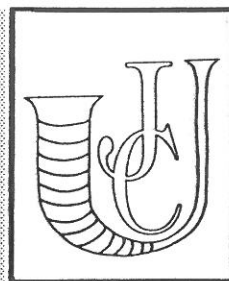


The Shofar

February/March, 1992



Lecture, Film Series Starts February 11

Strong response is expected from all sectors of Hong Kong's Jewish community to the lecture and film series *Israeli Politics and Society* starting February 11 (see page three). Jointly presented by The UJC and The Jewish Club, the Tuesday evening series offers perspective and insights into current events in Israel from a knowledgeable observer, the newly-arrived Israeli vice consul, Mr. Mark Regev. Before joining Israel's foreign service, Mr. Regev taught at Tel Aviv University, Open University, and the Israeli Defence Force Staff College. He received his B.A. at University of Melbourne, M.A. at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and has completed course work for a doctorate at Tel Aviv University.

The series begins with an overview of the Israeli political process and parties. Later sessions are devoted to the military's impact, religion and state, Arabs, the media, immigrants, and the women's movement. Three of the sessions are built around Israeli feature films (Hebrew with English subtitles) that have been ordered from the U.S. On these evenings, a buffet dinner (optional) will be offered before the session starts with the talk and film beginning around 7:15 p.m.

This adult education series follows the successful conclusion of a two-part program presented by Professor Michel Millodot on antisemitism. Although attendance was disappointing at the first session, nearly 40 people showed up for the January 29 showing of *The Longest Hatred*, a documentary produced by Thames Television. Professor Millodot's instructive comments after the video put the subject into a larger historical perspective, amplifying the information presented by the documentary and filling in the record on areas not covered by the film. He compared the development of anti-semitism to the building of a fortress from foundation to the upper levels, a fortress which he showed is built on distortion and fabrications totally lacking in substance but which is nevertheless real and almost unassailable.

UJC Decides on Visiting Rabbi Program

Rabbis from Dallas, Washington D.C. Expected For Services, Seder, Seminars in March, April

At a special meeting called in December to discuss policy issues, General Committee members decided that since it will be difficult to engage a resident, full-time rabbi for at least the next two or three years, the Congregation's religious and spiritual needs could be partly met through a visiting rabbi program. This consists of budgeting for at least two or three rabbinical visits a year as well as for a rabbi and cantor at the High Holidays. In addition to inviting rabbis to come here, the Congregation will continue to encourage rabbis who are otherwise visiting or passing through at their own expense to conduct services and assist in other UJC activities.

Accordingly, Rabbi Kenneth D. Roseman, Senior Rabbi at Temple Shalom in Dallas, Texas will conduct services March 6, followed by a dinner and discussion at The Jewish Club (see below and schedule on back page). He will also meet with the Jews by Choice group in the following week. Rabbi Harold White of Georgetown University's Campus Ministry in Washington, D.C. has accepted an invitation to come from approximately April 15 to 22 and conduct the Passover seder on April 17. More information about Rabbi White and plans for the seder will appear in the next issue of The Shofar.

Rabbi Roseman, son of an American diplomat, received his B.A. degree from Oberlin College. After ordination from Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati in 1966, he earned a Ph.D. in American-Jewish History and continued on the seminary faculty and as Dean of the College until 1974. For two years, he headed the Institute for Jewish Life in New York City, an applied social science 'think tank' of the Council of Jewish Federations. Rabbi Roseman served Temple Beth El in Madison, Wisconsin from 1976 to 1985 before taking up the position in Dallas.

Rabbi Roseman has special experience in the field of medical ethics and has also written a series of children's books on Jewish history, two of which have received prestigious prizes. He has served as Co-chair of the National Joint Commission on Jewish Education, a member of the Alumni Overseers of HUC-JIR, and Chair of the Family and Children's Liturgy Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Rabbi Roseman's wife, Helen, is a consultant in the teaching of reading. Their daughter, Allison, graduated from Amherst College and is now a law student at University of Texas. Their son, Michael, is studying Chinese language and culture at Chinese University in Hong Kong and has been assisting the Community's efforts to establish a youth activities program.

