



Points East

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

Vol. 38 No. 1
March 2022

A Publication of the Sino-Judaic Institute

China - Israel: How Long Will Strong Relations Last?

By Farzad Bonesh

Reprinted from *Al Bawaba* (www.albawaba.com), 3 August 2022

Israel was the first player in the Middle East to recognize the People's Republic of China and vote in favor of China's membership in the United Nations in 1971. Following that, China and Israel opened their embassies and sent diplomatic missions in 1992.

In the past two decades, the relationship between these two actors has grown and expanded in various fields, including economy, trade, politics, military, security, culture, and technology. The growing relationship between Israel and China culminated with the signing of the Comprehensive Innovative Partnership between the two sides in 2017. Also, in January, China and Israel celebrated 30 years of official relations.

Geopolitics and politics

With a very ideological policy, China supported the Arab positions towards Israel for decades, but after adopting the open door policy and prioritizing the economy in the country's foreign policy, it took a neutral position and became balanced. Regarding geopolitics and strategy, China and Israel have somewhat different views and goals. Israel is close to the United States and China is also close to Russia and Iran, but China and Israel have been able to deepen relations beyond the differences.

In fact, Beijing is trying so that the development of relations with Israel does not have a negative effect on its relations with the Arab countries of the region and Iran. Therefore it considers the balance in relations with Israel. Also, the normalization of Israel's relations with the Arab countries of the region has a positive effect on their relations.

(continued on page 4)

Is the Israel-China Relationship Starting to Sour?

By Tal Schneider

Excerpted from the *Times of Israel*, 3 August 2022,

...“The honeymoon in relations between Israel and China is over,” former general Assaf Orion said at the launch of the Israel-China Policy Center in Tel Aviv Monday. “A series of indicators show that we are in a new period in relations between the countries and ties are now more complex and freighted than before.”

The new center will be run under the auspices of the Institute for National Security Studies, a Tel Aviv think tank with close ties to Israel's military and government.

Chinese Ambassador to Israel Cai Run attended the Monday opening, along with Intelligence Minister Elazar Stern and senior Israeli diplomats, as well as envoys from India, Vietnam and other countries.

In January, Israel's Foreign Ministry celebrated 30 years of diplomatic ties with China by touting the \$18 billion trade relationship between the countries. According to Orion, though, both Chinese investments in Israel and Israeli exports to China peaked in 2018.

Since then, both indices have been on the decline and in the last six years, the number of Israeli firms exporting to China has dropped by 15 percent to 480 companies.

The timeline dovetails with mounting pressure on Israel, first from former US president Donald Trump's administration and later from Joe Biden's White House, to more closely monitor the trade relationship, especially regarding large potentially sensitive deals.

In 2019, Israel's security cabinet announced the formation of an advisory panel on foreign investments in the country, after dragging its feet on the issue for several years

(continued on page 6)

Reflections on the New Port in Haifa

By Matti Friedman

Excerpted from: <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/israel-middle-east/articles/chinese-itzik-haifa>, 9 January 2022

Last week I drove up to Haifa to see with my own eyes a sight that, for most Israelis, has yet to sink in: the country's brand-new port, our third, which is beautiful, automated, efficient, and operated by the same Chinese company that runs the megaport at Shanghai. The first full container ship dropped anchor the day after my visit. Chinese characters adorn the soaring ship-to-shore cranes, freshly painted red and white; Israeli workers man joysticks opposite computer arrays running Chinese software; and in the managerial offices sit Chinese executives. To get to the port, I paid a toll and drove through the Carmel Tunnels, which were dug a few years ago by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation. At a gas station on the way I bought a pineapple yogurt made by the iconic dairy-products giant Tnuva, founded as a cooperative by Labor Zionists and now controlled by Bright Food—263 Huashan Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai. China was far, far away, until suddenly it was right here.

Americans increasingly see China as an adversary, but Israelis don't. When the Pew Research Center carried out a survey on global attitudes in 2019, two-thirds of Israelis said their view of China was “favorable,” and just a quarter said the opposite. This was close to a mirror image of the American public, where it was 60% unfavorable and just 26% positive...

In a great game between two powers there are always opportunities for agile little players who can work both sides, but getting that right isn't easy...But ties have only grown closer, cemented by—well, by cement. Last year I was driving up to Belvoir, a Crusader fortress above the fields of the Jordan Valley, when I came upon construc-

(continued on page 7)

Notice to Subscribers. Particularly Overseas Subscribers. Please Consider Receiving Points East Digitally

It is very expensive for us to mail out Points East, particularly to those of you outside the United States. Please consider receiving the electronic version of Points East and letting us put your dues to a better use. Just send an email to Laytner@msn.com and you'll be switched over. Thanks!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Featured Articles:

China - Israel: How Long Will
Strong Relations Last? 1

Is the Israel-China Relationship
tarting to Sour? 1

Reflections on the
New Port in Haifa 1

From the Editor 2

In the Field 2

Articles:

Questionable heroism 3

The Canadian Jew on the Chinese
Hockey Team 4

Book Nook 6

A German-Jewish Musician
in Shanghai 8

In Memoriam 12

At Beida, Something Brand Nu — A
Class in Yiddish 14

Israeli Folk Dance in Taiwan 15

Chinese Itzik 16

SJI MEMBERSHIP

Country	Total
United States	123
China	17
Israel	8
England	5
Canada	3
Germany	3
Taiwan	2
Australia	2
Japan	2
El Salvador	1
Greece	1
Mexico	1
Singapore	1
Total:	169

FROM THE EDITOR

2023. The Year of the Rabbit.

Climate change, war in Ukraine, US/China, Israel/Palestine, Peru, Brazil, Korea, Somalia, Congo, Democrats v. Republicans, etc., etc.

Oy Gevalt!



It's not the Year of the Rabbit—it's the year of the rabid!

Listen, Doc, wouldn't you prefer a year like this?



It can happen if everyone learns to cooperate and play nice!

In the meantime, enjoy the initial issue of Points East volume 38.

Anson Laytner

In the Field

Sean Gao has composed a musical, 'Shanghai Sonatas', based on the stories of the Jewish musicians in Shanghai and their role in transmitting European classical music to China. Mr. Gao is aiming for a full Broadway production and a Hollywood film version. He welcomes feedback and advice. For more information go to <https://shanghaisonatas.com>

Points East

Anson Laytner, Editor

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

Letters to the Editor and articles for *Points East* may be sent to:

Preferred Form:

e-mail: laytner@msn.com

or to: Rabbi Anson Laytner
1823 East Prospect St.
Seattle WA 98112-3307

Points East is published three times a year, in March, July and November. Deadlines for submitting material to be included in these issues are January 15th, May 15th and September 15th.

FINANCIAL REPORT AVAILABLE

SJI members interested in receiving a copy of the annual financial report should send a self-addressed envelope to: Prof. Steve Hochstadt, Treasurer of the Sino-Judaic Institute, 34 Colgate Rd., Unit 1, Roslindale, MA 02131 USA

Sino-Judaic Institute
c/o Rabbi Anson Laytner
1823 East Prospect St.
Seattle WA 98112-3307

SJI Officers

Anson Laytner, President
Wendy Abraham, Vice-President
Steve Hochstadt, Secretary/Treasurer
Arnold Mark Belzer, Immediate Past President

Managing Board

Joel Epstein, Beverly Friend, Loraine Heller, Dan Levitsky, Ondi Lingenfelter, Abbey Newman, Kevin Ostoyich, James Peng Yu, Charlene Polyansky, Eric Rothberg, Danny Spungen, Joshua Zuo

International Advisory Board

Moshe Y. Bernstein, Jan Berris, Zvia Bowman, Mark Cohen, Avrum Ehrlich, Fu Youde, Jonathan Goldstein, Judy Green, Len Hew, Tess Johnston, Dan Krassenstein, Den Leventhal, Michael Li, Yonatan Menashe, Maisie Meyer, Mark Michaelson, Sonja Muehlberger, Gustavo Perednik, Andrew Plaks, Pan Guang, Shi Lei, Yitzhak Shichor, Elyse Silverberg, Noam Urbach, Shalom Wald, Tibi Weisz, Xiao Xian, Xu Xin, Albert Yee, Zhang Qianhong, David Zweig.

Past Presidents

Al Dien, Leo Gabow

Bequest Request

**Please consider putting the
Sino-Judaic Institute in your will.**

Questionable heroism

By Rotem Kowner and Joshua Fogel

Reprinted from *Number 1 Shimibun* (The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan), December 2022

Japan has a new national hero. In recent years, Lieutenant General Kiichiro Higuchi of the now-defunct Imperial Japanese Army has become a well-known paragon of virtue. His exceptionally benevolent deed has been extolled in dozens of articles appearing in national newspapers and in the foreign press, in magazines, books, documentary films, and even a manga series currently in print. During the last few months, the commemoration of Higuchi has culminated in a conference, music concert, and ceremony last October unveiling a bronze statue of him on his home island of Awaji. But, does Higuchi merit such honors?

Born in 1888, Higuchi ended his military career as the commanding officer of the Sapporo-based Fifth Area Army. As the person in charge of Japan's northern border in August 1945, he was involved in the desperate defense effort against the Soviet Army. His fame, however, stems largely from a brief episode seven years earlier. At the time, Higuchi was in charge of the Special Branch of military intelligence in Harbin. It was a major city in Manchukuo, the puppet state established and controlled by Japan in China's vast northeastern region of Manchuria.

In this capacity, the story goes, Higuchi was informed of a large number of German Jewish refugees stuck in the freezing border Soviet town of Otpor (present-day Zabaykalsk) situated opposite the Manchurian town of Manzhouli. There were "about 20,000 of them," he wrote. Escaping persecution by the Nazi regime, they crossed Siberia by trains at the peak of the winter of 1937-38, seeking to enter the safe haven of Manchukuo. "It was clear that if these refugees were left alone," Higuchi recalled years later, "it would become a matter of life and death." With this sense of urgency, he resolved to help them and discussed the matter with the chief of the Harbin delegation of the Manchukuo Foreign Affairs Office. When permission arrived, Higuchi provided the refugees with trains and food, and so "saved their lives."

To be sure, this episode of rescue and benevolence is moving and seems to merit tremendous honor, even if posthumously. Regrettably, however, many gaps in the story make it unreliable and render Higuchi's heroism more than questionable. The first and foremost gap involves

the sources, as the only full reference to this episode comes from Higuchi himself. Intriguingly, there is not a single person who ever testified to having been stranded in Otpor and entering Manchukuo due to Higuchi's intervention. Likewise, there are no official Japanese documents that mention the arrival of this group of refugees during the time Higuchi served in Harbin.

