sharone of the U.S., grandchildren, and great-children.

Don Shapiro was TJC Chairman in the 1980s-1990s.

Cohen,, continued from page 1

Chinese community...One day in a cafe he saw an elderly Chinese man quietly sipping tea. Suddenly, two Chinese thugs entered and assaulted him. Moishe, fearless and hating injustice, sprang to his defense, and threw them out. The gentleman bowed quietly, thanked him and left. He was Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who would become the first president of the Chinese republic.

While attending a Chinese lodge meeting, Moishe was formally introduced to Sun, visiting Canada to raise funds for his revolutionary activities from the large expatriate Chinese community, mostly railroad workers. They willingly supported his cause envisaging a better future for themselves and their families. In Canada, they were outcasts, badly treated, poorly paid and subject to discriminatory laws.

Sun asked Moishe to guard him during his tour, as the Chinese regime had placed a \$1 million price on his head. He also requested Moishe's help in purchasing rifles, which were then smuggled into China as "sewing machines."

Appointed as a commissioner for oaths, Moishe became increasingly involved in local politics on behalf of the Chinese, elevating their status to a group with political significance. He also consolidated his own position as a successful wheel-dealer.

By 1911, there was a revolution in China when Sun and his followers overthrew the corrupt Qing Dynasty. That same year Moishe visited his family in London, the "prodigal son" returning as a successful businessman. But everything changed in 1914, with the outbreak of World War I. He joined the Canadian army, experiencing the horrors of trench warfare and fierce fighting at the Battle of Ypres in France.

After the war he returned to Edmonton a hero, but the real estate boom was over and he needed a new occupation, at the same time continuing to raise support for Sun.

In 1922 Moishe received a request from Sun with help regarding railway construction. He left for China and, on arrival, Sun asked Moishe to remain as his bodyguard and arms buyer. He happily accepted, moved into Sun's house and dedicated himself to protecting him. Moishe admired Sun for his quiet dignity and Sun saw Moishe as someone honest, who could be trusted. He also developed a friendship with Soong Ching-ling, wife of

Sun, that lasted a lifetime.

Wherever Sun went, Moishe, his indispensable aide, was close behind. One attack on Sun's life resulted in a bullet injury to Moishe's arm. Moishe realized he would be much safer shooting with both hands, so he purchased two Smith and Wesson pistols that he always carried with him, (even, as he told Cyril, keeping them under his pillow whilst staying at the Mayfair Hotel, London). Thereafter he became known as "Two-Gun Cohen."

Moishe was also active buying arms on behalf of Sun's government. At one meeting he negotiated a deal entirely in Yiddish with the local warlord who had lived with a Jewish family whilst studying overseas.

Sadly Sun died in 1925. Moishe confessed that he cried only twice in his life, once for Dr. Sun, and once for his father. He said that the period spent with Sun was the first time in his life that he felt he had truly found his place. Before dying, Sun gave Moishe a letter stating [his support of Zionism].

Moishe remained in China as a military adviser to Sun's successor, Chiang Kai Shek, and in 1928 the Chinese parliament appointed Moishe as a full general, carrying a life pension. For relaxation he would spend time at Shanghai's Jewish Club, where there was a sizable Jewish community, mainly comprising Russians who had fled the 1917 Revolution and Iraqi Jews seeking their fortunes. He became known for his generosity and the lavish parties that he threw for friends...

In 1941, the Japanese seized Hong Kong. Moishe placed Madame Sun and her sister Ai-ling on one of the last planes out of the British colony but he stayed, waiting for the inevitable.

He was immediately arrested and taken to the notorious Stanley Internment Camp for two years, being constantly beaten and losing 60 lbs. Moishe told Cyril that, at this, the lowest point of his life, he often found himself reciting the Shema – the Jewish prayer he remembered from childhood.

Thanks to a Red Cross prisoner exchange in 1943, he was evacuated to Canada where, as a member of the Chinese delegation, he took part in the founding of the UN. For the next few years he shuttled between Montreal and China trying to do business deals and keeping up his old contacts.

In 1947, Moishe heard that China intended to vote at the UN against the creation of the Jewish state. He was deeply affected by the struggle for independence of the Jews in Mandatory Palestine and immediately contacted his good friend, General Wu Tieching, the Chinese representative at the United Nations, producing the letter he had received from Sun so many years ago.

When all the efforts by Zionist leaders to meet with Wu Tieching failed, they brought Cohen to San Francisco to urge him to use his connections to influence Wu. It turns out that Cohen had not only been an advisor to Wu when the latter had served as the Canton police chief, but he had also later appointed Wu as a general in the Chinese army.

In a meeting the very next morning, Cohen presented Wu with the 1920 letter he had received from Sun expressing his strong support for the Zionist cause, and Moishe convinced his old friend, Wu, to abstain in the Palestine partition vote.