TO BOOK FOR DINNER WITH RABBI ROSEMAN AT THE JEWISH CLUB, PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND MAIL TO:

Robin Krieger, 25A Harston, 109 Repulse Bay Road, Repulse Bay, Hong Kong

Name _____

Address _____

Tel. _____

UJC MEMBERS — \$140, NON-MEMBERS — \$160

I have enclosed a check for \$_____ for _____ persons made out to The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong.

Anim Z'mirot

'I make pleasant songs and weave verses'

*(Look with favor) Sim Shalom (Grant us peace)
joyce) Invocations (For oboe and string quartet)
Songs for Flute & String Trio The Scattered of
(Happy are they that dwell in Thy house) Ata
Anim Z'mirot (I make pleasant songs and*

Ben Steinberg, son of an Orthodox cantor, was born in Winnipeg, Canada and educated at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music and University of Toronto.

Presently Director of Music at Toronto's Temple Sinai, Mr. Steinberg is well-known for his lecture-recitals on Jewish music history at major universities and cultural centers in Canada and the United States.

His many commissioned works have been performed often at synagogues, concerts and on radio and television throughout the United States and Canada.

His cantata 'Echoes of Children' commemorates the children who perished in the Holocaust. It was broadcast under his direction on the Canadian National Network and won the prestigious, international 'Gabriel Award' for outstanding creativity in broadcast programming. A PBS performance with the Toledo Symphony and late actor Herschel Bernardi as narrator screened on television stations throughout the U.S.

In addition to writing music for broadcast dramas, he has appeared as conductor for many Jewish music broadcasts including American premieres of newly-discovered Jewish music of the Baroque period, a program of 19th century Russian synagogue music, and programs of Jewish works by contemporary composers.

He was honored by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which devoted a broadcast to his synagogue music, performed under his direction by two cantors, a choir and symphony orchestra. In addition to a number of other international awards and honors, he has been invited twice to be artist-in-residence at the City of Jerusalem's creative retreat — an honor reserved for composers, artists and writers of international stature.

Ben Steinberg — what better way to describe him than this 13th century poem by Judah of Regensburg — one of the many solos, choral settings, chamber works, cantatas, instrumental pieces and concert works that Mr. Steinberg has written or adapted.

Ben Steinberg — by reputation, one of the leading composers and conductors of Jewish synagogue music of our time, a rare individual with vast knowledge and outstanding talent. To those who know him as a friend or colleague — a gentle, charming man, approachable and easy to like, who will touch you with the beauty of his music.

Meet Ben Steinberg — and hear him bring to life our Jewish musical heritage with song, piano, amusing stories and rare tapes collected in Israel, Europe and North America.

Wednesday, March 4

Chinese Buffet Dinner

7 p.m.

King David Room

Jewish Club Members, \$125

Non-Members, \$150

Please call 801-5440 to book for dinner

'Musical Mosaic of Judaism'

with Ben Steinberg

8:30 p.m.

\$30 (No surcharge for non-members)

Includes tea/coffee & cookies

The Jewish Club

Melbourne Plaza, 4/f

Queen's Road Central, HK

**A Joint Presentation of
The Jewish Club and The UJC**

*(My mouth shall utter the praise of the Lord)
How goodly are Thy tents) Ahavat Olam (With
everlasting love) Lakol Zman (To everything
there is a season; Ecclesiastes) R'tsal donai
Eloheimu The Vision of Isaiah Mah Tovu (How
Goodly are Thy Tents (This is the day) Zeh Ha-
yon (They shall rejoice) Anim Z'mirot (I make*

UIA Team Seeks Wider Participation, Invites All for February 26 Brainstorming Breakfast

The United Israel Appeal team is looking for ways to broaden the fund-raising effort and attract greater community participation.

At a mid-January strategy meeting, the team decided to host a bagels and lox brainstorming breakfast on February 26 at The Jewish Club for all community members willing to offer organizing or fund-raising suggestions (see page 5, 'Help Us Tell The Story').

