

## A PEEK BACKWARDS INTO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SHANGHAI\*

(This paper is dedicated to the memory of the late Mr Hans Diestel)

WEI PEH TI

### Introduction

Jewish traders were among the first foreigners to come to work and live in Shanghai when the port was first opened to foreign trade in November 1843. Despite the important role a number of these Jewish residents played in Shanghai as well as in international commerce at that time and for a century to follow, scholars are just beginning to focus their attention on this community. David Kranzler's dissertation at Yeshiva University in New York on the Jewish refugees from Europe who arrived at Shanghai after 1938, *Japanese, Nazis and Jews: the Jewish Refugee Community at Shanghai*, is the only generally known work that has been published in English.<sup>1</sup> Vilhelm Meyer was a Danish Jew who started a small trading house in Shanghai importing goods from his native Denmark at the beginning of the century, and who eventually sold the company, by then a commercial and industrial conglomerate of 1,800 employees, to General Electric in 1935. His life and work is being researched by his grandson, Christopher Bo Bramsen.<sup>2</sup> Bramsen, however, is writing a personal biography of his grandfather, emphasizing his work in Shanghai as a Dane, not a treatise on a Jewish individual in Shanghai. On the other hand, two doctoral dissertations on the Sephardic community are being undertaken at this time, one at the London School of Economics, and one at the University of London.

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\*The suggestion for a paper on the Jewish community in Shanghai was first made in 1987 by Dr Jewish Diestel and Mrs Paula Sandfelder when the Jewish Historical Society and the Jewish Recreation Club of Hong Kong invited me to give the first Ezekiel Abraham Memorial Lecture. Subsequently, I have given similar talks to the student body of the Chapin School and at Temple Emmanuel in New York City, as well as to Jewish groups on Long Island. I am grateful to my many friends for showing interest in the subject, and am especially flattered to be consulted by otherwise intelligent scholars who wish to work on the subject of the Shanghai Jews seriously. I would like to thank the Jewish Library in Hong Kong for letting me consult their collections. My appreciation also goes to the Rev Carl Smith for generously sharing his numerous index cards and his encyclopaedic knowledge.

In theory, records of business and other enterprises founded and controlled by members of the Shanghai Jewish community exist somewhere, awaiting scrutiny by scholars. In reality, however, these materials are not always readily available to the scholars who are looking for them. It is hoped that individuals working on the Jewish community or on Western enterprises in Shanghai will be able to meet up with these records.<sup>3</sup> When Mr. Bramsen first started his current research, he chanced upon a series of letters written by a Danish *au-pair* girl in Shanghai during the early years of the 20th century. For six years this young woman wrote at regular intervals to her family in Denmark, describing in great detail each dinner party given in the house, identifying and describing every guest, the clothes they wore, the food and drinks served, and from time to time, the conversation that took place as well. Valuable historical resources indeed!

There is a unique collection of information in Hong Kong. The Rev Carl Smith, a retired American missionary who has been living in Hong Kong for almost half a century, and author of a book on Chinese Christians in Hong Kong, has gathered a fantastic amount of isolated information on individual foreigners and Chinese Christians who were active along the China coast during the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>4</sup> He has put the information on literally hundreds of thousands of 3 × 5 index cards, most of which have been categorized and filed. Mr Smith compiled the data from public and journalistic records, including jury lists, will probates, newspaper obituaries, and numerous other sources.

### **Jewish Immigration to Shanghai**

With few exceptions, the Jews in Shanghai fell into three groups: the Sephardic Jews, the Ashkenazi Jews, and the German, Central and Eastern European Jews. Throughout the decades they lived and worked in Shanghai, and although they worked together from time to time on certain projects, the three communities remained distinct.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Sephardic Jews**

The Sephardic traders in Shanghai came during the 19th century from the Middle East by way of India under the aegis of the Sassoons. Their numbers are not discernible from census statistics, principally because the statistics recorded the nationality rather than the religious affiliation of each resident. The number of early arrivals could not be more than

a handful, because efforts had to be made in order to make sure that there would be enough male Jews to constitute a daily *Minyan*.