As a result, China abstained and the vote was passed. Israel was born. Moishe tried enlisting in the Israel army, but was gently told that they had no need for 60-year-old ex-generals. He was deeply disappointed.

He did, however, help in other ways. One day the phone rang in Cyril's Jerusalem surgery. It was the deep booming voice of the general, invited by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to spend a week in Israel as his guest.

Why had he been invited? Cyril guessed it must have been because Palestinian terrorists were scattering button mines near schools in the North. These harmless looking discs, manufactured in China, were being picked up by children, whose hands were blown off. Immediately after Moishe's Israel trip, he visited his old friend Zhou Enlai (the Chinese prime minister) in Geneva. He very likely produced Sun's letter again, as suddenly the mines stopped.

By now Moishe was living with his sister's family in Manchester, acting as a consultant to the Rolls Royce aircraft company whose products the Chinese used in their Vickers Viscount airplanes.

He was one of the few Westerners to be allowed to travel to both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. He admired the Communists' achievements for their masses, but felt it was in contradiction to the highly individualistic Chinese character.

The Chinese government continued to pay his pension and in 1966, the 100th anniversary of Sun's birth, Moishe was the only westerner on the podium in Beijing together with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai.

Cyril recalled the huge bear hugs of this emotional, affectionate and sentimental man. Aged 58, Moishe married Judith Clarke, an attractive Jewish businesswoman from Montreal. They divorced after 11 years but remained friends; Judith saying that she felt she had been married to China rather than to Moishe.

In 1977, he died and was buried in a Jewish cemetery in Manchester with a headstone in English, Hebrew and Chinese, paid for by the Chinese government – a tribute from the people he served so well. The tomb was inscribed by Soong Ching-Ling, Sun's widow, then-vice chairman of the People's Republic of China, Peking. It identified him as "Mah Kun" – as close as the Chinese could get to Morris Cohen's name, meaning "clenched fist"...

Moishe's life reads like a film script. Cyril related how many years ago the family was told that he had been decapitated by the Chinese for some misdemeanor. They sat shiva – the Jewish mourning period. Two months later, he unexpectedly turned up in London. No explanations.

It was sometimes said that Moishe never let the truth stand in the way of a good story but, according to Cyril, who met him several times and on whose memoir this is based, it all happened.

Thank you Cyril – who died at the age of 97 in 2018 and is sadly missed – for bringing Moishe into my life. I loved getting to know him.

From poverty and petty crime, he rose to become a man of substance. Watching the old newsreels of him, the only Westerner proudly walking in Sun's funeral cortege and again at the 100th anniversary of his birth, you see a man who used his wits, charm and humor to achieve something extraordinary.

There is no way he can be forgotten.

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Rosenfeld,, continued from page 1

come China's foreign minister. By the time Sino-Israeli diplomatic relations resumed, both Rosenfeld and Chen were dead, but the latter's successors maintained the legacy of respect their predecessor had for Rosenfeld. "Every year, the Chinese Embassy in Israel pays tribute to the tomb of Dr. Rosenfeld at Kiryat Shaul Cemetery, Tel Aviv," Chinese Ambassador Zhan Yongxin tells *The Times of Israel*. "By doing so, we want to reaffirm that the Chinese government and its people will never forget the friends who contributed to the founding and development of the People's Republic."

Within China itself there is a Rosenfeld Hospital in Junan County, the area in the Shandong province where Rosenfeld was stationed and practiced medicine during the war. The county also houses an exhibition hall dedicated to the "Deeds of International Fighter Rosenfeld," built in 2000.

Rosenfeld's journey to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and China began in 1930s Vienna where he was a well-to-do urologist with a clinic – and a member of the Social Democratic Party.

That party was banned in 1933 by Austrian Nazis following the coup d'etat by Englebert Dollfuss. However, it was only in 1938 that Adolf Hitler declared the Anschluss with Austria and began emptying the former country of its Social Democrats and Jews.

In 1938, Rosenfeld was sent to Dachau for a year. When he returned to Vienna in 1939, he and his younger brother quickly requested visas from the Chinese Legation and traveled to Shanghai...

Rosenfeld opened a successful practice in urology, gynecology and obstetrics in Shanghai soon after he arrived in 1939, most likely with capital he had from his previous practice. However, his past interest in socialism quickly led him to a Marxist reading group led by fellow Austrian Jew and agent of the Communist International organization, Hans Shippe...

The most potent factor in Rosenfeld's recruitment appears to be Shippe's description of the areas under Chinese communist guerrilla control. Shippe described these areas as places where democratic politics prevailed and the people relied on their own production to survive, like a proper Marxist utopia. Meanwhile, the lack of medical care in these areas and the description of amputations for leg injuries and lack of anesthetics horrified the doctor and encouraged his belief in the necessity of his assistance.