Although Hong Kong is one of the highest per capita contributors to the UIA in the world, an overwhelmingly large percentage of what is collected comes from just a few individuals, some of whom give several hundred thousand dollars.

The burden of the collection effort has fallen on the shoulders of just a few people, however, including Charlotte Godkin and Eric Beare. Trustees Michael Green and Robert Dorfman are also active in the effort.

As Mr. Green put it, 'Most of us care about our Jewish identity and most of us are deeply concerned about Israel. Many of us are generous financial supporters. [But] The wider Jewish Community in Hong Kong has got a problem and we need advice on how best to handle it. An aging and shrinking number of people are doing all the work involved in collecting for the United Israel Appeal.'

Recognizing the need to reach out to more members of the Community, team members decided to explore ways to motivate and inspire both collectors and contributors.

The first step, team members agreed, was to enlarge the UIA committee. Mr. Green said the committee should represent all congregations, ages, and sectors (e.g., professions such as diamonds and trading, Israelis, youth, professionals, large donors, etc.).

Mr. Green also spoke of the importance of acknowledging the importance of all contributions and offered the team some sample correspondence from his former university which he said could be adapted for the team's use and incorporated into the effort.

Committee members feel there are a number of very talented, skilled people in the Community with either a personal background and expertise in fund-raising or extensive familiarity with UIA efforts in the U.S. The members stressed the importance of these individuals attending the February 26 breakfast. The purpose of the breakfast, it was strongly emphasized, was to get ideas and not to solicit contributions.

Not Yet a Landmark

JEWS SIGHED with relief, and fair-minded people everywhere cheered, when Captain Alfred Dreyfus was exonerated in France in 1906 and Menahem Mendel Beilis was set free in Russia seven years later. The two had been victims of deliberate antisemitic plots, of calculated blood libels.

Dreyfus and Beilis were undoubtedly relieved by their exoneration, and grateful to the few who stayed loyal when the world pilloried them. But having spent tortured and humiliating years in jail, their lives threatened, their families racked, they had no reason to thank their judges. Only the courts should have felt indebted: They owed Dreyfus and Beilis thanks for staying alive through the unspeakable ordeal. Otherwise, the exoneration and the removal of the courts' dishonor would have seemed hollow indeed.

The blood libel leveled at Israel by the United Nations in 1975 was no different from that which has plagued Jews for centuries. This time, the victim was the whole Jewish nation rather than an individual. And the plotters were not a single band of antisemites in positions of influence, but an unholy alliance of murderous racists, genocidal dictators, and medieval tyrants guilty of human destruction on a scale matched only by Nazi Germany. That they could persuade a large majority of the world's nations to brand as 'racist' one of the tiniest, most liberal and most threatened democracies in the world is a blot on the UN which Monday's repeal resolution cannot eradicate.

The Zionism = racism resolution is, after all, only the most egregious of the UN's many offenses against Israel. In a post-war world shaken by innumerable conflagrations, in which tens of millions have become refugees and millions have been killed, Israel — whose population constitutes one-thousandth of the world total — has been the subject of almost 30% of Security Council meetings, and the target of a full third of its resolutions.

Since its birth, Israel has endured at least three unprovoked attacks by Arab armies which threatened its existence, a continuous war of terrorism waged by the Arab states, and an economic and political boycott. During the same period, Arab states from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf have been involved in wars, genocide, civil strife, massacres, wholesale atrocities and an unceasing campaign of international terrorism against Western targets. In at least two of these wars — Egypt's invasion of Yemen and Iraq's war against Iran — poison gas, outlawed by the Geneva Convention, was used. Yet until Iraq invaded Kuwait, not a single Arab state was ever condemned, warned or censured by the Security Council. During the same span, almost 100 'expressions of concern,' 'warnings' and outright 'condemnations' were leveled at Israel.

In the General Assembly, 'open season' on Israel has been the order of the day for over 40 years. Nor has the repeal of Zionism = racism changed anything. On the very morning of the repeal, 152 nations, including the United States and the USSR, voted to condemn and annul Israel's 'decision to impose its laws in Jerusalem,' and bade the countries with embassies in Jerusalem to remove them. Another resolution, sponsored by Oman, Sudan and Vietnam, calling on Israel promptly to withdraw from all *Palestinian* territory, recognize the PLO and "all the rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of 'return'," was passed by a vote of 93 nations. The U.S. voted against this one. The Soviets abstained.

