

**JEWISH REFUGEES
IN SHANGHAI 1933–1947**

A Selection of Documents

Edited by Irene Eber

ARCHIVE OF JEWISH HISTORY AND CULTURE VOLUME 3



Archiv jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur

Archive of
Jewish History and Culture

Band/Volume 3

Im Auftrag
der Sächsischen Akademie
der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig

On behalf of the
Saxonian Academy of
Sciences and Humanities at Leipzig

herausgegeben/edited
von/by Dan Diner

Redaktion/editorial staff

Frauke von Rohden

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

Jewish Refugees in Shanghai 1933–1947

A Selection of Documents

by
Irene Eber

The “Archive of Jewish History and Culture” is part of the research project “European Traditions – Encyclopedia of Jewish Cultures” at the Saxonian Academy of Sciences and Humanities at Leipzig. It is sponsored by the Academy program of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Free State of Saxony. The Academy program is coordinated by the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities.

With 33 Figures and 3 Maps

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche
Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data available online: <https://dnb.de>.

ISBN 978-3-647-30195-2

ISSN 2566-6673

© 2018, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co. KG, Theaterstraße 13, D-37073
Göttingen

www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or utilized in any form
or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any
information storage and retrieval system, without prior written permission from the
publisher.

Typesetting by Dörlemann Satz, Lemförde

This Book is Dedicated to my Beloved
Daniel, Brandon, and Tiffany

Contents

Foreword	9
Abbreviations	11
I. Introduction	13
General Introduction	13
Acknowledgements	23
Chronology	25
Maps	29
List of Documents	32
List of Figures	43
List of Shanghai Street Names, Old and New	45
Document Selection and their Rendition	47
II. Documents	49
Transcription Conventions	49
Chapter 1 <i>Destination China: Opponents and Proponents</i>	51
Introduction	51
Documents 1–29	56
Chapter 2 <i>Journeys, Arrivals, and Settling In</i>	141
Introduction	141
Documents 30–49	145
Chapter 3 <i>The Polish Refugees Arrive, 1941</i>	219
Introduction	219
Documents 50–66	223
Chapter 4 <i>Wartime Shanghai: Social and Economic Institutions, 1939–1945</i>	277
Introduction	277
Documents 67–89	282

Chapter 5 <i>Shanghai Anti-Semitism and the Designated Area, 1943–1945</i>	399
Introduction	399
Documents 90–116.	403
Chapter 6 <i>The Shanghai Jewish Exile Press, 1939–1946</i>	485
Introduction	485
Documents 117–141.	490
Chapter 7 <i>Culture, Theater, and Entertainment</i>	549
Introduction	549
Documents 142–162.	554
Chapter 8 <i>End of the War and New Decisions</i>	605
Introduction	605
Documents 163–184.	608
Figures	I–XVII
Bibliography	671
Index	685

Foreword

About twenty thousand Jewish refugees, mostly from Austria and Germany and later from Poland, reached Shanghai by the end of the 1930s and early 1940s. This refuge was available to them because unlike elsewhere there were no visa requirements at the port of entry. Shanghai's openness derived from the city's political status. Although under Chinese sovereignty until the summer of 1937 its port was an international treaty port until then administered by the treaty powers and Chinese. Other parts of Shanghai were divided among the treaty powers and there was also a Chinese area. The latter was conquered by the Japanese in 1937. However, since Japan was not at war with the Western powers, they did not conquer the port. Neither the Japanese nor the powers were controlling arrivals at the port. Therefore, any number of refugees could arrive in Shanghai without having to produce a visa, or even passport.

That the Jews were able to flee to Shanghai and there survive World War II despite considerable hardships and increasing harassment at the hands of the Japanese occupying power was due to a strange coincidence of global affairs: Despite the accord between the Axis powers – Germany, Italy, and Japan – the European and East Asian theaters of war remained essentially separate. While the Soviet Union was allied to Great Britain and the United States, it was not at war with Japan. In fact, the Soviet Union and Japan were bound by a so-called Neutrality Treaty in place since April 1941. This agreement held until August 8, 1945 – two days after the American nuclear strike on Hiroshima and one before that on Nagasaki. On that day, the Red Army finally confronted the Imperial Japanese Army in Manchuria. Up until then the two parties had been careful to stick to their arrangement, as neither wanted to become entangled in a two-front war.