This community was by far the most prominent of the three groups of Jewish residents in Shanghai. They were among the first foreign traders in the metropolis, bearing names that included Sassoon, Kadoorie, Ezra, Abraham, Solomon, Rahmin, Moses, and Gubby, families still active in Hong Kong today, and were a part of the international mercantile community in the Far East at that time, enjoying business and personal links with the close-knit Jewish communities in Hong Kong and Bombay. At first they traded in raw cotton and general goods, then took over the opium trade. In time, in Shanghai as well as in Hong Kong and Bombay, they branched out into real estate, banking, shipping, warehousing, insurance, hotels, utilities, and other industries, gaining power and influence locally as well as in international commerce. The names of 38 prominent Sephardic Jews were found among the 1932 list of 99 members of the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

### **Ashkenazi Jews**

Immediately following the completion of the trans-Siberian Railroad and the pogrom in Russia in 1905, a number of Russian Jews moved to Manchuria through Siberia, with about 300 filtering down to Shanghai. After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, more than 10,000 Jews emigrated to Harbin.<sup>6</sup> Apparently at that time the Chinese government had been contemplating expelling the Jews from Manchuria.<sup>7</sup> In the mid 1920s when White Russians and Japanese interests began to spread in Manchuria, many of the earlier immigrants moved southward to Tianjin and Shanghai, swelling the total Jewish population in Shanghai to just under 2,000.<sup>8</sup>

The Ashkenazi community of Jews in Shanghai, mostly Russian but by then joined by stragglers from Lithuania as well, increased to more than 1,000 after 1924. They were not exactly embraced by the Sephardic community of Shanghai. The Ashkenazi were not princes of commerce, but small businessmen who engaged in the import and export of such items as wool, bristles, and fur. The Chinese in Shanghai remembered Jewish salesmen going from house to house, carrying rugs for sale. The Ashkenazi Jews were also professionals; physicians and lawyers, for instance; and, above all, musicians.

## German, Central and Eastern European Jews

The third wave of Jewish immigration into Shanghai, and incidentally the largest, was in the years following 1938, as a result of Nazi persecutions in Germany, Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>9</sup> Since Shanghai was the only port that accepted people without visas, Jews who were not permitted to enter other countries came to Shanghai.

They travelled by water, on Italian liners via Africa. Since canal tolls had to be paid in pounds sterling, ship captains tended to take the long way by going around Africa, making the journey to Shanghai more than six weeks. Other refugees took the Siberian Railroad to Manchuria, then went from there to Japan. The Japanese consul at Vilna, apparently for humanitarian reasons, issued transit visas for those who possessed another, usually for some Latin American country. Or, for those who did not have any visa at all, the destination was to be Shanghai. As a result, a large number of Jews congregated at Kobe or Yokohama, waiting to travel to Shanghai by ship. Among this group were the faculty and student body of the Yeshiva from Poland. So, until the school moved to New York after 1945, the rabbis were trained in Shanghai.

When the Sino-Japanese conflict merged into the global war following Pearl Harbour in December 1941, resulting in Japanese occupation of the International Settlement, the Jews in Shanghai were treated according to their nationalities. The large refugee community, either with 'non-enemy alien' status or stateless, manned the factories and operated cottage industries in their homes.<sup>10</sup> In 1943, when special privileges enjoyed by foreigners in China came to an end as the unequal treaties of the 19th century were formally abrogated, the Jewish population in Shanghai was estimated to number 25,000.

As the war ended in 1945 the Jewish refugees left to settle in the United States, Canada, Australia or, after its establishment, Israel. Long-term Jewish residents left as well after 1949. By 1956, only 543 Jews remained in China, 231 of them in Shanghai. 402 of these Jews were classified as Soviet citizens by the Chinese government, and were therefore unable to obtain the necessary papers in order to emigrate without cooperation between the Chinese authorities and the Soviet consulate. R.D. Abraham, leader of the Jewish community at that time, learned through a BBC broadcast that David Marshall, the noted Jewish lawyer from Singapore, was being invited to visit China. He quickly

wrote to Marshall, asking him to intervene on behalf of these Jews. Marshall spoke to Zhou Enlai and Zhou was able to release the Jews as a gesture to the Russians.<sup>11</sup> In 1983, only one Jew, a 75-year old woman by the name of Agre, who was born in Russia but was officially listed as stateless, remained in China.<sup>12</sup> The last Jewish resident in Shanghai, a Max Lieberman, died in 1982.