The second gap involves the historical facts about the Jewish flight to East Asia and its scale. Overall, some 20,000 Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, and Poland did seek safe haven in East Asia, but the vast majority of them arrived while boarding ocean liners in Italy. Moreover, most of them did so after the Nazi pogrom – "Kristallnacht" – in November 1938 and at least eight months after the episode described by Higuchi. There are some indications that a few dozen Jews reached the Manchurian border by land in 1938. Nonetheless, they did not face any risk to their lives at the time, nor was any official policy in force to prevent them from crossing into Manchukuo territory.

In retrospect, Higuchi's involvement in this episode, if it indeed occurred, was no more than a clerical approval for the passage of a small group of refugees some 18 months before the outbreak of the war in Europe. It was certainly not a matter of life and death. If refused, the refugees could have continued to Vladivostok and then headed by sea to Shanghai, a war-torn city that did not require visas for entry, the only such port in the world at the time.

This is not to say that Higuchi did not deal with Jews during his stint in Harbin. Upon his arrival, this city still hosted the second-largest Jewish community in East Asia. However, the Jewish population had fallen sharply since Japan seized the region in 1932. One way in which Japanese authorities exerted control over the local population was by turning its ethnic groups against each other, especially the White Russian community against the Jews. In one notorious case, in which the son of a local Jewish hotel owner was kidnapped and murdered, its echoes reached the League of Nations.

In the aftermath of this murder, the Japanese authorities temporarily stopped their maltreatment of local people. Higuchi seemed particularly positive towards the Harbin community and soon became involved in launching the first Far Eastern Jewish Congress in December 1937. Whatever he personally felt about them, the motives he represented – those of his government – were self-serving. While some believed the congress could attract

foreign capital to Manchukuo, Japan's primary aim was avoiding rupture with the United States. As historian Naoki Maruyama points out, this was Japan playing the "Jewish card".

Jewish sources suggest that Higuchi was favorably disposed toward the local community and receptive to its pleas. Nonetheless, the general trend in Harbin was not in favor of the Jews and by 1940, initial visions of settling Manchukuo with Jewish refugees were abandoned. Evidently, the Harbin Jewish community was anxious about the Japanese regime, and its leader, Dr. Abraham Kaufman, did his utmost to appease and coax their decision makers, including Higuchi. Among other things, Kaufman registered Higuchi's name in the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund. This act did not require more than a monetary donation, as did thousands of Jews registering their sons or friends upon a family celebration. Kaufman for one never associated it with any act of "saving Jews" as is being currently touted.

Against this backdrop, it is striking that the largest gap in the legend of General Higuchi lies between the harsh reality of the Jewish community in Harbin and this rescue fantasy. This gap explains why historians ignored this over-dramatized and inflated anecdote during the first two decades after it appeared in 1971. So how did this minor and obscure affair, of a small number of refugees entering Manchukuo, turn into a major epic? How is it that many now refer to Higuchi as the "Japanese Schindler," alluding to Oskar Schindler, the German businessman honored in Steven Spielberg's award-winning film for having saved the lives of 1,200 Jews during the Holocaust?

The current version of the Higuchi legend began when his grandson, retired musicology professor Ryuichi Higuchi, decided to salvage this story from oblivion. Nonetheless, the crucial turning point came somewhat later, when the late Hideaki Kase (1936–2022), a prolific diplomacy commentator and one of Japan's leading historical revisionists, joined the fray. The two formed an association for the commemoration of Higuchi and brought the story to the media's attention. The association quickly gathered many willing enthusiasts enchanted by the general's goodwill. Kase also managed to recruit international backing by several American and Israeli Jews who were willing to lend support to the story, often without scrutinizing its credibility.

The spectacular rise of this fable, however, cannot be understood merely as the product of a loyal grandson backed by an

enthusiastic association. The social and cultural circumstances that made this story successful are broader. Indeed, since the 1990s, rightwing circles in Japan have been trying hard to improve the image of their country, both domestically and internationally, by revising its history. These efforts center on the nation's conduct in Asia during the so-called Fifteen Years' War, referring to the period from the Mukden Incident of September 1931 through 1945.

The irony is that revisionists have resorted increasingly to involving Jews. Unlike Nazi Germany, current nationalist circles contend, Japan befriended them and strived to save them. Yet the historical reality is quite different. Apart from a few episodes of conscious humanitarian support alongside a tentative plan to utilize Jewish money and influence, wartime Japan did not extend help to the Jews trying to survive or find shelter in areas under its control. Rather, the opposite was the case. Although Japan did not exterminate these Jews, it impeded the passage of some, deported others, and eventually, during the last two years of the war, detained the majority of them simply for being Jews.

Kase was one of the leading figures in the efforts to revise the modern historiography of Japan. As head of the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact, as well as a member of other similar revisionist groups, he fought indefatigably to alter images that portray Imperial Japan as the bad guy in the Greater East Asia and Pacific War. He also considered himself a "friend of the Jews," and so the Higuchi affair offered him a rare opportunity. Still, Kase for one was not interested in Higuchi per se since he was a too minor figure to rely on.

His holy grail was Hideki Tojo (1884–1948), Japan's wartime prime minister and the main figure among the Japanese leadership tried and found guilty in the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. As the Higuchi affair supposedly was happening, Tojo served as the chief of staff of the Kwantung Army – the unit that controlled Manchukuo. In the late 1990s, Kase was involved as a consultant in the production of the melodramatic film *Pride: The Fateful Moment*, which aimed to embellish Tojo's historical reputation. It is not surprising, then, that he elaborated now on Higuchi's testimony that he did not act alone. It was Tojo, Kase insisted in an interview not long before his death, who made the ultimate decisions: "Higuchi took the initiative but Tojo approved."

Tojo aside, the problem with Higuchi's rise to fame is not merely a matter of insufficient sources or inflated figures, but the willful misuse of Jewish suffering. For many who hail this late general, putting him on a pedestal is tantamount to purging wartime Japan of its intense aggression and colonial heritage. In this sense, the recent emergence of Higuchi as a hero tells us much about contemporary Japan. The rise of ultra-nationalism and its moving into the mainstream during Shinzo Abe's eight-year tenure may explain part of the success of this story. Nevertheless, the extensive use of the past to enhance the country's soft power, and the capacity to exploit a dubious story without anyone casting skepticism over its claims, alert us to the vulnerability of truth to a determined assault.

Rotem Kowner is a historian and professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Haifa, Israel. His book Jewish Communities in Modern Asia (Cambridge University Press) is forthcoming. Email: Rotem Kowner <kowner@research.haifa.ac.il>

Joshua Fogel is a historian and professor of East Asian history at York University, Toronto, Canada. He focuses historically on relations between China and Japan and has also written on the Jewish community in Harbin. Email: Joshua Fogel <fogel@yorku.ca>

The Canadian Jew on the Chinese Hockey Team

Louis Keene

Excerpted from the *Forward*, 8 February 2022

<https://forward.com/news/482168/ethan-werek-canadian-jewish-hockey-player-beijing-olympics/>

Most of Ethan Werek's teammates on the Chinese Olympic hockey team had never met a Jewish person before he joined the roster. But Werek's family tree was once planted in Chinese soil.

Like the six athletes suiting up for Israel in this year's games, Werek didn't need to be born in the country on his jersey to play for its national team. Yet his right-of-return story is no less Jewish than theirs — and it predates the Jewish state. How this Canadian came to play for the Chinese national team is a Jewish homecoming more than a century in the making.

During World War I, Werek's great grandparents, Nehemia and Luba Werek, fled Eastern Russia to Harbin...Werek's grandparents grew up in China; two aunts were born in Shanghai. In 1948, the family immigrated to Israel, where Ethan's father was born. The Wereks immigrated to Canada in the 1950s...

As the 2022 host country, China automatically qualified for Olympic hockey, but because it had a weak national program, it needed to naturalize professional players with connections to the nation. Enter Werek, a journeyman forward drafted by the New York Rangers in 2009 who has since played in various pro leagues...

There was also a career benefit to Chinese citizenship: it made it easier for him to play in the KHL, the top hockey league outside of North America which has a franchise in Beijing. He's played on that team since 2019. During hockey season in China, Werek has taken the time to visit the synagogue his grandparents used to attend. Their names are still engraved in the building...

Perhaps owing to a dearth of ponds that freeze over in the winter, Israel's hockey program makes China's look like Russia's. So Werek has volunteered to contribute to establishing the sport more firmly there this summer. He's going to live in Tel Aviv and help out with the Israel Elite Hockey League, a one-month semi-pro league, by running hockey camps at the two rinks in the Tel Aviv area — with part of the goal to make equipment more accessible to kids...

In the meantime, he's an Olympian. The Chinese team will be an experiment in communication — half of its 24 players speak only Mandarin and the other half (plus the head coach) speak only English. While the team has a pair of translators on staff, it won't have one in skates.

Werek, who was assigned a Chinese name, Wei Ruiké, for fans to use, can barely pronounce it. "I've gotten pretty good at charades and hand gestures," he said...

But Werek says, in spite of the language barrier, he's bonded with the team, and enjoyed teaching them the finer points of the game. His enthusiasm has sparked his own. "I guess in hockey at the age of 30, I'm kind of the older age," he said. "But I feel I got a shot of youth just being around these guys and seeing their passion for it."

Louis Keene is a staff reporter at the Forward. He can be reached at keene@forward.com or on Twitter @thislouis.

China - Israel, continued from page 1

In another dimension, considering China's rise to the top world power in the next two decades, and Washington's gradual exit from the Middle East, relations with China have been prioritized in Israel's foreign policy. This is also an opportunity for Beijing. Also, the expansion of relations with Israel can be an important help in advancing China's 'One Belt-One Road' project, increasing China's global position and being a global superpower and increasing its presence in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Apart from this, while China is constantly fighting with Taiwan and the West over the issue of Taiwan, Beijing is trying to force Israel to cut off relations with Taipei, by making Israel maintain its loyalty to the 'One China Policy', mutual respect for sovereignty, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. In addition, Israel can be a factor in reducing the tension between Washington and Beijing in critical times. In this regard, China is cautious in China's explicit support for Palestine, extensive criticism of Israel or conditionality of relations.

With approaches such as the four-point proposal regarding the situation of Palestine and Israel, the two-state solution, and maintaining relations with Palestine, China is seeking a stable Middle East, having a policy of friendship with everyone, and even a new military presence in the region.

In fact, Beijing also has an outlook to its long-term interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Despite its political differences over the Palestinian issue, China wants to cooperate with the Israelis. China is even seeking to play a more active role in mediating and creating a fair solution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

In the past decades, the Chinese government has tried to partially overcome its technological weakness in the military field by expanding relations and using Israeli military technology. In the current situation, despite Washington's objections, it seems that Israel is still one of the important partners in China's military sector and defense equipment and new technologies.

Strengthening soft power

Previously, variables such as issuing 10-year multiple-entry visas for each other's citizens, direct flights between Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Israeli cities, trips of more than a hundred thousand of citizens to the other country

have led to the strengthening of the two-way tourism industry. Also, Israel studies and Hebrew courses are taught in some colleges and universities in China.