That being said, a closer look shows that Japan and the Soviet Union had been involved in a military encounter immediately before the Second World War. From May to September 1939, a war raged in the Mongolian-Manchurian border region – downplayed as a “border incident” – from which the Soviet Union emerged victorious. The conflict had been simmering since Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931 and Tokyo's subsequent installation of the Manchukuo puppet regime.

When Nazi Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union in August 1939 while the Soviet-Japanese war

was still ongoing, Japan viewed that surprising development with the utmost concern. And when German troops invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941 under “Operation Barbarossa,” the Japanese held back in the Far East.

The Japanese occupied Shanghai in 1937 in the course of their war with China. The territories under their control ran for the most part southwards along the coast. Following the fall of France in June 1940, Japanese troops permeated French Indochina, which was governed by Vichy loyalists. From there they invaded the British and Dutch possessions in Southeast Asia in December 1941, eventually leading to the fall of Fortress Singapore. The simultaneous attack on the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor was meant to provide cover for these operations. In Indochina itself, a previously established Franco-Japanese condominium prevailed until early 1945. The French Concession in Shanghai was controlled by Vichy as well.

The presence and survival in Shanghai of Jews from Austria, Germany, and Poland, as well as of Russian Jews who had lived there since the October Revolution, might seem negligible compared to the horrendous events that occurred during the war in Europe. However, their fate provides a perspective on the war that differs significantly from others. Jewish Shanghai demonstrates that World War II was a complex combination of events, mirroring a variety of entangled and disentangled configurations. Here, in Shanghai, Jews who escaped Nazi Germany found refuge in a location which came under the control of Japan – an Axis power.

While it is true that Japan committed monstrous war crimes of its own, it did not share the genocidal Nazis’ priorities or methods. The unique perspective of Shanghai, reflected in the experiences and observations of the Jews stranded there, helps refine historical judgment concerning the mass crimes both regimes committed.

The present edition, assembled by internationally renowned expert Professor Irene Eber, uses a variety and wealth of original documents to explore that very perspective. I am grateful to Professor Eber, as well as the volume’s executive editor, Dr. Frauke von Rohden, for the insight this collection provides.

Professor Dan Diner
Series Editor

Abbreviations

AD	Archives Department, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem
AO	Auslandsorganisation
AJJDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, New York
CAEJR	Committee for the Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai
CAHJP	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem
CCR	Coordinating Committee for Refugees
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency, Washington
COMASSIS	Comissão Portuguesa de Assistência aos Judeus Refugiados em Portugal
CZA	Central Zionist Archive, Jerusalem
DNB	Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, Frankfurt a.M./Leipzig
DÖW	Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes, Vienna
EJAS	European Jewish Artists Society
HCL	Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Mass.
HIAS	Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society
HUJI	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
IC	International Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IKG	Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Vienna
JDC	Joint Distribution Committee
JNUL	Jewish National University Library, Jerusalem
JRC	Jewish Recreation Club
LBI	Leo Baeck Institute, New York/London
LC	Library of Congress, Washington
NAC	National Archives of Canada, Manuscript Division, Toronto
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.
NCDN	<i>North-China Daily News</i>
NLI	National Library of Israel, Jerusalem
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei
OAV	Ostasiatischer Verein
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht

ORT	Obshchestvo remeslennogo i zemledel'cheskogo truda sredi yevreev
PRO	Public Record Office (National Archives), Richmond/London
REC	Refugees Economic Corporation
RELICO	Relief Committee for the War-stricken Jewish Population
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt
SACRA	Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaborating Relief Association
SAJCA	Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association
SD	Sicherheitsdienst
SEPM	<i>Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury</i>
SMA	Shanghai Municipal Archive, Shanghai
SMC	Shanghai Municipal Council
SMP	Shanghai Municipal Police
THAZO	Theodor Herzl Allgemeine Zionistische Organisation
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington
YIVO	Archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York
YVA	Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem
ZOS	Zionist Organization of Shanghai

I. Introduction

General Introduction

Readers may ask, why read a documentary history? Its purpose is not to replace a narrative history in which the author interprets events and the participants' actions. The usefulness of this documentary compilation is primarily the presentation of a contemporary record. It provides glimpses of how participants and bystanders viewed a set of events beginning with the Jewish flight from Europe to Shanghai and ending with their departure after several years from the metropolis. It furthermore allows readers to see aspects of their reception by the powers in control of Shanghai at the time. Significantly, readers can also gain small insights into the confusion that overtook the refugees upon arrival, as well as the helplessness and frustration local power holders often expressed about the massive influx.