### **Some Prominent Sephardic Jews in Shanghai**

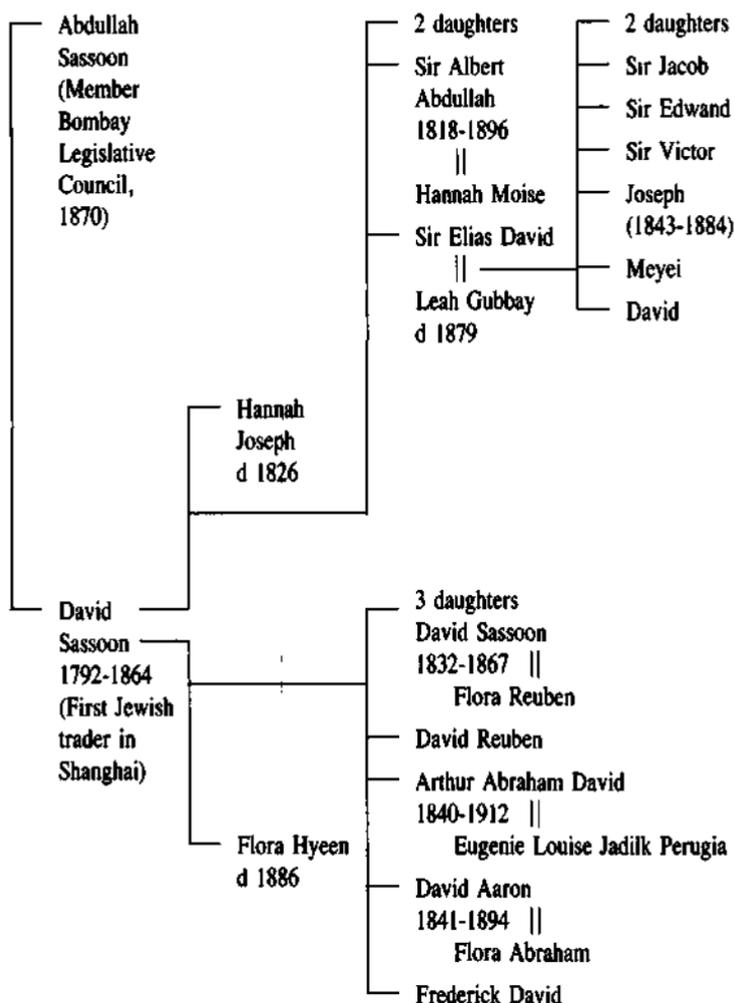
The first Sephardic Jews came to Shanghai to work for the Sassoon interests, then left to establish enterprises of their own. A number of them prospered and founded dynasties of their own, but I can only give account for a handful of them here.

#### **The Sassoons**

David Sassoon was the first Jewish trader in China. The *Old Chronicle of Hong Kong* recorded Sassoon as 'the first Jewish merchant that set his foot at Canton.'<sup>13</sup> The Sassoons were Sephardic Jews who had been in Baghdad for several generations by the time David Sassoon was born in 1793. David left Baghdad in 1825 for Bombay where he organized a company to export raw cotton to China and Great Britain. At that time, the East India Company still maintained a monopoly on tea, but had adopted the practice of permitting their employees deck space on Company ships to carry private goods between India and China. People like Jardine and Matheson had used their allotted space to ship opium, which had been grown specifically in India for cash sale in China, despite the fact that opium was considered contraband by Chinese authorities. When the Company's monopoly ended in 1833, private traders began to trade on their own. Jardine, Matheson and Company dominated the opium trade until the 1870s.

e moved from place to place, the responsible

## David Sassoon and His Family



David Sassoon's elder brother, Abdullah Sassoon, who had supervised the family's business in Bombay, was a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. David Sassoon and Company, incorporated in London to buy and sell raw cotton, began to carry opium in the early 1830s. After the Opium War ended in 1842, David Sassoon and Company moved into Hong Kong, and, as soon as British authorities were

established in Shanghai, Sassoon moved his legitimate articles of trade there until 1858. Meanwhile, Jardine, Matheson and Company, which had hithertofore been the major trader in opium, had been buying through native Indian firms in India and carrying it in their own ships to China. It was partly due to Sassoon's manipulation of the opium supply and the opium market that led Jardine, Matheson to abandon the opium trade and to diversify its interests in Hong Kong and China. After 1871. Sassoon companies controlled the opium market.