Beijing is also trying to prevent the spread of Sinophobia in Israel's media. It also trying to make sure that the emergence of China and its presence in Israel do not arouse negative feelings towards China. In this regard, the very favorable position of China in the polls in Israel and support for the strengthening of economic relations, the establishment of the Hebrew language section of China International Radio (CRI), educational and cultural exchange programs, the existence of Confucius Institutes and Chinese language education in Israeli universities and schools are part China's successes in expanding its soft power in Israel.

Economy, trade and technology

In the past, Israel's exports to China included high-tech products, agricultural technology, and China's exports to Israel were mostly raw materials, textile products, and consumer goods. But passing from geopolitical disagreements has had many results for Israel and China. Now, the value of trade between the two countries has increased from only \$50 million in 1992 to \$22.8 billion in 2021.

By having signed numerous economic agreements in areas such as various economic projects, agriculture, high-tech projects, startups, new technologies, the New Silk Road project, ports and other Israeli infrastructure, etc., the two sides have developed their relations.

The economies of Israel and China have complemented each other. Israel is keen on China's billion-strong market and benefiting from Beijing's ability to invest in its infrastructure projects.

Also, despite the many challenges, many in Israel see China as a growing power with huge economic potential, and they do not want to ignore their growing economic interests in this great Asian power. In addition, China sees Israel as one of the axes of its 'One-Belt, One Road' Initiative.

In fact, the 'Comprehensive Innovation Partnership Agreement' is just an important emphasis on trade. Therefore, one of China's main interests in Israel is advanced technology and exchange and investment in it. The past role of Israeli knowledge in agriculture, desertification, water engineering to its current role in innovation, digital skills, and artificial intelligence (AI) are important to

China's economy and power.

Future challenges of relationships

Recently, US President, Joe Biden, traveled to the Middle East, to strengthen the 'special relationship' between the United States and Israel as one of his top priorities. But it seems that the expansion of China-Israel relations will cause more disputes in relations between Tel Aviv and Washington. While China-Israel trade in goods increased significantly in 2021 compared to the previous year, and China recently surpassed the United States as the largest trading partner, Washington's concerns about China's presence, Israel's role in developing capabilities (strategic, military, and technological) of Beijing, China's surveillance of the Eastern Mediterranean and Beijing's negative role in relations between Israel and the West have increased.

Israeli innovations are areas of high-security sensitivity and many of them have direct military use. They can play an important role in strengthening Beijing's power. In the meantime, although Israeli leaders do not want to reduce the size of their relations with the West, Beijing's influence in Israel has definitely increased.

However, it seems that there are challenges to the way of increasing cooperation with China in areas such as the limitation of China's participation in infrastructure projects, increased monitoring of tenders or their rejection, putting the name of some Chinese companies on the US blacklist, and the American trade war with China.

In the political, geopolitical, and security dimensions, disagreements regarding 'anti-Semitism' in China, Israel's vote for resolutions in the United Nations on matters such as the Xinjiang, the type of communication between Israeli authorities and media with Taiwan, the Dalai Lama, and Tibet can cast a shadow on relationships. However, now some in Israel also believe that the America who abandons Taiwan will also abandon Israel, and China is a better option to fill the vacuum created by the US absence in the Middle East is a much better option than Russia or Iran. Therefore, Israel's interests and position are more important.

Farzad Ramezani Bonesh is a writer, senior researcher and analyst on regional issues, especially in MENA and South Asia. He has written hundreds of research articles, analyses and journalistic features in Persian and English. He has had many interviews with international media outlets such as Aljazeera, RT Arabic, Al Arabi and others.

Sour, continued from page 1

while trying to balance its ties with Washington and Beijing. While the panel was too late to have any say on infrastructure projects already underway, such as the Tel Aviv Light Rail and work at Haifa's port, it managed to stall other deals being worked on, and has helped cool down the trade relationship.

At the event, Cai noted that the economic relationship remains strong, saying bilateral trade had shot up from \$15 million in 1992 to \$22.8 billion in 2021. (It was unclear why Israel's figures were \$4.8 billion lower). "China has become the largest trade partner in Asia and the second largest in the world," the ambassador said. "Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic direct flights were open between Tel Aviv and five Chinese cities." China remains Israel's largest trading partner in Asia; Israel imports more from China than anywhere else and exports more to China than any other Asian country. From 2011 to 2021, the share of Israeli exports to Asia going to China rose from 25% to 42%.

Israelis appear split down the middle regarding how they see China, which has been criticized for its stifling authoritarianism and alleged crimes against humanity against the Muslim Uyghur minority in the country's west. According to the results of a Pew survey released in June, 48% hold favorable views of China, more than in any other Western country surveyed, while 46% were down on Beijing. Israelis showed the least concern globally about human rights issues in China or Beijing's growing military might, though they were slightly more jittery about economic competition with China or Chinese meddling in domestic affairs.

Orion, however, noted that in other years, favorable views of China had been even higher. In 2019, 66% held favorable opinions of China and only 25% were unfavorable, according to Pew. Orion led strategy in the Israel Defense Force General Staff's Planning Directorate before leaving the military in 2015 after 32 years. Since then he has been working as a researcher at INSS, heading up its China program.

The institute is seen as very close to the defense and foreign affairs branches of Israel's government. Many of its researchers are former defense brass or senior diplomats and its position papers are regularly circulated among senior officials in the Defense Ministry, Foreign Ministry and National Security Council. The launch

of the center was seen as reflective of the seriousness Israel is taking its China strategy as the relationship morphs...

Tal Schneider is an Israeli journalist and blogger, owner of the personal blog "The Flug" and political correspondent for The Globe newspaper. In 2001 Tal Schneider graduated with a master's degree in political science and law from Tel Aviv University. She then moved to the United States, where she passed the New York State Bar exam, and studied journalism at Georgetown University and photojournalism at Corcoran College in Washington. Between 2004 and 2009, Tal Schneider was the Maariv correspondent in Washington D.C.

BOOK NOOK

China and Ashkenazic Jewry: Transcultural Encounters

Edited by: Kathryn Hellerstein, University of Pennsylvania, and Lihong Song, Nanjing University, China.

Published by De Gruyter (Oldenbourg, Germany), 2022. 359p.

PDF and eBook: \$89.99, ISBN: 9783110683943

Hardcover: \$89.99, ISBN: 9783110683776

In the past thirty years, the Sino-Jewish encounter in modern China has increasingly garnered scholarly and popular attention. This volume is the first to focus on the transcultural exchange between Ashkenazic Jewry and China. The essays within it investigate how this exchange of texts, translations, images and ideas has enriched both Jewish and Chinese cultures and prepared for a global, inclusive world literature.

The book breaks new ground in the field, covering such new topics as the images of China in Yiddish and German Jewish letters, the intersectionality of the Jewish and Chinese literature in illuminating the implications for a truly global and inclusive world literature, the biographies of prominent figures in Chinese-Jewish connections, and the Chabad engagement in contemporary China. Some of the fundamental debates in the current scholarship are also addressed, with special emphasis on how many Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai and how much interaction occurred between the Jewish refugees and the resident Chinese population during the wartime and its aftermath.

CONTENTS

Kathryn Hellerstein, Introduction

Part One: The Bible in China

1. Irene Eber, From Rags to Riches: Joseph and His Family
2. Fu Xiaowei and Wang Yi, Why Is Having No Posterity the Worst Unfilial Thing? A Comparison of Mencius 4A:26 and Genesis
3. Cao Jian, The Impact of Ancient Israelite Prophets on Modern Chinese Intellectuals
4. Zhong Zhiqing, Reading the Song of Songs in Jewish and Chinese Tradition
5. Liu Yan, The Transcultural Characteristics of the Chinese Bible Translated by S. I. J. Schereschewsky (1831–1906): A Case Study of the Song of Songs

Part Two; Jews in Modern China

6. Xu Xin, Jewish Communities and Modern China: Encounters of Modern Civilizations
7. Ai Rengui, When the Muscular Jews Came to the Far East: Jewish Sports and Physical Culture in Modern China, 1912–1949
8. Wang Jian, Tracking the Exact Number of Jewish Refugees in Shanghai
9. Maisie Meyer, The Global Reach of Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews
10. Nancy Berliner, Jewish Refugee Artists in Shanghai: Visual Legacies of Traumatic Moments and Cultural Encounters
11. Yang Meng, Drama in Wartime Shanghai
12. Marc B. Shapiro, The Mir Yeshiva and Its Shanghai Sojourn
13. Samuel Heilman, Chabad Outreach on the Jewish Frontier: The Case of China

Part Three: Jews and Chinese

14. Kathryn Hellerstein, Yiddish Translations of Chinese Poetry and Theater in 1920s New York
15. Bao Anruo, Enemy or Friend: The Image of China in Yiddish Newspapers during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905)
16. Zhang Ping, To Speak or Not to Speak: Hanoch Levin's Suitcase Packers and Cao Yu's Peking Man in Light of Cross-Textual Dialogue
17. Li Dong, Teaching American Jewish Literature to Chinese College Students: Anzia Yezierska's "Children of Loneliness" as a Case Study
18. Rebecca Kobrin, Chinese and Ashkenazic Encounters in the American Immigration Regime: Max J. Kohler, Immigration Legal Practice, and the Chinese Exclusion Act
19. Song Lihong, A Homeless Stranger Everywhere: The Shadow of the Holocaust on an Israeli Sinologist

Reflections, *continued from page 1*

tion signs with lovely Chinese characters that looked as out of place as a pagoda in an Iowa cornfield. It turned out that Sino-hydro, the state contractor raising dams and ports from Nigeria to Sri Lanka, was building us a hydroelectric plant. Israel's second new port, at Ashdod, will be run by a Dutch operator, but it's being built by China Harbor. There's so much action that a group of big Israeli contractors just appealed to the Supreme Court to stop what they called a Chinese "takeover" of our infrastructure. (It didn't work.) Trade between the two countries, worth barely \$1 billion in 2001, is now 10 times that, mostly in the form of Chinese exports to Israel.

Beyond the realms of concrete and steel, a notable feature of China's presence here can be found in the two Confucius Institutes that opened at Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University. The centers for China studies have brought Israeli scholars and students into greater contact with Chinese people—and with their government, which funds the institutes and shapes their content. Some scholars in Israel, like many colleagues abroad concerned by the approximately 500 Confucius Institutes that have opened worldwide, have warned that the centers compromise the academy. Once you're in bed with "Confucius," enjoying Chinese funding and scholarships, you'll think twice before antagonizing the people who write the check.