Various kinds of documents are included here. They consist of letters written from Shanghai, reports by officials at consulates and ministries on the spot, newspaper articles published at the time, memoirs, poems, and the like. The poetry, whether serious or flippant, is especially valuable. It contributes an emotional dimension generally and perforce lacking in reports and official letters. Finally, the selection of documents included here, chosen from something like two thousand documents in several languages, provides an opportunity to view a set of events from various perspectives. These are, to mention only a few, by leading members of the well established Jewish communities in Shanghai, the British in control of the International Settlement, Germans like Adolf Eichmann, men of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC),¹ and, of course, the newcomers. However, it is also important to understand more clearly what Shanghai was like and why it was to Shanghai that the Jews came and not to any other Chinese city.

1 The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) is popularly referred to as the "Joint." The organization was established in 1914 in order to aid Jews that were affected by World War I, and has played a vital role ever since in Jewish life. Jews in many parts of the world have benefited from the Joint's aid and from its rescue and relief work. The American organization, which had its headquarters in New York, is abbreviated as both AJJDC and JDC, while its overseas branches are usually shortened to JDC. In this publication, the abbreviation JDC will follow the latter use, and AJJDC will be used only for the New York office.

Shanghai, the Context

Although the name Shanghai (“on the sea”) is mentioned as early as eight hundred years ago, the place did not become a walled town, that is a town of some importance, until centuries later. By the nineteenth century, Shanghai had evolved into a county seat, achieving some prominence due to its thriving cotton trade and lively junk (flat-bottomed Chinese ships) port.² Agents of the British East India Company did not fail to notice this and, following the Opium War (1839–1842) between the Chinese empire and Great Britain, Shanghai became a major treaty port.³ As such, it developed rapidly. Increasing numbers of foreign firms were established, the population grew by leaps and bounds, and ever larger numbers of foreign ships made port in Shanghai. Foreigners generally did not settle in walled Shanghai, but preferred living in the northern suburbs, which eventually became the International Settlement.⁴ The French Concession and Chinese areas similarly developed outside the walled town. The wall was demolished between 1912 and 1914, thus eliminating the division between within and without the walls.

The population influx was not composed only of foreigners, the Chinese population too increased rapidly. Chinese merchants from the adjoining provinces of Fujian and Guangdong came, as did simpler folk in search of

-
- 2 George B. Cressey, *China’s Geographic Foundations. A Survey of the Land and Its People*, New York/London 1934, 301; cf. also Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights. Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century*, Berkeley Calif./London 1999, 26.
 - 3 From the end of the Opium War, European colonial powers and the United States forced the weak East Asian empires to open their ports to foreign trade; Shanghai became a British treaty port in 1842. The following is largely based on Irene Eber, *Wartime Shanghai and the Jewish Refugees from Central Europe. Survival, Co-Existence, and Identity in a Multi-Ethnic City*, Berlin/Boston Mass. 2012, 7–21.
 - 4 The Shanghai International Settlement was established in 1863 when the British and American concessions merged. The Chinese had already handed their formal sovereignty over the concessions to the foreign powers in 1854, leading the British, American, and French to create the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) as their administrative body. From 1862 on, however, the French Concession acted independently on behalf of its own interests. The Anglo-American domination of the SMC ended in December 1941 when Japanese forces occupied the International Settlement. In February 1943, British and the American authorities returned the International Settlement to the Chinese Nationalist Government – admittedly only on paper, as they were not in control of the area. The Japanese responded by mandating the SMC to the City Government of Shanghai, which was dominated by the pro-Japanese Wang Jingwei administration, in July, 1943. In 1945 the International Settlement was dissolved.