After his recruitment by Shippe and Dr. Shen Qishen (the health commissioner of the New Fourth Army), Rosenfeld had to find a way to get out of Shanghai and join the revolutionary forces in the struggles against the Japanese and Kuomintang...

Rosenfeld accomplished this by traveling through Shandong province dressed as a German missionary with a cross on his chest, according to Chinese sources. His Chinese companions on the trip referred to Rosenfeld as Luo Shengte – a local adaptation of the sound of his Western name.

This is how Rosenfeld went from being a passive victim of fascism in Europe to an active fighter against Japanese fascism in China. Rosenfeld became the field doctor at the army's front quarters in Junan County.

Informally, he became known as "great doctor with big nose." Some soldiers and local people even praised him as the reincarnation of Hua Tuo, a famous Chinese doctor from the Han Dynasty era.

The New Fourth Army had a severe shortage of medical personnel, so Rosenfeld created the Huazhong Medical School. The first class was comprised of 50 students, according to the Chinese book "You and Us," which tells Rosenfeld's story. The Jewish doctor provided lecture courses there, physical dissections, experience with internal medicine and surgery, pharmacology and battlefield rescue.

Over time, the school trained nearly 10,000 medical professionals, some 95 percent of the total medical team of the New Fourth Army, according to Chinese sources. After the civil war these medical personnel formed the backbone of the medical establishment in China.

Rosenfeld's front-line clinic not only treated soldiers, but over a dozen locals every day. To do this while lacking a steady supply of medical implements, the doctor developed some creative work practices. For example, Rosenfeld used bamboo sticks instead of metal tweezers, butter and mutton tallow instead of petroleum jelly, and kraft paper coated with glue instead of adhesive bandages...

When the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) marched through Beijing and established it as a capital of the new People's Republic of China in 1949, Rosenfeld was there. But his Chinese adventure would soon come to an end.

By November 1949, Rosenfeld had returned to Austria to seek the remnants of his family not killed in the Holocaust. He found a younger sister and older brother,

but the conditions were still too anti-Semitic and uncomfortable for Rosenfeld to tolerate.

"I don't know if he was a Zionist or Communist but he felt out of place in war ravaged Vienna, most of his family and friends were gone," says Professor Tom Grunfeld of Empire State College of the State University of New York.

Rosenfeld applied for a visa to return to China, but was rejected due to the ongoing Korean War, according to Grunfeld, so he turned to Israel.

In August 1951, with no other prospects, he immigrated to Israel to rejoin his younger brother Joseph, who had resettled in Israel from Shanghai. The elder Rosenfeld died of a heart attack within less of a year of entering the country at the age of 49.

Mao's Other Jews

Rosenfeld isn't the only one of his kind — more than a handful of Jews played roles in the rise in the People's Republic of China (PRC), and are largely neglected by history.

"[M]any of the foreigners who went to China and worked with either the CCP or the left wing of the [Chinese Nationalist Party] were Jewish," says Grunfeld.

Hans Müller, a German Jewish doctor,

played a similar role to Rosenfeld as a field doctor for the Eighth Route Army — the other major CCP army group during World War II and the civil war. Unlike Rosenfeld, Müller stayed in China and worked in various positions at hospitals and medical schools after the establishment of the PRC and until his death in 1994.

Most of the other Jews who joined the CCP were literary types, such as the journalist Israel Epstein, the interpreter Sidney Rittenberg, and the translator Sidney Shapiro, among at least a half dozen others like them.

Collectively they helped the outside world understand the CCP and the new PRC government after the civil war ended. Epstein edited the magazine "China Reconstructs," which became "China Today." Rittenberg interpreted into English Mao's messages to US President Harry Truman and later worked as an English language interpreter for Xinhua News Agency. Shapiro translated major

Chinese literary works of revolution-ary-era China such as Ba Jin's "The Family" for Western audiences. He also served as a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council.

With China's expansion on the global stage and with greater ties with Israel, in particular, one can expect to hear more in English language media about these forgotten Jews of China in the future.

"Dr. Rosenfeld is an outstanding example of our international friends," says Chinese Ambassador Zhan. "He is a great doctor that saved many lives in China and a fearless soldier who devoted his life to the fighting of fascism."

Ronen Shnidman is a freelance journalist as well as an experienced Hebrew-English translator. He has also written for *Buzzfeed*, *Haaretz*, *JTA*, *JNS*, *The Forward* and *The Jerusalem Post*.

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BOOK NOOK

Contributed by Dr. Barbara Hoster at the Monumenta Serica Institute in Sankt Augustin, Germany, hoster@monumenta-serica.de, with thanks to Frank Joseph Shulman.