One critic is Noam Urbach, who fell in love with China after a post-army trip in the 1990s, followed by a few years of travel and study at Shandong University. He later spent more than a decade teaching Mandarin at Bar-Ilan University and the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya. He found himself feeling increasingly uncomfortable in the field as his criticism of Chinese government policies was frowned upon by colleagues and administrators eager to cooperate with Chinese institutions, less in the cash-strapped humanities than in science and tech, where real money is at stake. Israeli academics who study China, he said, have learned to speak very differently in public and in private. I asked if this meant that a department head, for example, might quietly suggest that a doctoral student change a research topic, or decide that a proposed academic conference might best be indefinitely postponed. "All the time," he said.

"Let's say an academic department in the sciences is studying a certain plant, and starts accepting funding from that plant to say good things about it," he said. "Once that happens, those botanists aren't botanists anymore." Urbach isn't describing an obscure academic spat: He's saying that

Israel's China-watchers are being neutralized by the people they're supposed to be watching. Urbach has let his doctoral studies lapse and currently runs an art gallery.

A moment of understanding came, he said, when he served as a translator at a meeting for executives from an Israeli company and the Chinese firm that had just bought a controlling share. (He wouldn't name the companies.) The Chinese executives, he said, had studied every nook of the Israeli operation and knew every detail of every government regulation in the market. The investment, he understood, combined political and economic goals that were meant to serve each other...

We have "entered the stage in which the Chinese have begun to create economic centers of power, which in time can be transformed into strategic and geopolitical centers of power," [Aron] Shai, the China scholar, who is a proponent of ties with the Chinese, wrote in his 2019 book *China and Israel*. "Realistically, we must anticipate that in Israel as well as in the region that it occupies, China will have influence at a level that currently seems the stuff of fantasy."

Just two years after those lines were published, I was at the new port in Haifa and met Israeli guys named Dima, Yasser, and Chris, who were training on the mechanical claw that moves containers remotely from a control room overseen by a skilled operator from Shanghai. This is the first foreign venture for SIPG, the company that operates the Shanghai port, which moves about 43 million shipping containers a year. That's nearly 15 times what comes in and out of the entire state of Israel.

The Americans expressed concern about this deal, in part because the old Haifa port, just across the bay, has long been used by the U.S. Sixth Fleet. But no American company bid when the contract was up for grabs. The deal went ahead, and when I was there the new port crew was preparing to handle their first full ship, a Chinese Ocean Shipping Company vessel due the next day. As one of the Chinese managers, a man in glasses and a neon yellow vest, told me proudly, the port was actually operational last summer, half a year ahead of schedule. The Israeli government, on the other hand, was supposed to provide a rail link to the coastal train line about a mile from the pier—and is running three years late. China, the manager said, opens 30 miles of new track every single day.

The original Haifa port, with old equipment and even older labor agreements, can't handle the volume—you can see the

traffic jam of cargo ships stretching out into the Mediterranean, sometimes waiting weeks to dock, a vast expense ultimately paid for by Israeli consumers. The new port has better tech, isn't unionized, and pays its workers less. It plans to do the same work with a third of the staff. Contracts with the Israeli government limit the autonomy of the Chinese company. Israeli security officers stationed at the port answer to the Israeli police. But the Chinese are in charge.

The lease runs until 2045, but the Shanghai company is playing an even longer game than that. Part of the idea of the new port isn't about Israel at all, but about consolidating containers from the smaller ships that come through the Suez Canal from China and the East, loading them onto larger vessels at Haifa's deep-water port for transit west, thus streamlining global shipping and saving money. Another part of the idea is to be here when trade expands between Israel and its neighbors, including current enemies. In such a scenario, Haifa goes back to being what it was before 1948: a portal to the region, not just to Israel. SIPG wants to be here when that happens. I said I wasn't sure about the chances, but the manager was unimpressed with my skepticism, and with our local problems. "We are here for business," he said, "and the businessmen want peace." The way he said it, "peace" didn't sound like a fluffy Western dream. It sounded as blunt and necessary as an iron pipe.

I found myself wondering about this new world. The immediate threat to Haifa and its port facilities comes from Hezbollah, the Iranian proxy in Lebanon, which rocketed the city during the last war in 2006 and threatens to do so again if another war breaks out. China does billions of dollars of business with Iran. A major Chinese firm now has an entire port in Haifa. Imagine the port is disrupted or damaged, costing millions. A phone rings in Tehran. Nihao!

What happens then? What does all this mean for the Middle East? And what happens if the U.S.-China cold war becomes hot, with Israel in an increasingly convoluted minefield of interests—a Sixth Fleet port-of-call on one side of the bay, Shanghai on the other? It's impossible to say. All we know is that a ship has sailed, and we're on board.

Matti Friedman is a Tablet columnist and the author, most recently, of Who by Fire: Leonard Cohen in the Sinai and Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel. He may be reached via his website: www.mattifriedman.com

A German-Jewish Musician in Shanghai

By Christian Utz

Excerpted from *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 13:1, January 2004.

History is made by individuals and this is even - or especially - true for modern Chinese music history...we might ask how exactly Western individuals have contributed to the music of 20th-century China: To what extent did some of them consciously try to mediate between the divergent music traditions of China and the West (or to what extent were they forced to do so), rather than importing an idealized form of Western music as a model that every Chinese musician should aspire and adhere to?

...The interactions, collaborations and conflicts between Europeans and Chinese in Shanghai's music scene in the late 1930s and early 1940s were intensified by the presence of a significant number of Jewish musicians fleeing Nazi Germany and Austria. Only three of them can be counted as representatives of Western musical modernism: Alban Berg's German student and assistant Julius Schloss (1902-73); the pianist Karl Steiner (1912 -2001), also from Schoenberg's Viennese circle; and the Berlin composer, musician and judge Wolfgang Fraenkel (1897 - 1983). All three arrived in Shanghai in 1939 as refugees from Nazism after having been detained for a few months in concentration camps. While the lives and artistic development of Schloss and Steiner have already been documented within research projects on exile composers and on the history of the Schoenberg school...Fraenkel's case awaits a more comprehensive study.

Wolfgang Fraenkel lived in Shanghai from 1939 to 1947 and taught composition and music theory at the National Vocational Music School Shanghai (*Guoli Shanghai Yinyue Zhuanke Xuexiao*), today named the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (*Shanghai Yinyue Xueyuan*), from 1941 to 1947 and at the National Music School Nanjing (*Nanjing Guoli Yinyue Yuan*) in 1947. During these years he also pursued an active career as a performer, composer and writer, conducted orchestras of Chinese musicians and reflected on the future of Chinese music. As an influential teacher and conductor his impact on Chinese musical modernism was without doubt much stronger than that of either Schloss or Steiner, although it was severely curtailed during the decades of Maoist cultural policy and could thus only indirectly provide a ground for the "Second Chinese Modernity" in the 1980s *xinchao* ("New Wave") generation of composers.

Fraenkel's presence in Shanghai in the profession of musician was completely invol-

untary, the result of a radical personal and cultural displacement...the socio-historical context suggests that the daily struggle for existence, which characterized the life of most Shanghai refugees, was an immediate challenge for him too, at least in the beginning...Within a relatively short time, Fraenkel acted as violinist, violist, pianist, orchestral and choral conductor, teacher of music theory and composition, writer of theoretical essays and arranger and composer for dance and film productions. In all these activities he evidently had also to accommodate an establishment comprising a mixture of Europeans, Japanese administrators and Chinese collaborators...

From Berlin to Shanghai

Wolfgang Fraenkel's eight-year residency in Shanghai is predated by a many-sided professional career. He was born in Berlin on 10 October 1897, the son of Philipp and Agnes Fraenkel (née Krenz). As a child and young man he took violin lessons...and viola lessons...He studied piano and music theory...and conducting with Julius Prüwer of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. On graduation from high school, he studied law at Berlin University until the beginning of the First World War, during which he served as an artillery officer in the German army. After the war, he completed his study of law in 1923 and worked as a judge at the Berlin court of appeals until April 1933 when, as a consequence of Hitler's takeover of power, all Jews were removed from public office. From 1933 until November 1938 he worked as a freelance musician, composer and conductor, taking part in a number of performances organized by the *Kulturbund Deutscher Juden* (Cultural Federation of German Jews) ...

In late 1938, Fraenkel was detained in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Oranienburg near Berlin, probably as one of 6,000 Jewish males who were deported to Sachsenhausen following the *Reichskristallnacht* pogrom on 9 November. As his mother was considered to be "Aryan" and he promised to leave the country immediately, he was released from Sachsenhausen with the help of the *Kulturbund* after one or two months, probably in late 1938 or early 1939. He left for Shanghai on the Conte Rosso, a famous Italian Lloyd-Triestino liner, in late March or April 1939. As he accompanied a vocal recital of the tenor Lewinson-Lewens on the first-class deck of the liner on 22 April, he must have arrived in Shanghai in late April or early May 1939.

Fraenkel's Musical Activities in Shanghai

Fraenkel came to Shanghai as one of 12,089 German and Austrian Jews who

fled Nazi Germany in 1939, the year in which the number of refugees coming to Shanghai reached its peak. For them, Shanghai was a "port of last resort", since it was the only place in the world that accepted Jews without requiring a visa. Deprived of most of their personal belongings and allowed only a personal financial funding of 10 Reichsmark (4 US\$), the refugees arrived in Shanghai after a journey of one to two months, mostly in poor material condition, and without any preparation for living in a Chinese - though very international - city. The situation of the Jewish refugees was partly relieved by the activities of several self-founded Jewish help organizations, such as the Speelman committee ("Committee for Assistance of European Refugees in Shanghai") of Dutch businessman Michel Speelman, which provided housing and a monthly stipend for a certain period to the victims of the Nazi regime...

On 18 February 1943 the Japanese government announced that all "stateless refugees" (designating all Jewish refugees who had arrived in Shanghai from 1937 on) were to move to a marked off area in Hongkou (a northern district of Shanghai) within three months. Fraenkel relocated to the Jewish Ghetto in Hongkou (Hongkow)...In the recently published "List of Foreigners in Dee Lay Jao Police District" from 24 August 1944, he is registered as "Dolfgang [sic!] Fraenkel, Musician", age 48, together with his wife, Rosa Fraenkel, age 46...

Fraenkel as Performing Musician

The programme sheets and reviews preserved in the Literary Collection testify that Fraenkel took part in musical performances as a violinist, violist and pianist, and acted as a conductor for both choir and orchestra. Documents from the Fraenkel collections allow us to conclude that Fraenkel started to work as a performing musician almost immediately after his arrival in Shanghai, making public appearances as a musician as early as October 1939, only a few months after his arrival... Fraenkel was a member of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra (SMO) by early 1940. In the SMO, which gave weekly concerts every Saturday under its Italian director Mario Paci (1878 - 1946), Fraenkel usually played the viola, although there is evidence that he occasionally played both first and second violin as well until its dissolution in May 1942.