The repeal of Zionism = racism, then, can be viewed only as a single correction of an historic travesty. Unless the world community follows it with a drastic change of direction, unless a myriad other UN resolutions — only slightly less offensive — are rejected with similar decisiveness, Monday's vote will be remembered not as a landmark, but as a momentary aberration.

Reprinted from The Jerusalem Post, International Edition, December 18, 1991; submitted by Michel Millodot

When the great Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted.

Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer." And again the miracle would be accomplished.

Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say: "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient." It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer; I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story, and this must be sufficient." And it was sufficient.

God made man because he loves stories.

From *The Gates of the Forest* by Elie Wiesel, Schocken Books, New York 1982

Help Us Tell The Story

They say there's no such thing as a free lunch and I'm inclined to agree. But what about a free breakfast?

A free breakfast with bagels, lox, cream cheese, maybe some scrambled eggs and as much steaming, Jamaica Blue Mountain (all right, so maybe it's only regular grind Maxwell) as it takes to kick start your day.

Coffee's a great inspiration and some of us do our best thinking early in the morning. That's what we're counting on.

'We? Counting on? I thought you said it's free.'

Free, what's free? What's freedom? Janis Joplin said 'Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose.' Remember her? She OD'd. She was free.

'We' means us, the people of Israel, the Jews of Hong Kong, the Jews all over the world. And we're not about to commit suicide. If you watched that documentary on antisemitism the other night with Professor Millodot, you'd know just how many people are out there ready to do the job for us. Ultimately, a strong Israel is our greatest safeguard against that ever happening.

It's our future that's at stake, our future and the future of our children and grandchildren. We are not free. We're committed. We have a lot left to lose.

Our community has many talented people, people who may not know the prayer or the place in the forest, but people with a talent for lighting the fire and telling the story, the story of Israel. You know who you are and the imperative of stepping forward in critical times to lend a hand.

That's why we'd like to share that coffee and get your ideas. Ideas that are more precious than money. There's no need to bring your checkbook, that's not the point. We simply want an hour or so of your time to do some brainstorming over the bagels.

The place is The Jewish Club, 8 A.M., Wednesday, February 26 and you're invited. Just call me at 735-3037 or The Club at 801-5440 to say you're coming.

Please help us tell the story. God loves stories.

■ Bob Green

'Activists' Seek Redevelopment Facts on Finance, Facilities, Plan To Call Special Meeting

Five members of The Jewish Club and Ohel Leah Synagogue claiming to represent 'a large group of members very concerned about the Club and its future' have addressed a letter to General Committee members asking for answers to a series of pointed questions relating to finances and facilities of the redevelopment.

The move reflects dissatisfaction among a number of members within the Community with the amount and content of information released so far about the Robinson Road project.

The group, calling themselves 'The Activists,' asks specifically about plans for religious, education, sports, and parking facilities. One of seven questions raised in the letter asks if 'any promises [have been] made verbally or in writing to any of the religious groups in the community?' The five also question if 'the land on Robinson Road [has] been mortgaged to a certain bank or other Factors [sic]' and 'Does the Jewish Club receive a certain percentage of the land or its equivalent in money.'

The unsigned letter bears the names of Mrs. Yoni Gewurtz, Mr. Simha Ben-Shay, Mr. Misha Krakowski, Mr. Elie Lavi, and Mrs. Penina Nagar, all Israelis. They request 'updated and flowing information about the advance of the construction plans and the construction itself, so we can make the right decisions.' After receiving the information, the letter says, 'We are going to call an Extraordinary General Meeting. . . We have 35 signatures already.'

Brit, Naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Marriage or Other Rites of Passage? Please Register Here

Members who wish to meet with visiting rabbis or otherwise avail themselves of their services should contact The UJC well in advance so appointments or other arrangements can be made. In addition to the visits in March and April by Rabbi Roseman and Rabbi White, Rabbi Sam Joseph and Cantor Robin Helzner will be here around September 13—26.