New German Publication on Jewish Press in Shanghai

Zhang, Ruoyu (Ed), *Wir in Shanghai: Presstexte deutscher und österreichischer Journalisten im Exil (1939–1949)* [We in Shanghai: Press releases by German and Austrian journalists in exile] Munich: Iudicium Verlag, 2021. 412 pp., 13 b/w Illus., EUR 48 (PB). ISBN 978-3-86205-535-7 An unprecedented phenomenon existed in the Shanghai Jewish press landscape for a decade. It began on March 30, 1939, the day the first edition of the German-language magazine *Shanghai-Woche* appeared, edited by the Jewish emigrant Wolfgang Fischer. Inspired by Fischer's great deed, other Jewish journalists in exile founded twelve additional periodicals in German such as *Gelbe Post*, *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, and *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*.

The book presents an anthology of texts from the German language press in Shanghai, comprising 200 articles by twenty influential Jewish journalists, including Alfred Dreifuss, Adolf Josef Storfer, Ossi Lewin, and Willy Tonn (W.Y. Tonn), but also lesser-known ones such as Gertrude Herzberg, Robert Basil and Erwin Felber. The texts on political, economical, cultural, religious, and family issues reflect the daily life of Jewish exiles in Shanghai during and after World War II. Here is a link to the title on the publisher's website: <https://www.iudicium.de/katalog/86205-535.htm>

New Japanese Publication on the Jewish Artist David Ludwig Bloch

Ōhashi Takehiko, *Di Eru Burohho o meguru tabi: Bōmei yudayajin bijutsuka to sensō no jidai* [A Journey Exploring D. L. Bloch: A Jewish Refugee Artist and the Age of War]. Shunyodo library 4. Tōkyō: Shun'yodoshoten, 2021. ix, 387 pp. Illus-

trations, Maps, Index. ¥ 2800. ISBN 978-4-394-19503-0

This richly illustrated book describes the life of the German-born Jewish artist David Ludwig Bloch (1910–2002), who fled to Shanghai in 1940 to escape Nazi persecution. The book's first and the third part provide information on the living conditions of Jewish refugees in the ghetto of Tilanqiao neighborhood in Hongkou and on Bloch's works of art produced in Shanghai. The author of the present book, Ohashi Takehiko is professor of literature at the Kwansai Gakuin University and has published several books on the cultural life and literature in the foreign concessions of Shanghai.

The book is available, among others, from Amazon, <https://www.amazon.co.jp/dp/B0978Q6N27>

Monumenta Serica Institute published David Ludwig Bloch's Shanghai woodcuts in 1997 in a trilingual edition, see <http://www.monumenta-serica.de/monumenta-serica/publications/otherpublications/catalog/Bloch-Holzschnitte.php>

Rabin, *continued from page 1*

was and how he ended up on the island.

Little did his caretakers know that Rabin had been a “killer when drunk” and “one of the most notorious Japanese gang members in Shanghai”, who engaged in extortion and blackmail, among other crimes, according to Bernard Wasserstein’s *Secret War in Shanghai* (1998). He was described by the Shanghai Municipal Police as “wholly unscrupulous”, a “real strong-arm man”...

Shanghai in the 1930s was self-governed, and self-policed by 14 foreign powers, admitting “the paperless, the refugee, the fleeing”, writes Paul French in his book *City of Devils* (2018). Shanghai was “a home [for those] with nowhere else to go and no one else to take them in” – which was good news for the young Rabinovitch.

He stepped off the SS *Princess Alice*, in December 1932, along with his aunt and uncle, the Gurevitches, who would show him around the city. Boris and Eva Gurevitch had recently immigrated to the United States after years managing Shobur Pharmacy, on Shanghai’s Avenue Joffre, then known as Shanghai’s “Little Russia”; another relative owned a pharmacy up the street and the neighbourhood was filled with those who had fled pogroms and the Russian Revolution. Rabinovitch found his home there, at the upscale Linda Terrace flats.

It was a new start for Rabinovitch, whose life up until that point had been marked by constant relocation: he was born in Dvinsk (now Daugavpils in Latvia), then part of the Russian empire, to Anna and Mendel Rabinovitch in 1909, the latter of whom was a rabbi and a shochet, a ritual slaughterer.

Probably because of pervasive anti-Semitism in the empire, or the revolution itself, the Rabinovitches immigrated to Harbin, China, alongside the thousands-strong Russian Jewish community that had been established there.

In 1928, the Rabinovitches moved again, this time to the United States, where they settled in Detroit, Michigan; 19-year-old Nathan began working as a car salesman and studying music part time at Detroit City College.

The Rabinovitch family eventually applied for American citizenship, but for unknown reasons, Nathan did not. His visa had expired six months after his arrival in the US, and having somehow been able to evade authorities, he was deported in 1932.

His chosen destination was that “international capital of sin and vice”, Shanghai, not a bad choice given the ease of immigration and existing Russian and Jewish communities...