David Sassoon died in Bombay in 1864. He was married twice, and had a number of sons, who took turns managing the business in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and London. After David's death, his second son, Elias David Sassoon, organized E.D. Sassoon and Company. Thereafter, there were two Sassoon companies, known by contemporaries as the Old Sassoon (David Sassoon and Company), and the New Sassoon (E.D. Sassoon and Company). A number of employees of the Old Sassoon, such as Silas Haroon, joined E.D. Sassoon and Company as partners.

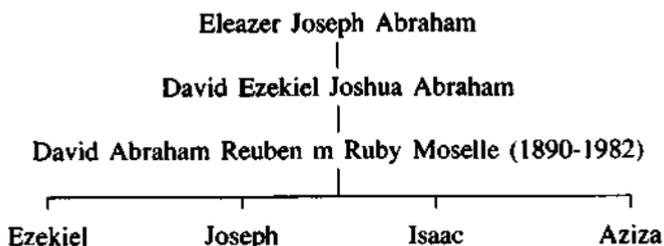
### **Other Families**

Shortly after the arrival of the British Consul at Shanghai in November 1843, three young employees of David Sassoon and Company began working and living in Shanghai. The three were E.J. Abraham, M.S. Moshee, and J. Reuben, the last a founder of the Jewish congregation, Sheerith Israel, in Shanghai. In quick order, other Jewish young men arrived at Shanghai to work for the Sassoons, including a number of names later distinguished on the China coast. At first, the young men returned to Baghdad or Bombay for their brides. Eventually, as more Jewish families settled in Shanghai, marriage partners were chosen locally.

### **The Abrahams**

Despite being identified by Cecil Roth in *The Sassoon Dynasty* as the one Jewish merchant family of Shanghai closely associated with scholarship, the Abraham men were first of all traders handling commodities typical of that time, including opium. Eleazer Abraham had come to China as a clerk in the David Sassoon and Company. In 1843 he was in Hong Kong, and in 1850 in Shanghai. In 1904 D.E.J. Abraham was recorded to have sued the Sassoon Apcar Steamship Company to recover opium which had allegedly gone astray.<sup>14</sup> The grandson of the first Abraham in Shanghai, the noted R.D. Abraham, was elected leader

### The Abraham Family



of the Jewish community, and served it well. His son, Ezekiel Abraham, recalled how the Jewish community had rallied to succour the refugees from Eastern Europe and Germany in 1938 and 1941 when some 17,000 to 18,000 refugees found their way to Shanghai.

'The Japanese commander had called in R.D. Abraham, as leader of the Jewish community in Shanghai, to tell him that a shipload of Jewish refugees had arrived. 'We cannot let them land,' said the Japanese. 'Why?' Abraham wanted to know. 'There is no place for them to live, and the refugees have no money to feed themselves,' reasoned the Japanese. 'In that case,' said Abraham, thoughtfully, without a smile, 'you will just have to shoot all of them, because there is no other place on earth for them to go.' Then he paused for a few moments before confiding in the Japanese, 'or, we can open the Sassoon warehouses in Hongkew and let the refugees live there, and put them to work in the factories.'<sup>15</sup>

### Ghe Ezras

Edward Ezra switched from the opium trade to large-scale real estate construction and management in 1900. He erected - on the land bounded by Nanking, Kiujiang, Szechwan and Kiangse Roads - 1,000,000 taels worth of residences that enjoyed modern amenities. His own home on Joffre Road boasted a ballroom and a music room. The family interests included hotels. The Astor House Hotel, on Broadway and Whangpo Road, occupied three acres of ground. Edward Ezra, who was a Director of Astor House, was the first person born in Shanghai and educated at the Shanghai Public School to be elected to the Municipal Council. Socially linked to the Sassoons from the beginning by marriage, today

surviving members of the Ezra family still enjoy a favoured position in the Jewish community in Hong Kong.