livelihood. The Taiping rebellion, which engulfed much of China's southern countryside between 1850 and 1864, swelled the population still further. Many came to reside not only in the Chinese areas, but in the International Settlement and the French Concession as well. According to Hanchao Lu, “[b]y the end of the Taiping rebellion well over 110,000 Chinese had moved into the foreign settlements.”⁵

Shanghai thus grew and developed as a city consisting largely of newcomers, Westerners, and Chinese. Both were attracted to Shanghai by the opportunities to earn a living. For Chinese, however, there was an added attraction: the law and order that prevailed in the foreign enclaves. Shanghai was not a colony in the sense that large areas of Asia had become Western colonies. To be sure, Westerners occupied privileged positions, but Chinese entrepreneurship too could succeed. More than merely a flourishing city, Shanghai in time became an international metropolis, with a Chinese middle and even capitalist class.

Yet – and the significance of this must not be forgotten – Shanghai did not develop as a unified urban complex. It became a collection of interlocking, fragmented, and interrelated areas, each with its own administration. In the International Settlement the governing body was the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), which was composed of British, American, Chinese, and Japanese officials. The SMC was responsible to the Consular Body, who in turn was responsible to each respective government. The French Concession in turn was governed by the French Consul-General. The Chinese Municipal Administration, set up only in 1927, was the third governing body in charge of the Chinese areas of Wusong, Jiangwan, Nandao, Pudong, and Zhabei. Each administration had its own police force, which occasionally cooperated with the others.

As a rapidly growing international metropolis, Shanghai had all the appearances of a Westernized city. Gas lighting, telephones, electricity, and running water appeared in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and tramways were introduced in 1908. But beneath the modernity the Chinese population led a generally traditional way of life. Being newcomers for the greater part, native place identities persisted. Familial relationships continued to be elsewhere.

If in the nineteenth century manufacturing and commerce were the dominant characteristics of Shanghai, this changed considerably in the 1920s and 1930s when the metropolis became also a cultural center. Intellectuals and writers flocked to Shanghai as existence became ever more precarious in the north of China. Institutions of higher education proliferated until there

5 Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 36.

were twenty five universities, compared with Beijing's seventeen. Publishing of newspapers, journals, and books increased spectacularly, as did publishing houses like the Commercial Press. Numerous movie houses opened their doors where Chinese audiences could see the latest products of the Chinese film industry. Some forty movie theaters were in the Chinese areas alone. Nor was there a scarcity of Western films, or the latest motion pictures from Hollywood's film studios.

Shanghai's entertainment industry was a sign of its modernity, consisting of amusement centers, cabarets, dance halls, night clubs, and houses of ill repute. These establishments provided employment as well as opportunities for both Chinese and Westerners to make social and political contacts both within their groups and with each other.⁶

Amid prosperity and growth the ominous signs of lurking dangers were seemingly ignored. There was the Japanese occupation of China's three northeastern provinces, Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang (Manchuria) in 1931, and the establishment of a puppet government in Manchuria. Manchuria might have seemed a long way from Shanghai in 1931, but only some months later Japanese and Chinese armed forces clashed in Shanghai, leading to considerable destruction and casualties. Finally, in July 1937, the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the so-called Undeclared War, first in the north, then spreading to Shanghai and its environs, brought calamity close to home. Although Shanghai's foreign enclaves were spared, the devastation in Zhabei and Hongkou was considerable. Countless numbers of Shanghai inhabitants were made homeless during the fighting and, in addition, the city was inundated by refugees from the countryside.

As a result of the war the Japanese now occupied all Chinese areas of Shanghai, although not the International Settlement or the French Concession. Officials and armed forces of the Nationalist (Guomindang) Government withdrew from Shanghai. This, in turn, led to the cessation of passport control at the port of entry. Foreigners and travelers of all kinds could thus arrive without showing passports, visas, or any kinds of documents. The foreign powers could have taken over control of passports, but then, they knew, the same right would have to be extended to the Japanese. And this they did not want.