The day he arrived in Shanghai, Rabinovitch began writing a new story for himself, first changing his name: from the very-Jewish-sounding Rabinovitch to the slightly-less-Jewish-sounding Rabin; later, he began using a different last name altogether: Rakens, earning him the nickname “Raven”.

To get into the good graces of Joe Farren, a Viennese Jew and ballroom dancer who managed the glamorous Paramount ballroom in the International Settlement, Rabin boasted of having worked with the famous American bandleader Ted Lewis. He was swiftly hired as a member of the Paramount’s band, though it is unclear exactly how Rabin contributed.

A bandleader? A musician? Some accounts say he played the trombone, but this could well be another one of Rabin’s fabrications, says Greg Leck, a researcher of Japanese internment camps in China, now working on a book about a group of Americans in World War II Shanghai, which will include Rabin.

Later, he formed his own band, Nathan Rabin’s Champions, composed of himself and nine American men. They headlined the best clubs and theatres in the city with their “snappy tunes, either of the sweet or hot variety”, read one newspaper article. The local English publications, particularly *The China Press* and the *North-China Daily News*, lapped up Rabin’s story. They plastered his name and face on their pages and showered him and his players with praise.

Rabin was “a youthful American” of considerable talent and achievement for his age (his citizenship was another fabrication; Rabin, like most other Russian Jews in Shanghai, was stateless), his band was “easily on a par with the best units in this part of the country”.

The mid-’30s were Rabin’s heyday, and by 1936 he had bought the Little Club, on Bubbling Well Road, “Shanghai’s favourite dancing and dining spot”, according to a *China Press* article from September that year. Serving up top-notch entertainment alongside French and Russian cuisine brought in a steady stream of patrons and good money. But those days were coming to an end.

In 1937, the Japanese began their bombing campaigns, and started to gain control over parts of the city. Even as Shanghai plunged deeper into darkness, Rabin

saw nothing but opportunity. There was talk of gangsters teaming up with the Japanese secret service: Eugene Pick and his gang were selling their services as blackmailers and informers.

Rabin wanted in, and the Japanese got word of him; he was known among local gangs for assisting in illegal activities such as prostitution, drug running, extortion and – allegedly – hits.

Rabin sold the Japanese an even bigger story than the band scene, claiming involvement with the Purple Gang, Detroit’s predominantly Jewish prohibition-era mob, and status as a powerful Chicago gangster who rubbed shoulders with Al Capone. He was hired, and even received a special Japanese passport.

A new residential hotel, Broadway Mansions – built by the real estate investor and tycoon Victor Sassoon, responsible for many of the buildings on the still-iconic skyline of the Bund – was Rabin’s home.

Broadway Mansions was Shanghai’s tallest building: a symbol of the wealth and power of the city’s foreign elite, and a far cry from the cramped house his parents, siblings, aunts and uncles were sharing back in Detroit. He cruised the international settlement in a “borrowed” car with Japanese diplomatic plates and walked the city armed with a pistol. His Japanese passport gave him some protection from arrest, not to mention alleviating the anxiety of statelessness.

A post-war American intelligence report cited in Wasserstein’s book describes Rabin’s “sole aim with the Japanese” as “to obtain as much money as possible by criminal means and hide behind Japanese officials”.

With a little time, he would become one of the most feared “Japanese” gangsters in the city, known among Shanghaianders for being ruthless and plain mean. Rabin was tasked with brokering tens of thousands of dollars worth of arms sales with Chinese guerillas fighting against the Japanese invasion, only to lead them straight into the hands of the Japanese. Police reports suggest Rabin killed two of them himself.

His paymasters also had him target pro-Chinese media, calling in threats to journalists such as Carroll Duard Alcott, a radio broadcaster who became well known for his anti-Japanese on-air commentary...

The Shanghai Municipal Police had a thick case file on Rabin, and were on to him. All they had to do was prove that his crimes were committed in the international settlement, and detectives were

committed to seeing it through. One shamelessly described Rabin as “a low type of Jew, wholly unscrupulous and just the person to commit a particularly mean type of fraud”.

Indeed, he was far from discreet, and known for turning traitor to work for the enemy. He walked about drunk, pistol in full view, was often overheard passing on messages, and was on edge when a Chinese guerilla he had set up did not show and when a journalist he anonymously threatened called him by name.

But, says Leck, Rabin’s arrest would not happen until after World War II: the Nationalists apparently let Rabin off scot-free – at least for a time – and he continued to enjoy life while newly freed camp internees, some of whom Rabin arrested himself, watched in disgust.

Wasserstein places Rabin with a group of foreign collaborators who were “flourishing” in Shanghai, “with pockets full of money, promenading Nanking Road and Bubbling Well Road, frequenting reopened hotels and nightclubs”...

Though documentation is hard to come by, Leck is confident that Rabin was arrested after “the Nationalists finally got their act together” in 1945, and imprisoned in the Ward Road Gaol along with hundreds of other foreign collaborators, although it is unclear for how long.