<p>YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS Help to maintain THIS Synagogue</p> <p>Please make Arrangements with Our Treasurer Mr. Victor Falk for Yahrzeit, Kaddish, Shiva Minian and Bar-Mitzvahs. He is the only one authorized to accept donations and Give a Receipt: <i>By Order of the Congregation</i></p>	<p>אײנער שטיצע העלפט דעם עקססטענצ פון דער שוהל</p> <p>פליעז מאכט ארענגמענטס מיט אונזער סעקרעטער מר' א נאלדבערג פאר יאהרצײט, קדיש, א מנין פאר שבעה רל, און בר מצוה'ס דער סעקרעטער איז דער איינציגער וואס איז בעפאלמעכטיגט צו נעמען דאנאציעס און געבן א רעסײט ביי אדער פון דער שוהל</p>
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How to Help

The Social Action Committee has identified three organizations through which members may donate time for humanitarian or compassionate causes.

At a meeting in mid-January, Carol Betson (chairman), Dana Bender and Barbara Holbert concluded that unlike congregations in the U.S., UJC members could achieve more by contributing their time and talents directly to in-place, on-going programs of assistance than by channeling their efforts through the Congregation.

As a result, it was decided not to continue the committee as such but to provide members with some suggestions on how to get involved.

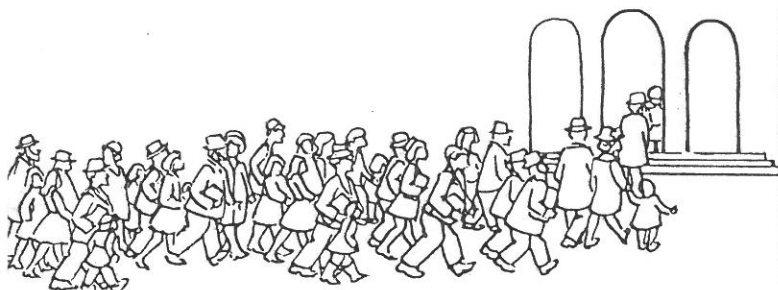
The Dutchess of Kent Hospital needs people to do clerical work in their fund raising office, according to the committee. They also need ward volunteers to play with sick children, although this requires a weekly or biweekly commitment. Play times are weekdays except Wednesday and Saturday. Evenings and weekends are available under special circumstances. Call Jullian Ford at 817-7111.

Mr. Jo Bracken at the American Consulate can put volunteers to good use with Vietnamese boat people waiting to be screened. Specifically requested are people skilled in gardening, crafts, and sports. Call the Consulate at 523-9011.

The American Women's Association is involved in a wide range of volunteer activities that benefit the community. Membership is open to all, not just Americans. Call 527-2961.

JBC Switches to Wednesdays

The Jews by Choice group have changed meeting nights from Thursdays to Wednesdays, as follows: February 19, 26; March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 8, 22, 29; May 6, 13, 20, 27. June and July 'make-up' sessions will be arranged according to individual requirements.



A New 'Jewish Agenda' in China

By Dennis Levanthal

THE OPENING of the Beijing Liaison Office of the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities in 1990 [and establishment of full diplomatic relations in January, 1992] marked a major turning point[s] in the relationship between Israel and the People's Republic of China. This [These] event[s] established a formal channel of direction and cooperation between scholars and institutes of both countries. The evolving diplomatic relations between China and the Jewish state is, however, only one part of the evolution of mutual understanding and respect between two peoples with strong and ancient traditions.

Traveling the length and breadth of China over the past 10 years, I have observed little knowledge or understanding of Jewish history. In general, while their limited perceptions of the Jewish people have been colored by Western generalizations as well as by Arab propaganda, the dominant factor has been the minuscule contact Jews and Chinese have had over the centuries.

Thus, while the Chinese people do not hold any deeply rooted antisemitic attitudes, some confusion is apparent in the minds of those who have been studying Christianity and now Islam's (to them) curious obsession with Jews.