The context of Shanghai has been discussed in some detail for the purpose of showing why it was Shanghai to which the refugees travelled, having acquired the reputation for easy landings. Its port facilities had developed together with its extensive commerce and these were especially suitable for

6 An excellent overview is provided by Andrew D. Field, *Shanghai's Dancing World. Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919–1954*, Hong Kong 2010.

ocean-going vessels. Similarly significant is the fact that when the refugees began arriving less than a year after the start of war they were confronted, on the one hand, by a city that had experienced the ravages of bombardment and the growth of an enormous Chinese refugee population. On the other, they found themselves in a modern city that had remained vibrant, a modern metropolis despite war. Neither like a Western city, nor like (an imagined) Chinese city, Shanghai was interesting as well as appealing, different yet also familiar.

The kind of city Shanghai was should be considered at least a factor in encouraging the refugees' creativity, as revealed in the documents in chapters six and seven. To be sure, some money, even if a pittance, could be earned by writing or acting. Still, the creative impulse would have lain fallow had there not been a readership and audience, and especially the need for cultural expression. We must, however, not forget that many, if not the majority of the refugees, were despondent or had lost all hope.

Shanghai's Jewish Communities

It was fortunate for the refugees that Shanghai had two well established Jewish communities who were able to assist the newcomers in their first efforts to settle. The refugees, especially in 1939 arrived for the greater part penniless with few possessions and much in need of help. The first community that had gradually constituted itself in the nineteenth century was that of the Baghdadi, or Iraqi, Jews, who had arrived mostly from India as merchants together with the British in the newly opened treaty ports.⁷ On the basis of their thriving business firms in Mumbai (Bombay), they established lucrative branches in Shanghai. Such prosperous families as the Sassoons, Kadoories, and Harpoons also generously contributed to Chinese causes and somewhat eased the extreme hardship of the newcomers. The Committee for the Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai (CAEJR)⁸ was established as a result of a Baghdadi initiative. The Baghdadis had settled for the most part in the International Settlement. The Judeo-Arabic tongue which most of them spoke was rapidly replaced by English and, despite being clearly Jewish, they were generally accepted by the British community.

7 For an excellent account of the Baghdadis, cf. Maisie J. Meyer, *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo. A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai*, Lanham Md. 2003.

8 For the CAEJR, see ch. 1, n. 5.

In contrast to the Baghdadis who numbered around one thousand persons, the Russian Jewish community was much larger, consisting of somewhere around seven thousand souls. Most of them had arrived after the October Revolution of 1917, although some had come as early as the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, having been drafted into the Russian army against their will. They had decided not to return to their country to which they felt no allegiance. Even if many Russian Jews became fairly well-to-do merchants in Shanghai, the affluence generally of the community did not compare with that of the Baghdadis. Moreover, they largely continued to be Russian speakers and did not integrate into the foreign community. Unlike the Baghdadis, many became domiciled in the French Concession.

The Russian Jews too created their communal institutions. Although they participated to some extent in relief work, they did not found a separate organization for that purpose. Generally speaking, relationships between Russian Jews and Baghdadis were cool, as they would be also with the German and Austrian newcomers. All this changed when after December 1941 full fledged war engulfed Asia and the Russian Jews became responsible for the German Jews.⁹ Nonetheless, it was fortuitous that organized Jewish communities existed in the metropolis, allowing newcomers to turn to them as needed.

By 1941 there were in Shanghai in effect five Jewish communities: the Baghdadis, Russians, and the three recent ones consisting of German and Austrian Jews – the majority arriving by ship in 1939 – and Polish Jews who were sent to Shanghai via Japan in 1941. Differences between German and Austrian Jews must be clearly understood. Although both were German speakers, German and Austrian expressions often differed. This, however, was a minor problem. Far more important was the fact that in Germany the process of persecution was more gradual, beginning with Hitler's ascent to power in 1933. This does not mean that the German persecution was easier to accept. Its only advantage compared with Austria in 1938, where persecution began immediately following the German "Anschluss," was that it was more gradual, leading to a false sense of security.

9 Japan was not at war with Soviet Russia until August 9, 1945, and the Russian Jews, unlike stateless Jews, did not undergo ghettoization. Relationships between German and Russian Jews became more strained after the Japanese created the SACRA (Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaborating [sometimes Communal] Relief Association) in 1943, which was in charge of the Jüdische Gemeinde.