...By 1939, when Fraenkel came to Shanghai, the SMO still consisted almost entirely of foreigners, mostly Russians, although the first Chinese musicians had joined the orchestra as regular members

in 1938...The overall development of an independent Chinese musical identity beyond colonial culture was in a very early stage. Fraenkel's contribution to the establishment of ensembles consisting entirely of Chinese musicians was therefore definitely of some importance. The "Chinese Youth Orchestra" (*Zhongguo Qingnian Jiaoxiang Yuetuan*), conducted by Fraenkel at least twice in 1945, was a 1942 initiative of Fraenkel's student Li Delun (1917 - 2001), who soon became one of China's foremost conductors, and his later wife, violinist Li Jue...

Fraenkel as a Teacher

In 1941 Fraenkel was asked to join the faculty of the Shanghai Conservatory's theory and composition department. According to his former student Sang Tong (b. 1923), he was appointed by Li Weining, director of the conservatory from 1940, in summer 1941. The Shanghai Conservatory of Music, the first Asian institution for music education, founded in 1927 by Cai Yuanpei and Xiao Youmei after the Russian conservatory model, was then still called the *Guoli Yinyue Zhuanke Xuexiao* (National Vocational Music School) and it was in a very difficult situation during the years of Japanese occupation. After war broke out between Japan and China in August 1937, the conservatory moved from its location...and it had to move again several times due to the exigencies of the war, before it was put under Japanese supervision.

Fraenkel's reputation certainly made it easier for him to establish ties with the conservatory. For both his contact with the SMO and the conservatory his letter of recommendation from the eminent German conductor Otto Klemperer (1885-1973), addressed to Klemperer's Japanese colleague Konoe Hidemaro (1898-1973), could only have helped... Konoe, the brother of the Japanese wartime prime minister Konoe Fumimaro (1891 -1945, Japanese prime minister from 1937 to 1939 and from 1940 to 1941), was a pioneer of Mahler performances in Japan and co-founder of the Tokyo New Symphony Orchestra (today named NHK Symphony Orchestra)... It could possibly be that Fraenkel originally planned to emigrate to Japan like compatriot composer Manfred Gurlitt (1890 - 1972), whom Konoe and composer Kunihiro Hashimoto helped to reach Japan early in 1939, at the same time that Fraenkel left for Shanghai... Support from a politically influential Japanese musician such as Konoe was surely helpful in Shanghai's music scene in the early 1940s...

How did Fraenkel react to the politically

sensitive issue of having to come to terms with Hitler-Germany's ally Japan, while at the same time teaching Chinese music students at the conservatory? ...My general impression is that Fraenkel tried to stay away from politics as far as possible and to concentrate on teaching, performing and composing. Considering the extremely difficult and ambivalent situation for teachers at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music during the war years, one can suppose, however, that the most important period for Fraenkel's activities as a teacher might in fact have been between September 1945 and his departure to the US in the middle of 1947.

Fraenkel started, in September 1941, by teaching (tonal) harmony according to the schedule. Later on he also taught strict and free counterpoint, musical analysis, form, orchestration and composition. After the end of the war, he was introduced to the National Music School Nanjing (*Nanjing Guoli Yinyue Yuan*) by his student Ding Shande (1911 -95). Ding was supposed to work in Nanjing as a piano teacher, but, since the school building had been destroyed during the war, teaching activities did not start in Nanjing before early 1947. Thus, Fraenkel taught in Nanjing only for two condensed terms from January to July 1947, while simultaneously continuing his teaching activities in Shanghai. Apart from teaching at the conservatory, Fraenkel gave private lessons in his apartment. In fact, it seems that he tried to enhance his activity as a private teacher, since his income from private lessons was higher than that at the conservatory...

Sang Tong probably had the most extensive contact with Fraenkel as a teacher. He started to work with Fraenkel at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1941. Fraenkel first taught him basic harmony and counterpoint, but from the beginning talked to him about the need for a renewal in composition. Sang Tong studied 20th-century music in the library, including works by Debussy, Stravinsky, Vaughan-Williams, Kodaly, Bartok and Scriabin. Advised by his teacher, he also studied the scores of Gustav Mahler who was introduced to him by Fraenkel as "our great master". This reveals Fraenkel's high degree of identification with the Second Viennese School...

Fraenkel was reluctant to talk about his own music, but one day in early 1947 he showed one of his pieces to his students Sang Tong and Yang Yushi - probably one of the three twelve-tone Preludes, composed in 1945 - and analysed it with regard to the use of twelve-tone technique. Sang Tong's first major composition

Yeijing ("Night Piece") for violin and piano was completed in February 1947 with Fraenkel's assistance, some months before Fraenkel left Shanghai for the US. Sang's next piece *Zai na yaoyuan de difang* ("In a land, far, far away") for piano, completed later in 1947, was already written under the direction of Julius Schloss, Fraenkel's successor. These two works are the first atonal compositions written by a Chinese composer. Although they could not have much effect due to political changes in China after 1949, they can be seen as key works of 20th-century Chinese music, because of their original combination of Chinese and Western techniques and materials. *Yeijing* and *Zai na yaoyuan de difang* were both premiered through the medium of Julius Schloss at the American School of the United States Information Service Shanghai in 1948...

A more comprehensive analysis of the accounts of Fraenkel's students and of the extensive teaching materials collected in Munich would not only provide substantial insights into Fraenkel's musical thought and his teaching methods, but could also help to understand a major shift in modern Chinese music history. Besides praising the energy, integrity, and originality of their teacher, a noticeable number of his former students affirm that his instructions had the deepest impact on their own understanding of music in general. This makes even more sense if one considers that Fraenkel - according to Sang Tong and according to his own writings - supported a kind of Chinese music that would always remain conscious of Chinese tradition and aim at a synthesis of contemporary Western and traditional Chinese sources: "Like Tan Xiaolin, he supported the idea of a synthesis between the spirit of folk music and new compositional techniques as an influential means of musical creation"...

Fraenkel's Shanghai Compositions

Fraenkel contributed actively to the musical life of Shanghai as a teacher and a musician, but not as a composer. To my knowledge, not a single one of his works was performed during his years in China (nor after his departure to the US), except for the above-mentioned arrangements of pieces by other composers - probably purely pragmatic applications of his creative skills. However, Fraenkel did have a remarkably creative period in Shanghai as a composer. In contrast to many other refugee composers, he neither experienced a serious compositional crisis nor turned to more commercially attractive genres like popular songs or film music (although a German note in the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle of 9 August 1942 mentioned that he was rehearsing a film score for a Japanese movie with the Shanghai Philhar-

monic Society)

Although only two compositions were completed in Shanghai, Fraenkel worked on six different projects during these eight years. They include almost all genres: an opera, symphonic works, vocal music, and piano pieces. The two completed works are the *Drei Orchesterlieder* ("Three Orchestral Songs") after Chinese poems from the Tang and Song Dynasties, translated into German by Vinzenz Hundhausen, composed between 9 May and 24 September 1941 (Fraenkel's only completed major work of his Shanghai years) and *Drei zweistimmige Praeludien* ("Three Two-part Preludes") for piano (1945), short twelve-tone compositions that were presumably designed for teaching and study purposes... Fraenkel also worked on four other large-scale projects - three orchestral works and one opera - that were left unfinished.

The Three Orchestral Songs provide remarkable evidence for the composer's response to Chinese culture during his Shanghai period. In fact, Fraenkel again departs significantly here from the average profile of exile composers, who in general rarely changed or adapted their style or their compositional thoughts in response to their new surroundings. Fraenkel, in contrast, not only based this song cycle on Chinese poems, but also studied Chinese and Japanese traditional music from recordings, reflected on the future of Chinese music and adjusted details of his musical theory according to his new experiences in Asia. For his Three Orchestral Songs, Fraenkel chose three poems by two Tang- and one Song-Dynasty poets that all refer to spring in their titles - a spontaneous choice, perhaps, since the composition was begun in spring 1941- as follows:

No. 1 "*Fru"hlingsnacht*" [Spring night] (*Chun xiao*) by Su Dong-Bo (Su Shi, 1036 -1101)

No. 2 "*Am fru"hen Fru"hlingstage*" [On an early spring day] (*Chun xiao*) by Meng Haoran (689 -740)

No. 3 "*Ein Flo"tenlied in Lau-Yang*" [A flute song in Lau-Yang] (*Chunye Luoyang xin di*) by Li Tai-Bo (699 - 762)

Fraenkel must have taken Hundhausen's translation from the publication *Chinesische Dichter in deutscher Sprache*, mit 2 Bildern nach Originalen des Wang Ting-Dsche (Beijing, Leipzig, 1926)... His German *Nachdichtungen* (poetic transformations) of classical Chinese poems were generally based on word-for-word translations by his Chinese friends and students. In fact, the three poems that Fraenkel used can be found written into his score

in a manner reminiscent of Hundhausen's technique: the Chinese characters are written on the score sheet and an English word-by-word translation is provided on an overlying transparent paper, which allows a deeper understanding of the original for a reader not capable of reading the Chinese script. At first, Fraenkel confused the (similar) titles and the authors of the first two movements several times, suggesting that he had no active knowledge of Chinese characters.

All three songs are based on the same twelve-tone row...it seems that the Chinese lyrics inspired Fraenkel to use more sensual, at times almost impressionistic colours that can hardly be found in his earlier works. In the second movement, for example, Fraenkel employs the very unusual combination of overtone-glissandi on the trombone with tremolo and arpeggios of the strings as a background to a floating melodic line in the oboe. Despite such colouristic experiments, the quality of the work can be seen in the fact that Fraenkel refrains from any kind of plain exoticism and rather tries to render the atmosphere of the texts with his personal (Western) means. The work was not performed in China, but it seems that the premiere might have taken place after Fraenkel had moved to the US, since the score bears inscriptions obviously made during a rehearsal process.

Transcriptions of Chinese & Japanese Traditional Music

Fraenkel also approached traditional Chinese and Japanese music, although, in the case of Chinese music, mainly after his time in Shanghai. In the Munich Fraenkel collection there are two files containing several pages of transcriptions taken from gramophone recordings. The file "Chinese Music from Records" comprises 22 pages...The transcriptions of Japanese music in the file "Japanische Platten" ("Japanese Records") were clearly at least in part connected with Fraenkel's arrangements of two Japanese dances - "Ombacha" and "Three Masks (Improvisation on a Japanese Theme)" - for the dance performance of Slavina-Brown and Indira Devi on 18 April 1940 under the direction of Aaron Avshalomov (1894 -1965)...In sum, the transcriptions show considerable efforts to grasp the idiosyncrasies of Chinese and Japanese music - efforts that not many of Fraenkel's contemporaries were willing to make.

Texts and Theoretical Works

In December 1941, Fraenkel published the first part of his article "Grundprobleme der Neuen Musik" ("Fundamental Problems of New Music") in the German

journal *Der Kreis: Monatszeitschrift für Kunst* ("The Circle. Monthly Periodical for the Arts") of which only one issue appeared...As in his major theoretical work *A-functional Music*, it becomes clear from this article that Fraenkel - who was in many respects indebted to Schoenberg's conception of new music, but had the advantage of being an outsider since he was not a Schoenberg pupil - conceives of new music in clear opposition to classical music. The analogy to language helps him to differentiate this opposition: new and classical music are both analogous to language, since they are basically demonstrations of imagination and thoughts... Both new and classical music are meaningful tone languages in their own right, but based on fundamentally different (technical) principles.