Further documentation shows that Rabin was imprisoned again, this time in 1949 in Taiwan, on a charge of falsifying statements. He was held first in a military prison and then transferred to a civilian prison, according to a 1953 US State Department memo reviewed by Leck.

Rabin’s paper trail after Shanghai goes almost dead, but for those few records of his arrests. Almost nothing is known about his life in Taiwan, or how he came to be there. Requests for documentation about Rabin in Taiwan were declined because of national privacy laws.

Leck offers a few possibilities as to Rabin’s activities after 1949. He was, “of course, stateless, and as such he would have had three realistic choices if he had been released from prison before 1949: accept entry to the Soviet Union, who most likely would not have treated him favourably; remain in China under the Communists, who would have viewed his past activities with disdain, or go to Taiwan, which we know he did”.

Most foreigners who stayed in Asia after the Communist revolution in 1949, though, chose British-controlled Hong Kong or Portuguese Macau; Taiwan at the time was a poor country, still recover-

ing from the departure of the Japanese. In 1949, when Rabin said he moved there along with 1.5 million other Chinese and the Nationalist government, it had just been put under martial law, which would remain in place until 1987.

“Whether [Rabin went to Taiwan] in KMT custody as a prisoner, or whether he managed to get there on his own,” says Leck, “we do not know.”

Surely to the disappointment of his rabbi father, Rabin did not seem to be an observant Jew and never visited the Jewish community in Taiwan until he needed help, more than 30 years later, from his old Shanghai friend and then-Taiwan Jewish Community president Liberman.

By then, he was no longer the “real strong-arm man” he had once been. The men and women who visited him would never have considered Rabin a hardened criminal, but he maintained his mythology: the stories about Al Capone, and all the money, property and power he was forced to leave behind in old Shanghai.

“When Mr. Rabin was telling his life story, he used to cry sometimes and said that he missed his good friend Al Capone and his big regret [was] that he never got married and had a family, although he had a lot of women,” says Yoni Gewurtz, one of the Jewish community members who visited Rabin in the time leading up to his death.

Towards the end, Rabin tried to reconnect with his brother, George, who he had not seen in 50 years. The two exchanged letters, and George once visited Rabin in Taiwan while on holiday with his wife and daughter. But George remained upset with his brother for his lifestyle choices and his disappearance...Another late relative told Leck that Rabin would call home every Sunday at 5pm to ask for money. Rabin died of heart failure in 1985 at the age of 75.

I reached out to the Little Sisters of the Poor, who told me where he had been buried: the Bali District third cemetery in New Taipei City, but the site had been dug up by the government several years ago; their building had also been renovated and Rabin’s belongings were gone. There was nothing left; his family did not attend the small funeral hosted by the Sisters and the Jewish community.

In chronicles of Shanghai history, Rabin has for now gone down as another character who never got more than a few paragraphs, at most, in the history books. Among the Taiwan Jews, he is one more strange story that most have not thought about in years... Jordyn Haime is an American Fulbright research fellow based in Taipei, Taiwan.

A Different Perspective on China and its Uyghur Population

By Jordan Paper

The last issue of Points East (36/2, July 2021) contains an article, “American Jewish Organizations Condemn Uighur Oppression,” which reports that the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) resolved that “The Jewish community should call upon the CCP [CPC] to end the genocide and exploitation of the Uighurs, as well as halt the oppression of other ethnic and religious minorities living within its borders.” This would be a laudable resolution if it were based on an actual situation, but on what evidence was this resolution based?

For those unfamiliar with Chinese policies toward non-Han ethnicities, some background information is necessary. Shortly after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, a list was developed of 56 ethnic cultures, including the majority Han, based on having a homeland with a substantial population and definable boundaries, a living language, and distinctive dress, customs, etc. Ethnicities other than the Han were given local autonomy where they are the majority of the population, and special advantages; e.g., free secondary education and medical care. As well, they were exempt from the one-child policy, etc. In drawing up the list, the government made one major error, they confused a religion with an ethnicity; that is, they confused a Muslim ethnic group, the Hui, with all Muslims in general, so Muslims who are actually Han (the vast majority of Chinese Muslims) are officially labeled Hui. When speaking to a Muslim taxi driver about this in Xi’an, he said he knew he was Han, but he enjoyed the perquisites of being labeled Hui and was not about to complain.

With regard to Islam, the Chinese government is concerned about the current influence of Wahhabism on Islam in China, along with the influx of Arab money to build mosques in the Arab style rather than the architecture of Chinese Islam, which I have observed in my travels in China. Thus, there is an attempt to orient Islam in China towards loyalty to Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries instead of China. Of course, there is also a concern regarding radical Uyghur imams preaching violent separation from China and terrorism; the Uyghurs have long resisted the Manchu dynasty’s amalgamation of Uyghur territory, along with other territories, into Xinjiang Province. There has been no attempt to stifle Islam itself, which has been viable in China for well over a thousand years; there are tens of

millions of Chinese Muslims. In all of my travels through much of China over several decades, I have observed Islam being alive and well everywhere and, over the years, have had discussions with lay Muslims and imams.