The situation for Jews in Germany and Austria

In Germany, in 1933 and 1934, Jews were largely excluded from public and administrative life, causing many to lose their sources of income. This was followed in 1935 by the Nuremberg Laws. Persecution worsened in 1936 with the exclusion of Jews from the economy and the confiscation of assets and property. The aim was twofold: to finance German rearmament and to improve state capital by forcing Jewish emigration.¹⁰ Avraham Barkai writes that of 50,000 Jewish businesses, only 9000 remained in 1938.¹¹

But Jewish emigration was not a simple matter. At first, the Reich Deputation (Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland)¹² did not encourage emigration, and later preferred orderly emigration rather than precipitous flight. Emigration, moreover, was expensive. There were travel expenses and the German imposition of the flight tax (Reichsfluchtsteuer). However, after the “Kristallnacht” of November 9, 1938 German Jews could no longer remain where many had lived for generations and immediately made plans for emigration. Between November 1938 and September 1939, 115,000 Jews fled Germany,¹³ compared to over 20,000 earlier.

In Austria the situation was quite different, where the plunder of Jewish property began almost at once after the German armies marched into the country on March 12, 1938. Adolf Eichmann arrived four days later, on March 16, and immediately began organizing the systematic expropriation of Jewish property as well as the arrest of Jewish men, who then were sent to concentration camps.¹⁴ Their release was contingent on their families providing documentation that they would leave the country.

10 Peter Longerich, *Holocaust. The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, Oxford 2010, 52, 63, 67.

11 Avraham Barkai, *Der wirtschaftliche Existenzkampf der Juden im Dritten Reich, 1933–1938*, in: Arnold Paucker/Sylvia Gilchrist/Barbara Suchy (eds.), *Die Juden im Nationalsozialistischen Deutschland. The Jews in Nazi Germany, 1933–1938*, Tübingen 1986, 153–166, here 165.

12 The Reich Deputation was established in 1933. In 1939 the Reichsvereinigung (Reich Association of the Jews in Germany) was established. For a recent publication about the latter, cf. Beate Meyer, *Tödliche Gratwanderung. Die Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland zwischen Hoffnung, Zwang, Selbstbehauptung und Verstrickung (1939–1945)*, Göttingen 2011.

13 Konrad Kwiet, *To Leave or Not to Leave. The German Jews at the Crossroads*, in: Walter H. Pehle (ed.), *November 1938. From “Reichskristallnacht” to Genocide*, New York 1991, 140–146.

14 For an account of Eichmann’s activities in Vienna and the way he used the Kultusgemeinde for his purposes, cf. Doron Rabinovici, *Eichmann’s Jews. The Jewish Ad-*

The November pogrom in 1938 in Austria was if anything even more gruesome than in Germany. Not only did it consist of the excessive destruction of property, there was also much loss of life. Austrian Jews realized that they must leave by any means possible, and the sooner the better. At the time of the invasion there were approximately 180,000 Jews in all of Austria; by the end of 1938 this number had been reduced to 118,000, and by the end of July 1939, 72,000 Jews were left.¹⁵ The catastrophe that had overtaken Austria's Jews within something like one and one half years is obvious.

In contrast the Polish refugees suffered a rather different fate. Some of them, both secular and religious, fled from Poland as soon as the German armies arrived in September 1939 and went to neighboring Lithuania, which at the time was neutral. Although they had left their worldly goods behind, the friendly welcome they received from Lithuanian Jewry compensated, at least in part, for any hardships they had endured. Their hopes of having a safe sanctuary were soon dashed, however, when the Russian army occupied Lithuania. Fortunately, a friendly Dutch consul, Jan Zwartendijk, provided visas to Curaçao, a Dutch colonial possession, on the basis of which many were able to procure transit visas via Japan from Sugihara Chiune, the Japanese Vice-Consul in Kovno.¹⁶

Many Polish refugees were obviously quite charmed by Japan. As Lazar Kahan wrote in his diary on March 6, 1941, "At last I am in Japan, an interesting free country where we all ran to eagerly with so much hope."¹⁷ But as previously, their hopes of waiting out the war in Japan came to naught, and by mid-1941 they had been shipped off to Shanghai, where their reception was not wholeheartedly welcoming, as the documents in chapter three reveal. The stories of these three groups, German, Austrian, and Polish Jews, have been retold in considerable detail.¹⁸ The non-cohesiveness of Shanghai's Jewish

ministration of Holocaust Vienna, 1938–1945, Cambridge 2011.