The same emphasis on a substantial difference between new and classical music is the basic argument of another text, written in Shanghai and more relevant to the China-specific situation in which Fraenkel lived and worked. Entitled "Music- Development?", it ...was apparently published in the first edition of *Music Weekly*, a weekly paper produced by the *Guanghua Daily*, at the request of his student Zhu Jian (b. 1924) who acted as an editor of the paper. There is an obvious connection between the text "Music-Development?" and Fraenkel's experiences both as a teacher of Chinese composition students and as a conductor of an orchestra of Chinese musicians. It reveals much of Fraenkel's open-minded attitude towards the Chinese and his knowledge of the difficulties that Chinese musicians were facing by the 1940s. The corrected typescript bears the date October 1945 (Fraenkel's sometimes non-idiomatic English and orthography have not been modified):

Music-Development?

One of the most important problems regarding the future music-life in China is the relationship between Chinese and Western music. Combination of these both divergent branches of music-art seems advisable on account of the fundamental character of Western music: to conceive and write c o n c e r t e d music.

The Western musician can not shape a new development of Chinese music, he only can prepare the way, perhaps try to exert some kind of influence; the completion must be carried out by Chinese composers. It will be up to them, first to absorb the technical and sensational items of Western art, and then to find out ways to form connexions to

the existing (old) Chinese music without disturbing its characteristic peculiarities.

To judge the prospects of a development of such kind is rather difficult, as there are not made even beginnings yet. I am convinced that it will be of no use for Chinese musicians to create typical Western music: such work means neither development nor progress; maybe it is remarkable and noteworthy, but it remains to be some kind of copy, as the innermost feeling is heterogeneous. The essential knowledge of Western music should be the basis only, which it is necessary to advance from, an advance which may in fact hold out incalculable prospects.

To my mind the technical starting-point for attempts of such kind is not the music of the classic period of Western music. The newest development in Europe demonstrated that the classic period is some terminated unit which hardly can produce new offsprings of real value. The modern Western music, which is developed since about 40 years, found its point of contact in the events of the pre-classic music and counterpoint which give more freedom and quite other possibilities of evolution. Here seems to be the way to insert the fundamental principle of concerted music to a system which is inwardly not connected with the Western music-ideas.

Wolfgang Fraenkel, Oktober 1945

Several efforts were made by Chinese reformers and researchers - like Wang Guangqi (1892 -1936), Liu Tianhua or Yang Yinliu (1899 -1984), who criticized the spreading influence of Western music in China - to reflect on a synthesis of Chinese and European music in the wake of the May 4th movement. This criticism often had a nationalistic accent and -in contrast to Fraenkel's thinking - was formulated on the basis of the Chinese reception of Western classical or romantic music. Yang Yinliu wrote in his important 1944 Draft History of Ancient Chinese Music (*Zhongguo gudai yinyue shi gang*):

Western music has already had an effect on Chinese culture, and we have encountered problems here which we have never met with before. Consequently, the development of Western music - unproblematic in its own context - is highly problematic in China, which has its own history, life customs, and national background...National music has so far followed its own path, but to develop further, Western

music, rather than being swallowed whole in China must be properly and naturally digested.

Fraenkel's perspective must thus have seemed new and fresh to his readers, although most probably only a few had a very vague idea of the "newest development in Europe" he was writing about. Considering later developments of Chinese music, particularly during the 1980s, Fraenkel's ideas can be seen as prescient in that he argued in favour of a necessary and desirable combination of (traditional) Chinese and modern Western music. In his view, the Chinese themselves would have to play a major part in this rapprochement and Western music is not labelled fundamentally superior to Chinese music, as basically most Europeans and also most Chinese intellectuals had usually claimed. Besides, Fraenkel implicitly criticizes the imitation of Western classic-cum-romantic music by Chinese composers that, in the 1930s, had started to build the basis of what was later described as China's "pentatonic romanticism"...for example, in the works of He Luting, Huang Zi, Xian Xinghai or Ma Sicong - and which remained the predominant style of China's "official" music until the end of the Maoist period (if not until the present day). Instead, Fraenkel suggests that Chinese musicians should learn from the emergence of modern music in Europe and even implies that pre-classical music might be a possible source of inspiration for Chinese musicians. Only in the 1980s have Fraenkel's ideas (in part) become reality: The merging process of traditional Chinese music and Western modernity has brought forward a unique musical language that has been comprehensively analysed in the context of Chinese East Asian 20th-century music.

Fraenkel's treatise *A-functional Music*, which he revised in Shanghai, is his major theoretical accomplishment and can be described as a unique and comprehensive study of modern European music from 1910 to 1935... In his introductory chapter, there are a number of inserts that show the influence of his exile experience. Talking about general musical principles, he limits the concept of "music as a demonstration of musical thoughts" to the "occidental musical area" and he criticizes those who think that Chinese or Arabian musical traditions cannot be labelled as "music". In these lines, it can be clearly felt how Fraenkel accommodated to his exile experiences, while at the same time insisting on his identity as a modern Western musician, an identity which already becomes evident from the project of revising his extensive theoretical work without seeing

any chance of its publication.

After Shanghai

After the Shanghai period...Fraenkel fled the Chinese civil war and emigrated to the United States, where he had to reorganize his life once again. What were the psychological effects on him of this second refugee experience and how did it affect his musical performance, compositional output and pedagogical work? Apart from working as a conductor of the "Music Workshop Orchestra", he made a living as a private music teacher, as a copyist for music publishers and as an arranger and composer for documentaries and TV. But he continued to compose (art) music, and his compositions finally achieved some international recognition for him as a composer. He won the Busoni-Prize Bozen 1957 for his *Variationen und Fantasien u"ber ein Thema von Arnold Schoenberg* ("Variations and Fantasies on a Theme by Arnold Schoenberg"), the Queen Elizabeth Prize Lu"ttich, Belgium, 1962 for his *Musik fu"r Streichquartett* and, most remarkably, a prize from the Teatro La Scala in Milan in 1965 for his *Symphonische Aphorismen* ("Symphonic Aphorisms") ...

Wolfgang Fraenkel died at the age of 85 in a Los Angeles hospital. He was a remarkably creative composer and wrote 193 works of which 19 were not completed, including four of the compositions he worked on in Shanghai. Most works are preserved in Fraenkel's calligraphically written manuscripts; only a few scores were published during his lifetime.

Conclusion

This presentation of selected materials from the Fraenkel collections in Munich can provide little more than an elementary point of departure for more detailed and comprehensive research on this important period of Fraenkel's development as both an artist and a teacher. An analysis of his refugee experience allows us to gain poignant insights into the specific challenges and artistic contexts exiled composers in Asia were facing while at the same time highlighting a crucial turning point in modern Chinese music history. The materials discussed suggest that Fraenkel was not only a versatile musician with a great talent for teaching and an informed view of Western music, both traditional and modern, which he was able to pass to his students, but he also had an active interest in assisting Chinese composers and musicians to discover a meaningful way out of colonial and post-colonial cultural struggle. Judging from his activities as a conductor of orchestras consisting of Chinese musicians, as a theorist, writer and com-

poser, it becomes apparent that Fraenkel was one of the few who were willing to confront ethnic separation and prejudice. He refrained from acting as a missionary of Western musical modernism, while still providing his students with a highly original and individual view of Western music history. In his public and semi-public musical life, Fraenkel was surely pragmatic rather than idealistic - anything else would have simply been self-defeating in the hard, and at times potentially life-threatening, situation of emigre Jews in Shanghai at the time. Nonetheless, in his private dedication to completing his theoretical study of the products of a musical culture with which he profoundly identified, but from which he had been expelled and to which he never returned, he reveals himself as idealistic at the most profoundly personal level.

It is rare to be able to see, via documentation and the evidence of written works, the process by which musical influence takes place - an influence flowing both from Fraenkel to his Chinese students and from Chinese culture into Fraenkel's music and thinking, in however limited and tentative a way. Due to the political upheavals that followed in the decades after he left Shanghai, Fraenkel's direct influence on Chinese music history was evidently not decisive and of only short duration. Sang Tong's and maybe other, less known experiments in early Chinese musical modernism in the late 1940s were simply swept away by what was considered "revolutionary music" from 1949 onwards. Still these early efforts to combine Chinese and Western musical thinking represent crucial links in the chain of development of Chinese 20th-century music that finally resulted in the bursting forth of contemporary Chinese music in the 1980s and 1990s. Wolfgang Fraenkel's story thus allows us to access an important moment in Chinese music history in gripping detail. A rediscovery of this regrettably forgotten refugee composer and writer in China, Europe and the US is not only desirable, but a highly visible necessity.

Christian Utz is a German musicologist, music theorist and composer. He is a university professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Austria and a private lecturer at the University of Vienna. His research deals with music and globalization, perception-sensitive music analysis and musical interpretation research as well as with the analysis, interpretation and reception of Gustav Mahler's music and digital music research. Email: mail@christianutz.net and website: <http://www.christianutz.net>

IN MEMORIAM

Lotte Lustig Marcus

May 1927 - 19 November 2022

By Ho Manli

Reprinted from *China Daily Global*, 02 Dec. 2022



Lotte and her husband, Alan Marcus. Courtesy of Ho Manli

Lotte Lustig Marcus, one of the last of the "Shanghailanders" — the 18,000 European Jewish refugees who fled to Shanghai to escape Nazi persecution during World War II — died at her home in Carmel, California, on Nov 19 at age 95.

A clinical psychologist well known for treating trauma sufferers, she was also active in humanitarian and educational work with migrant workers and multiple sclerosis patients.

In March 1938, two months before her 11th birthday, Lotte Marcus saw Adolf Hitler march triumphantly into her native Vienna after the Anschluss, the union of Austria and Nazi Germany, which subsequently shattered the third-largest Jewish community in Europe and precipitated a refugee crisis.

The lives of 185,000 Austrian Jews changed overnight under the ensuing Nazi reign of terror. Lotte's father Oskar was fired from his job at the Austrian State Bank. Because she was Jewish, Lotte could no longer attend school or participate in the ice-skating shows she loved.

Nazi authorities told Jews they could leave if they could produce "proof of emigration" to some place that would accept them. However, as evidenced by the Evian Conference in July 1938, most Western nations refused to open

their doors to Jewish refugees.

"It is difficult today to re-create the terrible climate of rejection and humiliation that existed for us," Lotte later wrote.

Lotte's father copied the addresses of all those with their surname of Lustig from American telephone directories, and Lotte wrote to them asking for help in her schoolgirl English. "We got almost 48 replies — all equally polite, equally firm that they couldn't help," Lotte recalled.

