JEWISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI

1933-1941

Oct 18 - Dec 15 2015

Culter-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center
122 E. Culver Street
Phoenix, AZ 85004

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It is an honor for the Confucius Institute at Arizona State University, in cooperation with ASU’s Center for Jewish Studies, the Arizona Jewish Historical Society, the Jewish Community Foundation and ASU College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, to bring *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai (1933-1941)* to Arizona. We are pleased to welcome you to this important exhibit and its associated events.

Starting at UCLA, this exhibit has visited selected Confucius Institutes around the U.S. ASU’s involvement began with visits made by representatives of ASU’s Confucius Institute to the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum in 2013 and 2014. Drawing on the UCLA model, ASU and other participating Confucius Institutes and their partners have been able incorporated the experiences and talents of local Jewish and Chinese communities to supplement the material in the travelling exhibit.

Long before Nazi persecution brought Jewish refugees to Shanghai, there had been encounters between the Chinese and Jewish peoples. Documentary evidence going back to the eighth and ninth centuries indicates the presence of Jews in China. The most famous example of an indigenous Jewish community flourished in Kaifeng beginning perhaps at least as early as the Northern Song (960–1127) dynasty and continues to this day. In the mid-1800s, Jewish entrepreneurs began arriving in Shanghai from India.

But it was in response to Nazi persecution starting in 1933, and especially after Kristallnacht in 1938, that German and Austrian Jews began to flee in significant numbers to Shanghai, one of the few locations open to these refugees. Through photographs, personal stories, and artifacts from the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum, *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai* documents the experiences of these families, their lives in the city of Shanghai, and the stories of the people who helped many of them escape Europe.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in this project. The exhibit provides an opportunity to bring the Arizona Jewish and Chinese communities together, an opportunity upon which we hope to build in the years ahead.

Robert Joe Cutter
Director
ASU Confucius Institute

Hava Tirosh-Samuelson
Director
ASU Center for Jewish Studies

Lawrence Bell
Executive Director
AZ Jewish Historical Society
In the 1930s, as Jewish refugees attempted to escape persecution and war in Europe, they had few options, due in part to immigration restrictions imposed by many countries. The city of Shanghai was one of the few exceptions. Although there had been a small Jewish presence in Shanghai for decades, from 1933 to 1941 Shanghai accepted significant numbers of Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust. Over 18,000 of them came to reside in the “Restricted Area for Stateless Refugees” of the Tilanqiao district in Shanghai. At the conclusion of the Second World War in 1945, most of these refugees had survived. David Kranzler, a Holocaust historian, described it as the “Miracle of Shanghai.”
Even though Shanghai was an open city with no visa requirement, some form of documentation was required to exit Europe. Jewish refugees obtained documentation in various ways, including through relief organization. But a significant number received the necessary documents through the heroic efforts of He Fengshan (1901–1997), the Chinese consul in Vienna, and Sugihara Chiune (1900–1986), the Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Today, in the Tilanqiao Historic Area, the original features of the Jewish settlement continue to be well preserved, sustaining this legacy of Shanghai’s Jewish past.
ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

Jewish Refugees in Shanghai (1933-1941), brings together photos, personal stories, and artifacts from Shanghai’s Jewish Refugee Museum. Located in the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue in the Tilanqiao Historical Area, the museum has played an important role in educating local and international visitors about the unique story of Jewish refugees in Shanghai.
The exhibit has given people from around the world an opportunity to learn about the story of Jewish refugees in China. *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, 1933-1941* was first developed by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Jewish Studies, the UCLA Confucius Institute, Hillel at UCLA, and the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum. Here in metropolitan Phoenix, the exhibit is made possible by the Arizona State University Confucius Institute, ASU’s Center for Jewish Studies, and the Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.
GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Ohel Moshe Synagogue
The Ohel Moshe congregation was established by Russian Jewish immigrants in Shanghai in 1907. Ohel Moshe and Ohel Rachel are the only two synagogues of old Shanghai still standing out of an original six. The Ohel Moshe Synagogue was the primary place of worship for the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. It is now the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum.

The buildings at 71-95 Huoshan Road and 1-81 Zhoushan Road, built in the late 1920s, are contiguous to one another in the European style. The residential area of Jewish refugees during the Second World War, this area also became a commercial center with an exotic atmosphere, earning it the nickname “Little Vienna” in those days. Michael Blumenthal, former Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, subsequently Director of the Jewish Museum in Berlin, once lived in a small garret at 58 Zhoushan Road.

Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum
Former Site of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
The branch office of the New York-based American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in Shanghai was located at 119 and 121 Huoshan Road. Built in 1910, the four-story building had a two-bay shop, but it now serves as a multi-family residence.

Huoshan Park
Formally known as Wayside Park, Huoshan Park is located at 118 Huoshan Road. It was built in 1917 and occupies an area of 3700 square meters (about 40,000 square feet). During the Second World War, Jewish refugees often came together here. Inside the park stands a monument in memory of the “Designated Area for Stateless Refugees.”

Mascot Roof Garden
The former site of the Mascot Roof Garden is located at the top of the Broadway Theater, 57 Huoshan Road. It was a famous gathering place for Jewish refugees, and Jewish musicians often held concerts here.

Architectural Complex at Houshan Road and Zhoushan Road
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Former Site of the Ward Road Heim, a Shelter for Jewish Refugees

After 1939, the Committee for Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai established several group shelters to give aid to Jewish refugees throughout the city of Shanghai. The largest one was this converted barracks inside Lane 138 on Changyang Road.

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EVENTS DURING THE EXHIBIT

While the exhibit Jewish Refugees in Shanghai (1933-1941) is on display in Phoenix, October 18 to December 15, 2015, at the Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center, the Hayden Library at Arizona State University will feature related items from the library’s collection. Additional related materials and library’s collection are also displayed in the Hayden Library at Arizona State University Tempe Campus.

Sponsors and partners will present a series of related community events:

October 18, 2015

Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center

Opening Lecture and Reception
Lecture by Weijia Li, University of Wisconsin-Madison

October 19 - November 13

“Jewish Refugees in Shanghai” Presentations for Middle & Secondary Schools
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"Jewish Refugees in Shanghai"
Presentations for Middle & Secondary Schools

2015 Lecture Series: Shanghai in 1930s and 1940s

October 19
Weijia Li
University of Wisconsin-Madison

November 12
Angie Chau
Arizona State University

December 1
Yomi Braester
University of Washington

November 3
Film Screening- "Shanghai Ghetto"

November 19
Book Discussion- Peony: A Novel of China

Lecture Series: Shanghai in 1930s and 1940s

November 31
Yomi Braester
University of Washington

Exhibit Visit Information
Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center
122 E. Culver Street, Phoenix
AZ 85004

ASU Hayden Library
Tempe Campus
Jewish Refugees in Shanghai 1933-1941

confuciusinstitute.asu.edu/JewishShanghaiExhibit