Regarding the specifics of the charge of genocide, it is a curious use of the term. In the present usage regarding the Uyghurs, it means no one is killed (save for a small number executed for terrorist murder). The claim is made that China is forcing sterilization on Uyghur women to wipe out the Uyghurs. Hence, one would then expect the population to be declining, but the reality is the exact opposite. From 2010 to 2018, according to available statistics, the Uyghur population in Xinjiang Province (Uyghurs compose slightly less than half of the Xinjiang population and are but one of the thirteen minorities who have resided in Xinjiang Province for a long time) grew by around 2,500,000 or 25.04%. This growth is considerably more than the growth of 13.99% for Xinjiang in general, and considerably greater than the growth of the Han population in China for that period which was only about 2%. This is because the Uyghurs were not subject to the one-child policy and because health services for Uyghurs were considerably improved during the recent period of poverty alleviation, as well as a major increase in the financial situation of most Uyghurs, from poverty to relative middle class.

As for cultural genocide, the Americans, Canadians and Australians are assuming that their own infamous policies towards their indigenous peoples are being carried out in China. The reality is the exact opposite. How can there be cultural genocide, when the Uyghurs, being granted autonomy in their part of Xinjiang, control the police, the educational system, the economy, and all cultural institutions? The Uyghurs themselves patrol the Chinese border in their area, they run the checkpoints for weapons control to stop terrorism, and they run the anti-terrorism program (which has been largely successful), especially as primarily Uyghurs died in the terrorist bomb explosions. The primary language in Uyghur areas is Uyghur; most men appear to wear the traditional Muslim skullcaps and beards, the mosques remain open, etc. If this is cultural genocide, then what does the term mean?

The Chinese government today promotes and subsidizes the dance, art, and music of the many ethnicities. Members of their parliament from non-Han ethnicities are expected to wear their traditional dress at parliamentary and other gov-

ernmental sessions. Their dance and music is highlighted at state-organized New Year television multi-hour extravaganzas, etc. Again, how is this cultural genocide?

As for forced labor, especially with regard to cotton farming and cotton spinning factories, Uyghurs lease their own farms (there is no private land ownership in China) and keep the profits. 80% of the cotton is harvested by subsidized machinery, and the remaining 20% are hand-picked and highly sought after, well-paying temporary jobs. The spinning factories are owned by Uyghurs and again the jobs are sought after; they were built as part of the recent poverty alleviation campaign. A high speed rail link goes all the way to Urumqi, so Uyghurs and others can easily go to the eastern cities for jobs if none are available in Xinjiang; no one forces them to do so.

This leaves the infamous prison camps supposedly holding from one to two million Uyghurs. I have seen a number of video interviews of those who have graduated from the re-education facilities (so-called prison camps). Of course, these are selected by the government, but what they say makes sense. I recall one young man, who was losing his wife and family because he had been led to fundamentalist Islam by an imam trained in Afghanistan, who insisted his wife give up her good job and never leave the home, and who insisted his family change their lifestyle. His wife, who would otherwise have left him, and his brother upset over the break in family ties, convinced him to voluntarily enter one of the two-year programs. There he was taught a more conventional Islam by a moderate imam, taught job skills, including the use of computers, and learned to speak, read and write Standard Chinese as a second language (without which it would be difficult to get a good job, just as without English, it would be difficult to get a good job in the U.S.). He felt the program was most worthwhile, and he started his own construction company. Even if this is not a typical case, this is far from the picture presented by U.S. propaganda.

Aside from voluntary students in these facilities, there are involuntary "students": those caught returning from terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, those caught smuggling arms and explosives, those preaching or instigating violence or separation from China, etc. These re-education centers are mainly run by Uyghurs and other Xinjiang Muslim ethnicities.

In 2020, a five-year program to eradicate extreme poverty throughout China was successfully completed. The government spent billions and hired five million dedicated young volunteers for one to three years' stints in villages all over China. Multi-disciplinary teams analyzed the poverty situation in every village in China, no matter how remote, considered what must be done in conjunction with the residents, and then either built new villages in less remote areas with factories for jobs to relocate the villagers, built expensive mountain roads to the villages so they could develop an economic base with the support of experts, or engaged in land reclamation; they have improved health care and schools; etc. All of the remote Uyghur villages were covered by this effort, and reeducation is one of the tools used for poverty eradication.

It is not surprising that American Jewish organizations will readily believe the most ridiculous propaganda vilifying Chinese and the Chinese government, and thus falsely condemn China for malevolent acts. The JCPA has unwittingly indicated the same will to believe the worst about people seen as different from themselves, and this is classic racism.