Then on Oct 18, 1938, Lotte wrote: "My father found himself standing in a long line in front of a building because someone had told him that the Chinese consul was giving out visas to Shanghai. My father happened to have our passports on him. He stood in line and retrieved (the) visas — 'just in case,' he told us."

My late father, Ho Feng Shan, the Chinese consul general in Vienna, had devised an ingenious strategy to save Jews by issuing visas to the only accessible entry point in war-torn China — the port city of Shanghai. Shanghai required no entry documents, but the visas facilitated safe passage out of Nazi-occupied territories and put Shanghai on the map as a refuge of last resort for Jews.

To a Western European of that time, Shanghai was simply unheard of, and Lotte's mother Grete was horrified, she recalled. "Our expectations had been to migrate to a Western country — America, England, Australia, France, etc." Or even to neighboring Switzerland, Lotte said, until her mother learned that close friends had been murdered by the person they had trusted to guide them across the border.

Then, on Nov 9 and 10, the Nazis orchestrated Kristallnacht, an overnight anti-Jewish rampage in Austria and Germany, during which Jewish stores were looted, Jewish synagogues burned, and 30,000 Jewish males, including Lotte's uncle Alfred, were arrested and deported to concentration camps.

"In December, Alfred's body was sent to us. He died, we were told, of pneumonia, which he allegedly caught working in the freezing cold on road construction wearing the famed striped pajamas," Lotte recalled. "It was then that Shanghai no longer loomed as a distant possibility but became an immediate necessity."

In January 1939, Lotte and her parents set sail for Shanghai on the Conte Biancamano, one of the luxury liners of the Italian Lloyd Triestino Company which

engaged in war profiteering by ferrying Jewish refugees to Shanghai and charging them for first-class tickets.

Arriving in a Shanghai ravaged by war and under brutal Japanese occupation could not have been a starker contrast to Vienna, or more shocking to European middle-class sensibilities, Lotte recalled, especially for her mother, who never recovered.

For the next eight years, Lotte's family survived with her father trading his stamp collection and Lotte taking odd jobs, including at a Chinese department store that sold tea biscuits to local foreigners. At the end of the day, Lotte recalled, she would scrape the bits of sugar at the bottom of the biscuit tin to bring home to her mother.

She utilized her English-language skills and ran errands for Chinese merchants. Every three months, she sold her thick brown hair by the ounce. She even started a little business with one of her boyfriends, turning Chinese comic books into bundles of toilet paper.

She was the first love of the most well-known Shanghailander, W. Michael Blumenthal, who later became the US secretary of the treasury in the Carter administration. She called him "Werner" and they remained friends for life.

In 1943, the Japanese ordered all the "stateless" Jewish refugees to move into a special designated area in Hongkou, which already had 100,000 Chinese residents. Living conditions became even harsher, with 10 people squeezed into one room, Lotte said. Dire poverty, hunger, disease and death were commonplace, and every summer, Lotte recalled, so was amoebic dysentery.

Not long afterward, Lotte's father died of kidney cancer, leaving a teenage Lotte to support herself and her mother until 1947, when they were able to emigrate to the United States. After arriving in Los Angeles, Lotte found a job as a legal secretary at the Hollywood movie studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where she met the writer Alan Marcus. They were married in 1952 and settled in Carmel, California.

That is where I met Lotte in 2003. I had been researching and documenting the history of my father's rescue activities in Vienna and learned that she still possessed the passports and visas that my father's consulate had issued.

By then, Lotte had raised three children, finished college, obtained her master's degree and, in 1985, at the age of 57,

earned a PhD in psychology. She had a successful clinical practice and had turned the post-traumatic stress she suffered from her wartime experience into a means to help others.

Our meeting was a revelation to both of us. For Lotte, learning that the visas her father obtained had a face behind them, that it had not been just a random bit of bureaucracy, but an act of kindness, led her to see the past with fresh eyes. For me, Lotte's ability to transcend her childhood traumas and memories, to see past experiences with adult eyes and to place them in a larger context, gave me a fuller understanding of that complex history.

For the next 19 years, Lotte spoke and wrote with unflinching eloquence about the harsh realities faced by the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. She gave credit where credit was due: to the wealthy local Jews and Jewish relief organizations who provided housing, soup kitchens and schooling for the refugee children, and facilitated the creation of an exile community.

She spoke with regret that neither she, nor her fellow refugees, ever learned the culture or language of their host country. The common struggle for survival had precluded any real social interactions with their Chinese neighbors, to whom the refugees were just another added "sliver of nakojin" ("foreigner" in Shanghai dialect), albeit poorer, Lotte recalled.

She decried a recent revisionist trend that embellished and distorted this Shanghai history into a "fictive tale" of hearts-and-flowers. "Nothing could be further from the essence of the actual experience," she wrote.

In her last years, Lotte often said how "lucky" she had been in life. But it was more than luck. It was Lotte herself: her strength of character, her intelligence, her resourcefulness, and her courage. My father would have been proud to have saved someone like her.

Ho Manli, the daughter of the late Chinese diplomat rescuer Ho Feng Shan, has been researching and documenting her father's heroism for the past two decades. She was one of the foreign editors who helped launch China Daily in 1981 and has continued to work with the paper on major projects such as the 1990 Asian Games, the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the launching of the paper's US edition. Contact the writer at homanli@chinadaily.com.cn

Harriet Bograd

April 1943 – 17 September 2022

[Harriet Bograd was a professional volunteer for Kulanu. She served as treasurer of Kulanu from 2002-2008, and president from 2008 until her death in 2022. While Kulanu has come to focus on the Jewish communities in Africa, there was a time when it worked with SJI to assist the Kaifeng Jews. Together, SJI and Kulanu brought Shi Lei, a young Kaifeng Jew, on a lecture tour of North America and later sent some young Kaifeng Jews to America to attend a Jewish summer camp so that they could experience an immersive Jewish environment. Ed.]

By Joseph Berger

Excerpted from The New York Times, 25 November 2022

In the summer of 2001, Harriet Bograd decided to visit her daughter Margie, who had taken a summer job in a remote village in Ghana.

When Ms. Bograd and her husband, Ken Klein, arrived in the village, Sefwi Wiawso, they learned about its community of two dozen families who considered themselves Jewish, even if the religious authorities in Israel and elsewhere did not...

In the years after that trip, Ms. Bograd worked with the nonprofit organization Kulanu, which supports "isolated, emerging or returning" Jewish communities in places where even most American Jews don't realize there are Jews: Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Cameroon, Madagascar, Indonesia, Pakistan, Guatemala, the Philippines and more — 33 countries in total...

"It gave her such joy that these Jewish people felt they were connected to the greater Jewish world and felt they belonged," Mollie Levine, the deputy director of Kulanu, said in an interview.

Ms. Bograd died on Sept. 17 in a Manhattan hospital. She was 79. Her daughter Rabbi Margie Klein Ronkin said the cause was complications of heart surgery.

So exhilarated was Ms. Bograd by her experience in Ghana that she promptly joined the board of Kulanu. By her death, she had served as its president for 14 years. The organization's headquarters were in the study of her Upper West Side apartment.

Under her command, the organization, whose Hebrew name means "all of us," raised funds to build synagogues in Uganda and Zimbabwe; a Jew-

ish-themed primary school in Uganda that is open to Christians and Muslims; and a mikvah — a ritual bath — in Tanzania. With a budget of around \$500,000, Kulanu has also provided rabbinical training and advanced classes in Judaism at American seminaries for community leaders and distributed prayer books, Torah scrolls, prayer shawls and other ritual items.

Kulanu's work has not been without controversy. While Jews in Ethiopia have been recognized by the Orthodox authorities in Israel as authentically Jewish, those in other parts of Africa have not been. Efforts by Conservative rabbis to formally convert some Africans to Judaism have encountered challenges because the Orthodox establishment in Israel does not recognize the legitimacy of Conservative rabbis. Bonita Nathan Sussman, Kulanu's new president, said that many Africans also reject conversion, arguing, "Who are you to tell me I'm not Jewish?"...

She was active in Jewish causes in New York as well. In the early 1980s, she and other parents partnered with educators to found the Heschel School, a Jewish day school in Manhattan that now enrolls about a thousand students. And at the West End Synagogue, a Reconstructionist congregation, she was known for the warm way she greeted newcomers, an act congregants affectionately called "Boggrading."

Harriet Mary Bograd was born on April 6, 1943, into a Conservative Jewish home in Paterson, N.J....Harriet attended a special high school operated by Montclair State Teachers College (now Montclair State University) and graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1963 with a degree in political science. The summer she graduated, she arranged for a group of nine white Bryn Mawr students to teach at Livingstone College, a historically Black college in Salisbury, N.C., so that they could absorb the impact of the growing civil rights movement.

One of 11 women in her class at Yale Law School, she graduated in 1966. Rather than joining a law firm, she went to work for an organization in New Haven, Conn., that represented indigent clients in matters like access to medical care and that trained local residents to be advocates for themselves and their neighbors...

She married Mr. Klein, a tax lawyer, in 1977. In addition to her daughter Rabbi Klein Ronkin, he survives her, as do another daughter, Sarah Klein; a sister, Naomi Robbins; and two grandchildren.

When Ms. Bograd received a diagnosis of Stage 4 breast cancer in 1997 with a bleak prognosis, it made her only more determined to use her remaining time for the Hebrew concept of *tikkun olam* — "repairing the world" — and for her work with Kulanu.

Jonathan Sarna, a professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, said Ms. Bograd had also seen Kulanu as a vehicle to expand the mainstream Jewish sense of what Jews are supposed to look like. "She felt it enhanced American Judaism to recognize that all Jews are not white and European," he said.

Joseph Berger was a reporter and editor at The New York Times for 30 years.

Harriet was a graduate of Bryn Mawr College and Yale University Law School. She led community programs in low-income neighborhoods and Jewish communities since the 1960s. She served as a staff leader and consultant for non-profit community organizations in areas of education, childcare, health, anti-poverty, and nonprofit "cyber-accountability." Her work involved funding, program development, finance, planning, and parent involvement in schools. Harriet was a founder of the Heschel School in New York City and a leader in her synagogue. She was married to Ken Klein, and Kulanu's office was in their home in New York City.

At Beida, Something Brand Nu — A Class in Yiddish

By PJ Grisar

Excerpted from the Forward, 18 September 2022

Over 30 students gathered for the first Yiddish class at Peking University in Beijing — and, according to its instructor, the first Yiddish class ever taught in China.

On the evening of Sept. 7, enrollees and auditors in majors ranging from psychology, space physics, engineering, law and mathematics, learned the alef-beys and the popular Yiddish song about learning it, "Afn Pripetshik." Their instructor was Yang Meng, one of only a handful of Chinese academics fluent in the language...