Nevertheless, individual members of the family (or families, since there were several separate groups of Ezias in Shanghai) attracted notoriety from time to time. In 1918, criminal proceedings were instituted against Joseph Ezra and Ellis Isaac Ezra for using the launch owned by the Standard Oil Company without authorization. The same year, Joseph Ezra was summoned to court for assaulting a Mr Gordious Nielson, a Dane, who was the proprietor of the *Shanghai Gazette*, which had printed something that Joseph Ezra did not like.<sup>16</sup> The *South China Morning Post* recorded a 1933 case whereby two men named Ezra, Judah and Isaac, were brought to court in San Francisco for smuggling narcotics.<sup>17</sup> By 1933, the International Convention against opium had long since been signed.

Nissim Ezra Benjamin Ezra, better known as N.E.B. Ezra, founded and edited the Anglo-Jewish weekly newspaper, *Israel's Messenger* from 1909 to 1935. This paper became the official organ of the Shanghai Zionist Association, taking issue with Sir Victor Sassoon and other Sephardic Jews in Shanghai over the issue of Zionism. The paper supported the Jewish National Fund in China. In 1921 the fund received a donation of 21,000 pounds sterling from a single donor in Shanghai. Since it was pro-Japanese, Chinese sources speculated that the Japanese had succeeded in buying the paper's editorial policy to favour Japanese imperial ambitions in Asia.<sup>22</sup>

### **Silas Hardoon**

Silas Hardoon alone among the Shanghai Jewery was not spoken of as a family. To the Chinese he was the most interesting Jew in Shanghai. There is so much information on him that it is difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. Hardoon was a colourful as well as important personality. He was also very, very wealthy. He was elected to the Municipal Council of the International settlement as well as the Conseil Municipal of the French Concession. Chinese tradition has it that the British made this Jewish parvenu pay for the honour of being a municipal councillor by shouldering the expenses of paving Nanking Road. Hardoon married a Chinese woman reputed to be of brothel origin, by Jewish and Buddhist rites. They adopted a number of Chinese and Eurasian children, rumoured to be from a dozen to twenty. The Chinese

children took Mme Hardoon's surname-Lo-the Eurasian children the surname Hardoon. Their ostentatious life-style was particularly noted. The Aili Garden, designed to be in the style of the Da Guan Yuan of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* embraced a temple and a school. After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, it was said that the Hardoons assumed the life style of the court by entertaining imperial concubines and employing eunuchs as retainers.

Actual facts known of the Hardoons are somewhat less flamboyant. Silas Hardoon was born in Baghdad. At the age of five, in 1851, his family moved to Bombay where his father worked for the Sassoons. In 1873 he moved to Shanghai to work for Sassoon as a clerk.<sup>23</sup> His parsimonious living, administrative skills and keen business sense soon enabled him to become a rich man himself. He engaged in opium sales and real estate speculation. Instead of buying expensive land in the British settlement, he bought land for himself and for the Sassoons in the External Roads area. And, when the settlement expanded, land value rose. It was said that he made as much as 500 million taels in one single transaction. Hardoon married a Chinese woman, and had little to do with Jewish religious or social life in Shanghai, despite his significant gift to the construction of the Beth Aharon synagogue for the orthodox congregation Sheerith Israel. Before and during the Revolution of 1911, Hardoon and his wife harboured revolutionaries in the Aili Garden. Whether or how much they contributed towards the revolutionary coffers is unknown.

Silas Hardoon died in 1931 and was buried in the Aili Garden. This final act of disregard of religious tenets again angered the Jewish community since the garden was not consecrated ground.

### The Kadoories

The first woman to drive an automobile in Shanghai was Lady Kadoorie, wife of Sir Elly Kadoorie, an Iraqi Jew who made his fortune in real estate utilities in Shanghai. Kadoorie was a part of the Sassoon establishment until he went on his own. One of their sons, Lawrence,\* was to become Lord Kadoorie, the first man from Hong Kong to sit in the House of Lords at Westminster. He has remained active in finance and industry in Hong Kong. Their other son, Horace, is known for his support for education of Jews all over Asia, including Israel. Horace likes to be active in all aspects of founding a school, from curriculum planning to staff hiring, in addition to fund raising. In Shanghai in 1939,

\* Since deceased [Editor]

for instance, he organized the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School, or the Kadoorie School, in Hongkew for refugee children. Horace Kadoorie is also active in youth affairs.

### **Religious Life**

In the 1920s there were two synagogues in Shanghai: Ohel Rachel and Beth Aharon.