15 These figures according to *ibid.*, 63.

16 Mordecai Paldiel, *Saving One's Own. Jewish Rescuers during the Holocaust*, Lincoln Neb. 2017, 78 f. About Sugihara, see ch. 3, n. 3.

17 Lazar Kahan, *Togbukh geshribn in Kobe*, 1941, Merts–Yuli [Diary written in Kobe, 1941, March–July]; handwritten fragment. I thank Rabbi Marvin Tokayer for making the diary available to me. About Kahan, see ch. 3, n. 2.

18 For an overview, cf. Marcia R. Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort. The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai*, Stanford Calif. 2001; Georg Armbrüster/Michael Kohlstruck/Sonja Mühlberger (eds.), *Exil Shanghai, 1938–1947. Jüdisches Leben in der Emigration*, Teetz 2000; Elisabeth Buxbaum, *Transit Shanghai. Ein Leben im Exil*, Vienna 2008; Steve Hochstadt, *Exodus to Shanghai. Stories of Escape from the Third Reich*, New York 2012; Eber, *Wartime*.

communities was due to several factors: differences in language and cultural background, as well as the greatly differing experiences that brought them to Shanghai. Each group, to be sure, lost its possessions and whatever assets they owned; there was, nonetheless, a difference between the Polish group's flight from the brutalized warfare of German troops and the German-Austrian Jews, who escaped deprivation of rights and increasing physical assault.

Continuing to identify with their co-sufferers rather than with the larger group of all Jewish refugees in Shanghai is not as surprising as it seems at first glance.

The Refugees' Achievements in Shanghai

Life in Shanghai was neither easy nor simple, and became even more difficult at the beginning of 1943 when all stateless Jews (German and Austrian) were forced to relocate to a small portion of Hongkou, the Designated Area. It was not like the kind of ghetto we know from Eastern Europe, but it was unbelievably crowded, and hunger and disease were rampant. The Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaborating Relief Association (SACRA), established by Russian Jews in spring 1943 with the objective of helping Jewish refugees – who were according to the Japanese not “enemy nationals” –, was made responsible by the Japanese for the stateless Jews. Considering the difficulties and hardships, it is most remarkable that some forms of cultural life continued. But cultural activities had begun earlier, in fact soon after the refugees' arrival. Here it is important to remember that not only writers, journalists, and actors were important, so were the readers of the papers in which writers wrote and the audiences who went to the theaters.

The exile press in German, as shown in chapter six, began almost at once after the first contingent of refugees came ashore in Shanghai. The newspapers were short-lived and nearly all ceased altogether after the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1942. But while they lasted they were an important part of refugee life.¹⁹ Besides newspapers, books by Jewish writers were being reprinted, many of these in Russian, due to the efforts of the journalist

19 A collection of Jewish exile newspapers and journals (*Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, *Shanghai Echo*, *8-Uhr Abendblatt*, *Shanghaier Morgenpost*, *Gelbe Post*, *S.Z. am Mittag*, *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*, *Shanghai-Woche*) is accessible on the website of the LBI, <<https://archive.org/details/lbiperiodicals?&sort=-downloads&page=2>> (March 7, 2016). Most of these papers and a few additional ones can be found on the website of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek <http://www.dnb.de/DE/DEA/Kataloge/Exilpresse/exilpresse_node.html> (March 7, 2016).

Yehoshua Rapoport.²⁰ In addition, Yiddish newspapers were also available.²¹ These were mostly in demand by Jews from Poland.