Yang learned Yiddish as part of her Ph.D. research on the Jewish exile in Shanghai during the Shoah. "Among the scholars of Jewish studies, I happened to know there was no mainland Chinese who spoke Yiddish at the time," Yang said, "I thought why not give it a try!"

I spoke with Yang over email about how the class is going, the state of Jewish studies in China and why Chinese students may find common ground with Yiddish language and culture. The following conversation has been lightly edited for length and clarity.

What would you say is the awareness of Yiddish in China? Is it distinct from the awareness of other modes of Jewish culture and languages?

...Most Chinese have very little knowledge about Judaism because it is not part of the education in schools or in universities. Out of 200-plus students of my Jewish civilization course last semester, only five of them ever knew the word "Holocaust," though they all knew this tragic event. Very few ever heard of Shabbat, let alone Yiddish.

...What is the state of the field of Jewish studies in China overall? And has it changed since you started?

Very few universities or academic institutions in China have Jewish studies programs, e.g., Nanjing University, Shandong University, Henan University, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, etc. Other universities only have one or two scholars who are doing related research or teaching. As in the city Beijing, where there are almost 100 universities or colleges, my Jewish civilization course is the only Jewish

Visit SJJ's Website

www.sinojudaic.org

**Featuring updated articles
and links and open access
to Points East archives**

civilization course which is open university wide...

Is there anything about Yiddish — either as a language, or in the culture or stories surrounding it — that you feel Chinese students are likely to recognize in their own backgrounds and culture?

As Shanghainese is my mother tongue, I have more feelings for different languages/dialects. Today Shanghainese is also facing a similar situation as Yiddish is and even worse, as there was no such rich literature of Shanghainese as there was in Yiddish. Shanghainese has its unique flavor and it should not just disappear. There are already efforts to revive Shanghainese in Shanghai, e.g., courses on Shanghainese in school in Shanghai. Students coming from all parts of China have dialects from their hometown (their shtetl), and they might sense the meaning of a local language which is closely attached to its people.

Last semester I organized two screenings: “Menashe” and “Unorthodox” and I guided the Chinese students to understand the language and culture in the films. This semester I plan to screen films from Woody Allen and the series “Shtisel.”

Do you think you’ll get the chance to teach Yiddish next semester as well?

Next semester I will lead a seminar on “World Jewish Literature and Art.” I would love to open more on Jewish studies but it is not easy to get approved. I have tried, fought, insisted, persisted. My colleague Professor Zhao Baisheng wrote a very supportive letter for my Yiddish course and finally my Yiddish course got approved after repeated failures. I am very grateful to the Kehillat Beijing and Kehillat Shanghai. Both Jewish communities in China have offered me a lot of help and support on my teaching and I firmly believe it is very meaningful to promote Jewish studies in China and let both Chinese and Jewish civilizations find their ways to know each other.

PJ Grisar is the Forward’s culture reporter. He can be reached at Grisar@Forward.com and [@pjgrisar](https://twitter.com/pjgrisar) on Twitter.

Israeli Folk Dance in Taiwan

By Jordyn Haime

Excerpted from JTA, 29 June 2022

YILAN, Taiwan (JTA) — It was a cool spring day in Yilan, a town on Taiwan’s northeast coast known for its picturesque rice fields and delicious spring onions. On a concrete clearing beneath a bridge that doubled as a dance floor, against a cloudy mountainous backdrop dotted with white cranes, about 10 Taiwanese adults danced expertly to classic Israeli folk music — songs such as “Hinei Matov,” “David Melech Yisrael,” “Sulam Yaakov” — and other folk tunes from around the world. Altogether, over 35 dances were practiced over three hours.

For many of these locals, the dances are familiar, almost second nature. All over the age of 50, they grew up at a time when international folk dancing was the only group activity allowed by the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) government, starting in 1949.

That year, the KMT, which had been in power in China since 1912, lost a longstanding civil war to the Communist Party and retreated to Taiwan. Estimates say around 2 million Chinese followed in migrating to the island over the following few years.

The KMT ruled Taiwan in a bubble under strict martial law in order to suppress potential Chinese Communist presence or any anti-government activities. What resulted was heavy censorship of newspapers, books, television, radio and other forms of entertainment, as well as a ban on “unlawful assembly.” The government promoted Chinese culture and the Mandarin Chinese language, banning the study of Taiwanese history, the practice of Taiwanese language, and dancing, claiming that activity was “against morals.”

But there was one reason Taiwanese could gather in groups, and one genre of dance they were allowed to practice — for political and nationalist reasons.

“The entire island was closed. Under those conditions, no one was allowed to [practice other forms of] dance, they couldn’t join these activities because they were controlled. But there was one kind that you could do, and that was folk dance,” says Xu Wenhong, a 57-year-old food sciences professor at Yilan University who organizes weekly folk dance classes.

“At the time we really had no form of entertainment. Even certain movies couldn’t be released, they were all con-

trolled,” he said. “So when I was a kid and saw my mother dancing, I thought it looked fun. So when I got to college I joined a club.” There he met his wife, Tsui-yen. The two have been together ever since and lead these regular events in Yilan.

Folk dancing “played a role as both a political tool and a communal activity during and after the Taiwanese Martial Law Period,” wrote Wei-Chi Wu of University of California Riverside in her dissertation on the topic. “For the National Government, international folk dancing was cultural work that assisted it in proposing Taiwanese Nationalism, and to show Taiwan’s alignment with the United States and its opposition to Communist China.”

To that end, in the 1950s, the Taiwanese government invited American dance instructors to introduce dances to teachers across Taiwan, who brought them to their primary schools and universities. Soon nearly all schools here were using folk dances from around the world as an exercise activity for students, and nearly every university had a folk dance club...

Americans like Rickey Holden, a prominent choreographer and folk dance teacher, brought songs such as “Mayim Mayim” (from Israel), “Shibolet Basadeh” (Israel), and “Wooden Shoes” (Lithuania) to Taiwanese teachers during his first visit in 1957. “Mayim Mayim” — which in Hebrew means “Water, Water” and became known as the “Water Dance” in Chinese — was one of the first folk dances introduced to Taiwan and became synonymous with the activity. Its impact was so significant that Taiwan’s International Folk Dance Association made it the theme of its 50th anniversary seminar in 2007...

When Taiwan’s martial law was lifted in 1987, folk dance largely fell out of style. For the first time, Taiwanese were able to experiment with styles like hip-hop, jazz and street dancing. Native Taiwanese dances and indigenous dances resurfaced too. Today, few schools still teach children folk dancing and few colleges have remaining clubs...But Israeli dances remain popular among the international folk dance groups that remain because of the abundance of new dances that have emerged from Israel over the years, especially those choreographed to Israeli pop music... Some have even applied Israeli dance moves to popular Taiwanese music. Groups have been able to attract more participants purely by including Israeli dances and music in their practice...

Bequest Request

Please consider putting the
Sino-Judaic Institute in your will.

Chinese Itzik

By Matti Friedman

Excerpted from: <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/israel-middle-east/articles/chinese-itzik-haifa>, 9 January 2022

...The most prominent face of China in Israel belongs to a guy named Itzik. His real name is Xi Xiaoqi, and he's a 35-year-old resident of Beijing, but here he's known as Itzik ha-Sini, or "Chinese Itzik." He gets recognized on the street. He stars in hundreds of internet videos about life in Israel from a Chinese perspective, and about life in China made accessible for Israelis. Some of these appear on his own YouTube channel, but sometimes he appears on Israeli outlets like Channel 12 or KAN 11, the public broadcaster, where journalists are delighted to have a Chinese figure—the first—who speaks perfect, slangy Hebrew and has an acute grasp of the Israeli audience. He's impossible not to like.

A good introduction to the Itzik genre is the video where he lists his top 10 reasons for loving Israel, including malawah, Jewish holidays, and the Pride Parade in Tel Aviv. Or the one where

he introduces his grandfather Xi Renan, 87, an energetic veteran of the Korean War (on the side of the communist North, of course), gives him a Hebrew name (Ronen), and teaches him to sum up his philosophy with the Hebrew workaholic expression nanuach bakever, "We'll rest in the grave." In Itzik's world, China is a great place, but one that can learn from us Israelis about openness, creativity, and fun. He has much respect for who we are and what we've accomplished. The "top 10" video actually includes only nine things, but he ends by saying, "It's OK, these are Israelis, they're good people, not small-minded—they won't make a big deal about it." He snaps his fingers. "That's the 10th thing." [See a sample here: <https://youtu.be/4Xt3fyJBhjk>]

I caught Itzik on Zoom from Beijing. He was born in the city of Jiangyin, he said, son of a traffic cop and a real estate agent. He'd never met a Jew or heard a word of Hebrew before arriving at university at age 18. The school offered Japanese, Nepali, Dutch, and a few other languages, but his grandfather told him that Jews were smart—people of the book. Everyone thinks

this in China, he said. If his years communicating with real Jews in Israel has disabused him of this notion, he was too polite to say so. During his Hebrew studies, first in Beijing with an Israeli teacher and then at Tel Aviv University, he adopted his Hebrew name, a diminutive of Yitzhak, or Isaac.

In 2009, with China taking a greater interest in Israel, he was selected to run the Hebrew desk at China Radio International, a state outfit that might uncharitably be called a propaganda arm or, more generously, a showcase for China's best self. (The Hebrew desk doesn't actually broadcast radio, only videos.)...In Itzik's rise from an obscure city to an elite college, then to studies abroad, and then to an official media job, it's possible to sense the hand of the state identifying and promoting a gifted young person...

Matti Friedman is a Tablet columnist and the author, most recently, of Who by Fire: Leonard Cohen in the Sinai and Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel. He may be reached via his website: www.mattifriedman.com

Notice to Subscribers. Particularly Overseas Subscribers. Please Consider Receiving Points East Digitally

It is very expensive for us to mail out Points East, particularly to those of you outside the United States. Please consider receiving the electronic version of Points East and letting us put your dues to a better use. Just send an email to Laytner@msn.com and you'll be switched over. Thanks!

**Mail to: The Sino-Judaic Institute, Prof. Steve Hochstadt, Treasurer, Sino-Judaic Institute,
34 Colgate Rd., Unit 1, Roslindale, MA 02131, or sign up online at www.sinojudaic.org**

JOIN THE SINO-JUDAIC INSTITUTE

Regular Member \$60	Supporter. \$100	Patron **\$1,000+	Benefactor ***\$5,000+
Senior 35	Sponsor 250	**Receive Chaim Simon's Religious Overseance by the Jews of Kaifeng China	***Donors at the \$5,000 level and above also get their choice of a copy of a book by Hochstadt, Laytner, Paper Schwarcz, Tokayer or Weisz.
Library 60	Corp/Org/Synagogue. . . 250		
Student/Academic 40	Sustainer. 500		

Selection: _____

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

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

Home Phone # _____ Work # _____ Fax # _____