Ohel Rachel was successor to Beth El, built by Sir Jacob Sassoon. The congregation Beth El had been in existence since 2 August, 1878, although they had used rented space for worship until 1917. Rabbi W Hirsch did not sign up for a second term reputedly because he did not like the wealthy. No other rabbi was appointed. The principal of the Shanghai Jewish School, Mendel Brown, served as rabbi unofficially.

In 1900, a group which thought that Beth El was too relaxed about observation of orthodox traditions left Beth El and organized Sheerith Israel.<sup>24</sup> The new congregation included some of the most illustrious names in Shanghai — Abraham, A.E. Moses, and M.J. Isaac, for instance. It built the Beth Aharon Synagogue on Seymour Road, and which was later moved to Museum Road downtown, with funds contributed mostly by Haroon. The synagogue included space for a Hebrew school (Talmud Torah) as well as a ritualarium (mikveh).<sup>25</sup>

A third congregation came into being when Shanghai was inundated by Jewish refugees from Germany and Eastern Europe during the late 1930s. This was Ohel Moshey in Hongkew, built in 1941, architecturally a twin of the Jewish synagogue in Hong Kong. It boasted a capacity for 1,000 worshippers at a time.

The Jewish cemetery built in 1862 on Mohawk Road was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution a century later.

### **Educational, Social, and Charitable Institutions**

#### *Newspapers*

A bibliography of the Jewish Press in China gives six Jewish publications in Shanghai. One of these newspapers. *Israel's Messenger*,

published weekly under the editorship of Ezra, was in English. Others were in Russian and German.

### *Schools*

Youngsters from the Sephardic community were educated at the Public School in the International Settlement. The fee was too hefty for most of the Ashkenazi boys. As a result, the Kadoorie family endowed the School for Hebrew Boys where there was a respectable scholarship program.

### *B'nai B'rith*

An article entitled 'Shanghai Fortunes' in the *National Jewish Monthly* (June 1930) revealed that B'nai B'rith, considered the foremost secular Jewish organization in the world, but by the Sephardic community as particularly Ashkenazi, had trouble getting started in Shanghai. The Shanghai lodge was established officially in 1928, but, 'the circumstances of Jewish life in Shanghai are such that the organization of a B'nai B'rith Lodge was fraught with the most unusual difficulties. National divisions are sharp, particularly between the older Jewish families of the city and the more recently arrived Ashkenzim.'<sup>26</sup>

Eventually the Shanghai Lodge of B'nai B'rith went on stream when leading citizens of the Sephardic community, notably the Kadoorie, lent their support. It sponsored such activities as the Jewish Boy Scouts and the Jewish Girl Guides, On Seder Night, hospitality was extended to all Jews. At a Hanuka tea, 500 children were present.<sup>27</sup>

### *Clubs*

The Jewish Club opened in 1919 or 1920 in a colonial style building at the corner of Great Western and Tifeng Road. The cost for the building was \$250,000. The entrance fee was \$25 and the monthly subscription was \$7. There was an auditorium of 80 by 40 feet for lectures, and a billiard room 'that was rarely neglected.' Meanwhile, Jews joined major clubs such as the Shanghai Club, the French Club, the American Club, and the Country Golf Club. They were also active in horse racing.

As the reader can see, a great deal of work remains to be done in order to obtain a more complete portrait of the Jewish community in Shanghai.

I have barely scratched the surface in this overview, but it gives the reader an idea of the vibrant state of the Jewish Community in Shanghai at its peak.

### **Jewish Vestiges in Shanghai in the 1980s**

There were still some physical remains of the Jewish heritage in Shanghai visible during the 1980s.

*The Cathay Hotel*, also known as Sassoon House, at the junction of the Bund and Nanking Road, built by the Sassoon interests, still exists today (October 1991) as a hotel, but has been renamed the *Peace Hotel*. Its ballroom, venue of many elegant tea dances in the hotel's hey day, is now a restaurant serving Western food.