For example, when Jeremy Zimman, former assistant trade commissioner of the Israel Trade Commission of Hong Kong, lectured at Nanjing University last December, professors and students alike exhibited intense concern about the reasons for antisemitism in the West. They had perceived, in their studies of the West, a uniquely virulent manifestation of antisemitism, and yet the fundamental irrationality of antisemitism seemed to them in contradiction with the supposedly rational basis of Western thought.

In short, the Chinese find antisemitism incomprehensible and, according to Zimman, they are eager to study the phenomenon.

Herein lies the focus of the proposed broader 'Jewish agenda' in China — to provide accurate historical information to those Chinese involved in disseminating knowledge about Jews and Judaism.

Beginning August 1988, a number of formal Judaic research and study centers were established in China. Some 30 Chinese scholars came together to form the Shanghai Jewish Studies Association, with the stated objective of 'promoting the development of Judaic studies and better understanding of the Jewish people.'

Formed as a division of the Shanghai International Relations Studies Society (a non-governmental group), its leading members say one of their goals is to create a pool of trained specialists in Jewish studies who will be able to serve in the Chinese Foreign Ministry when diplomatic relations move closer. Some members are also studying the history of the Jews of Shanghai in the 19th and 20th centuries, with special emphasis on World War II refugees.

Also in Shanghai, the Chinese Institute for Peace and Development Studies established in 1989, the Center of Israel Studies. This is another non-government unit whose aim is to promote studies in China on all aspects of Israeli history, economy, society, language, etc.

Both groups have programs involving the publication of translations and original research on a wide variety of Jewish topics.

As an example of the difficulties these scholars face, one of them told me that he spent well over a year searching libraries all over China for an English copy of Herzl's *The Jewish State* — without success.

Regular Hebrew-language courses have been conducted at Beijing University for the past five years. In 1990, the first official exchange of Chinese and Israeli students took place in an effort to raise the level of the students' knowledge in each other's language and culture.

However, the single most active and productive Chinese scholar is Prof. Xu Xin, of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at Nanjing University. Prof. Xu (whose article was published in the *Post* on September 3) is the founder of the China Judaic Studies Association (CJSA). This group has the broad aim of promoting all aspects of Jewish Studies including literature, history, philosophy, culture, and art in China. Although a small group, the CJSA has an impressive record.

Xu himself has lectured and studied in Israel. He has translated and published literature by both Yiddish and Hebrew writers, including the first Chinese translation of S.Y. Agnon's *In the Heart of the Seas*. He has also published numerous articles on Zionism and Israel, and begun work on an anthology in Chinese translation of works by such Israeli writers as Agnon, Asher Barash, Amos Oz, Ruth Aimag, Shulamit Hareven, Ben-Zion Tomer and 14 others. Xu is also the founder of China's first Jewish Studies curriculum/program at university level and the organizer of the first Judaic studies exhibition in China.

The Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong (JHS), an international organization of persons interested in China-related Jewish studies and issues, has for some years been supporting these Chinese organizations and individual Chinese scholars. In particular, it has helped promote academic exchanges by putting them in touch with specialists and institutions overseas, and have provided much-needed texts and even, on occasions, helped generate funding support for specific projects, including, Xu's Judaic-studies exhibition, which ran for three and a half months in Nanjing in mid-1990. It drew a large attendance of locals and tourists.

Xu is also the driving force behind the publication of the first Chinese-language Jewish encyclopedia. He recently wrote me '... such a book constitutes an important and badly needed reference for the Chinese. We know it is a heavy task that will take up a lot of time and energy. But we believe it is worth doing.'

One can well imagine what a daunting task this is for a Chinese professor, and in a country where the 1989 per capita income of urban dwellers was approximately \$275. Xu's personal down payment of \$1,000 towards the cost of publication is quite extraordinary.

Both the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong and the Sino-Judaic are endorsing this project. As indicated, Xu has an excellent record of responsible work, and has effectively made the CJSA a leading edge of the 'Jewish agenda' in China. [See related article, page 8]

The writer is chairman of the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong as well as a member of The UJC and The Jewish Club.

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