Taiwan to Open Its First Permanent Jewish Community Center

Excerpted from the Times of Israel and the JTA, 28 July 2021

Seven years ago, the lone Chabad rabbi in Taiwan reached out to Jeffrey Schwartz, a Jewish businessman and philanthropist who had helped fund the country's small Jewish institutions for years. The rabbi, Shlomi Tabib, was wondering if Schwartz could fund the construction of a mikveh...

There was a problem: Schwartz, who had lived in Taiwan for decades after growing up in a Conservative community in Cleveland, didn't know what a mikveh was. Once he learned, he believed there were not enough Orthodox residents in Taiwan to justify the construction costs, especially not when the region was still lacking a physical worship space.

"He said it's more important than [a] temple," Schwartz recalled. "He said Orthodox women need them every month. I said,

'Well, how many Orthodox people are there here that need it?' He said maybe one or two or three. "I do a lot of philanthropic work here in Taiwan, and I said, 'There's a long list of people way ahead of you to get my money,'" Schwartz said.

But fast forward seven years, and Schwartz is getting ready to open Taiwan's first-ever Jewish community center: a \$16 million complex spreading 22,500 square feet and featuring a 300-person ballroom, a kosher restaurant, a Judaica museum with items from Schwartz's personal collection, a library, spaces for group and individual study, and a Mediterranean-style courtyard for outdoor events — and a synagogue led by Tabib, along with that once-contentious mikveh, complete with a gold leaf ceiling and mosaics custom made in Lebanon. Tabib and his family will live on site. Once the center opens, the majority of Chabad's educational programming will be conducted there.

Until now, the Jewish community primarily operated out of two rented spaces in downtown Taipei — a Chabad house and a small office space...For decades, they've come together in small makeshift spaces for services and social events but have lacked a large central meeting place.

Construction on the Jeffrey D. Schwartz Jewish Community Center of Taiwan began in 2020, and is on track to be completed by December 2021...

Schwartz's center is not affiliated with the Taiwan Jewish Community group, which he had previously been a member of for decades. Schwartz says he is still on friendly terms with the Taiwan Jewish Community group and hopes their members will attend the many events he plans to hold in the center's ballroom space with traveling speakers. Links between the two

Jewish hubs are unavoidable among such a niche population: Glenn Leibowitz, the new center's head of communications — who during the day leads consulting giant McKinsey's communications team in the greater China region — has been friends with Ben Schwall, who heads the Taiwan Jewish Community, since the two went to college together around 30 years ago.

According to community spokesperson Leibowitz, the island has an estimated 700 to 800 Jews, half of whom are active community members involved in Shabbat meals and services, Jewish holidays, and other events.

Most Jewish residents live in Taipei, Taiwan's largest city and the center of business and social life in Taiwan, said Leibowitz, with a small number spread throughout the island, living in central, southern, and eastern Taiwan. Leibowitz estimated that Tabib's local Taipei following numbered in the hundreds, in addition to Jews traveling through the country who often stop at the local Chabad outpost for services or kosher food.

The center is being funded, built and operated by the "Jeffrey D. Schwartz and Na-Tang Jewish Taiwan Cultural Association" (JTCA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the Jewish community in Taiwan and around the world.

Schwartz, a businessman, has lived in Taiwan for over 50 years. His wife, JTCA co-founder and co-chair NaTang, is a Taiwan-born actress, musician and author.

Jeffrey Schwartz with his wife Na Tang. (Courtesy of The Jeffrey D. Schwartz & Na-Tang Jewish Taiwan Cultural Association)

"A community needs a rabbi. I was either going to go out and hire a Conservative or Reform rabbi and bring them out from the

States to Taiwan, and then it dawned on me one day — I don't want to go into competition with a rabbi here, and steal from his flock, so to speak," Schwartz said...

"I said, with all these years that I've devoted to Taiwan, I need to build a legacy for the Jews," said Schwartz, who has lived in the island nation for nearly 50 years since graduating from college. He founded a business in 1975 that has grown into a conglomerate of companies offering supply chain services. "When next generations come out, they're going to have a place that they can be proud of, that they can understand you can still be Jewish in Taiwan and still be part of the Taiwan community."

Collaboration between Taiwan's religious and secular Jewish communities was necessary in this instance, Tabib said, because "if someone wanted to build a center in Taiwan only for religious Jews, they would probably be going out of business quite quickly."

Despite its kitchens being strictly kosher and having a ritual bath constructed according to stringent Jewish law, the center is not intended for any one stream of Judaism — nor is it exclusively for Jews, said its founders...

"The JTCA honors and respects all other Jewish groups in Taiwan, including non-Jewish groups that support the Jews and Israel," Schwartz wrote in a statement. "The more internally diverse and externally united we are, the stronger we will be."



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