The *Ohel Moshe Synagogue* in Hongkew is now the isolation ward of the Shanghai Mental Hospital. A photograph taken in 1984 of the *Beth Aharon Synagogue* shows the dome of the house of worship intact but the Star of David covered by a coat of paint. The US government was asked to intercede to have this synagogue building preserved, but an article by Sam and Mona Kaplan in the *Vancouver Bulletin* reports that the building has been razed by a bulldozer.<sup>28</sup>

The *Jewish Cemetery* was demolished during the Cultural Revolution, but its chapel, as of September 1983, still stood, but as a tea house. Hardeen's *Aili Garden* became the Shanghai Agricultural Exhibition Hall. Kadoorie's *Marble Hall* has been transformed into the Children's Palace.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1976

<sup>2</sup> On a recent trip to Shanghai in September 1991 Mr Bramsen found that his grandfather's home had been razed only the year before

<sup>3</sup> There are still a number of former Jewish residents of Shanghai outside China, including Hong Kong. They are generous in sharing their memories, but they are advancing in years and more than a few of them are getting tired of being asked to recite the same things over and over again. A PBS radio programme in Los Angeles featured a number of former residents of Shanghai recalling their life, but these were mostly German Jews who were there from the late 1930s to the early 1950s

<sup>4</sup> Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* Hong Kong, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985

<sup>5</sup> It was clear when I gave the Ezekiel Abraham Memorial Lecture in 1987 that strong feelings still remained.

<sup>6</sup> Kranzler, 745.

<sup>7</sup> *The Hankow Daily News* July 13, 1917.

<sup>8</sup> Statistics differ. Even the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* gives different numbers on different pages. Without scrutinizing temple rolls, it is difficult to ascertain the number of Jews in Shanghai at a given time, but it can be estimated to be less than 2,000 from 1920 through the early 1930s.

<sup>9</sup> David Kranzler gave the following figures. On 25 March, 1934, there were 1,671 Jewish adults and children in Shanghai (881 male and 790 female), including Sephardic Jews as well as the Ashkenazi community. A little more than ten years later, 14,245 persons (8,283 male, 5,283 female) were classified as Jewish refugees in Shanghai in November 1944. Of these, 8,114 had come from Germany, 1,248 from Poland, 3,942 from Austria, and 236 from Czechoslovakia. Between 1939 and 1946, there had been 418 births, 366 marriages, 104 divorces, and 1,726 deaths among the Jewish population in Shanghai.

<sup>10</sup> Hans and Lala Diestel, respectively bourgeois before the Japanese occupation, ground assorted grains in their living-room by hand, using a Chinese millstone, selling the meal to the Red Cross for cash. Later on, they operated a factory making shoes, employing Jewish refugees. 'There was never any problem with raw materials,' related the indefatigable Mr Diestel, who was born in Tsingtao, 'because the Japanese thought that I was German.' Betty Peh-t'i Wei, *Shanghai, Crucible of Modern China*, Hong Kong, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, 252.

<sup>11</sup> Conversation with Ezekiel Abraham in Hong Kong. Also, see Joseph and Lynn Silverstein, 'David Marshall and Jewish Emigration from China', *China Quarterly*. (London 1979).

<sup>12</sup> *The New York Times*, 27 February, 1983.

<sup>13</sup> *Old Chronicle of Hong Kong* November 1870.

<sup>14</sup> *Hong Kong Telegram* 4 May, 1904. Shanghai dispatch.

<sup>15</sup> Wei, 252.

<sup>16</sup> *The China Mail*, 24 September, 1918.

<sup>17</sup> I am sorry that I have lost the date of this issue of the Hong Kong newspaper.

<sup>18</sup> His will was probated in Hong Kong in 1886.

<sup>19</sup> Left Sassoon and Company 21 January, 1891

<sup>20</sup> Merchant. His will, witnessed by Hardoon, was probated in 1893.

<sup>21</sup> The obituary in the *South China Morning Post*, 8 August, 1979, identified Mrs Ezra as Mozelle Robinson Ezra of Shanghai. Edward Ezra and Mozelle Sopher were married in 1907

<sup>22</sup> *People's Daily* (Beijing), 15 October, 1991, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Chinese sources insist that he worked as a door keeper. At least he had control over accessibility to the boss

<sup>24</sup> Complaints included members riding to services on the Sabbath and High Holy Days rather than travelling on foot

<sup>25</sup> An account of an interesting incident was found in Carl Smith's files. In 1927, the synagogue was invaded by zealous American missionaries who distributed Christian tracts during the yom kippur services

<sup>26</sup> The article was written by George Sokolsky, president of the B'nai B'rith

<sup>27</sup> I did not record the date of the tea, but the source was dated 1936

<sup>28</sup> 26 March, 1987 issue