Especially impressive was the entertainment industry which existed in Shanghai both in German and in Yiddish, as is obvious in chapter seven. Theater performances might consist of no more than sketches, but there were also classical as well as modern dramas. Frequently these had to be written from memory in Shanghai. Hurried departures and limited baggage allowances prevented librettos from being brought along. There being no theaters, they were staged wherever possible in the refugee camps, schools, or movie houses. Yiddish plays were performed in the Shanghai Jewish Club.²²

Entertainment could be had also elsewhere. Gifted musicians gave piano performances in coffee houses or in roof gardens, where popular singers like Lily Flohr,²³ for example, also appeared. In the Hongkou area were several dozen coffee and cake shops, restaurants, and delicatessen stores. Many of these may have been short lived, but the fact was that the refugees tried to make a living every way possible. A considerable number of musicians had found refuge in Shanghai, and concert performances, though perhaps less frequent, could be heard occasionally. All this was much curtailed after most of the Jewish population was forced to move to Hongkou, but it did not cease altogether. However, whereas for the performers the loss of income was disastrous, for the audiences an important means of maintaining a semblance of cultural identity was curtailed. Even if they were not yet aware of it, for these middle class people a period of their lives was drawing to a close.

20 About Rapoport, see ch. 5, n. 110.

21 For Yiddish papers, see ch. 4, n. 13 and ch. 8, n. 48.

22 For the Shanghai Jewish Club, see ch. 3, n. 74.

23 About Flohr, see ch. 4, n. 64.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the forward-looking suggestion of Professor Harold Zvi Schiffrin of the Hebrew University, the “Jews in China” project became a project of the Department of Asian Studies. Professor Avraham Altman, valued colleague and friend, began to devote himself tirelessly to the collecting of documentary materials both here and abroad. The collection of originals and copies of over 2000 items in several languages is to a large extent due to his efforts. Friends in many parts of the world sent valued documents and letters they had preserved for years. My utmost gratitude to all of them. The project also benefited from the financial support of the Harry S. Truman Institute and the Louis Frieberg Research Fund, and their support is gratefully acknowledged.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all those who actively helped in the past and encouraged me recently to undertake this documentary history. This is in the first place the editorial project “European Traditions – Encyclopaedia of Jewish Cultures” of the Saxonian Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Leipzig and its head, Professor Dan Diner. Dr. Frauke von Rohden of the Academy project unsparingly encouraged and advised me at every step of the way, and never hesitated to answer my many and often trivial questions. Her advice on format changes and her consistently valuable editorial work have led to great improvements and are deeply appreciated. My utmost gratitude for her invaluable help in seeing this collection of documents into print. Alan Nathanson, librarian and friend of many years, bravely typed the frequently illegible German documents. His patience with these and his enthusiasm regarding the project as well as his emotional involvement in the fate of the refugees were an inspiration. Yuval Sherizli provided invaluable technical help whenever needed with reproducing documents. Without the constant help of Itamar Livni, loyal assistant and friend, this project would not have seen completion. His fluency in both German and English were invaluable, as was his technological knowhow.

I am especially grateful for the constant interest and support in this project from Rabbi Marvin Tokayer. His help with Yiddish materials is deeply appreciated. Dr. Hartmut Walravens has been an enormous help by making materials available to me that were not to be found in any library. Joan Hill’s expertise in ferreting out nearly forgotten materials in libraries is exemplary and I owe her a huge debt of gratitude. I will never forget Professor Paul

Mendes-Flohr's unceasing interest in the progress of this project. Due to these good friends' constant concern with the project, this collection of documents finally sees completion.

Chronology¹

1933

- January 30 Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.
- February 12 Founding of the Presidium of the Reichsvertretung der jüdischen Landesverbände Deutschlands.
- July 26 German Finance Ministry announces Reichsfluchtsteuer for Jews who emigrate.
- September 17 Founding of the new Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden as the central organization of all Jewish communities.
- November 7 First arrival of a group of German Jewish immigrants in Shanghai (a contingent of physicians).

1934

- February 5 Cancellation of examinations for Jewish medical and dental students.
- March 5 “Non-Aryans” forbidden to appear on the German stage by German law.
- May 17 “Non-Aryan” physicians and “Aryans” married to “non-Aryans” forbidden to practice in health funds by German law.
- June 30 Concentration camps established in 1933, henceforth under the jurisdiction of Heinrich Himmler.
Establishment of the Hilfsfond für deutsche Juden in Shanghai under Dr. Kurt Marx.

1 Until 1939 the chronology is largely based on Otto Dov Kulka (ed.), *Deutsches Judentum unter dem Nationalsozialismus*, vol. 1: *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden 1933–1939*, Tübingen 1997, 577–604.