



## Chanukah at the Olival In Porto

*On December 17 the Ladina Association of Sephardic Culture held a public ceremony, lighting the third Chanukah candle on a giant three-meter menorah in the Olival, the old Jewish quarter of Porto, Portugal. It was the first time since the forced baptism of Portuguese Jews in 1497 that such a ceremony had been held in Porto. Following are the welcoming remarks to the assembled and Portuguese media by Manuel Lopes Azevedo, founder of Ladina.*

Welcome everyone,

Ladina is an association of Sephardic Marrano culture dedicated to rescuing the memory and culture of our Jewish people who in 1497, the year of the forced baptism, constituted a fifth of the Portuguese population.

We light these candles to celebrate Hanukah, the festival of lights which commemorates the re-taking of the Temple.

We light these candles in memory of Captain Barros Basto, Apostle of the Marranos, a man of vision and courage who in the 1930s built a magnificent Jewish Cathedral of the North. He was a victim of the New State and of Catholic integralism. He suffered an injustice and needs to be rehabilitated. We light these candles in memory of the victims of the Inquisition, of whom 3,000 were burned, some alive, like Professor Antonio Homem, Chancelor of Coimbra University, Abbot of the Cathedral, and secret rabbi who died in 1624 at an *auto de fe* in Lisbon.

We also remember our people who fled the In-

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## A Haredi Igbo Wedding In Jerusalem

*By Daniel Lis*

Beit Vegan, the site of Israel's first *haredi* Igbo wedding, is situated close to Mount Herzl and Yad Vashem, in the West of Jerusalem. I arrived a bit early in the evening at the hotel lobby and asked the receptionist about the wedding. Except for the empty banquet hall, nothing hinted at the upcoming event.

Neither the receptionist nor the security guard seemed to know much about the extraordinary event that was about to take place. "If there's a wedding, so where is the catering?" he asked. I called Miriam Lindenberg (an African American Jew with Haitian roots who made aliya four years ago) to make sure I was really at the right place. Yes, I was, but just too early. So I waited in the hotel for events to unfold. Russian immigrant pensioners were strolling around in the lobby, and one of them had a long coat on that made him look like he was still serving in the Red Army. Young American yeshiva *bochers* went busily in and out of the hotel. And then suddenly Esther, all dressed in white, with her two young boys, Israel and Moshe, wearing white kippot, entered the hotel. Seeing this Igbo woman dressed for the wedding there, I had no doubt that I would now witness the first *haredi* Igbo wedding in Israel.

Having arrived in Israel about two weeks earlier to study the situation of Igbos in Israel and the discourse on the Igbo-Jewish link here, I was presented with an excellent opportunity to enter the field (as we anthropologists say). At the same time, it was also an opportunity to do a mitzvah for the *kallah* and the *choson* by recording the wedding for them. They had been in Israel for about four years in order to convert to Orthodox Judaism and to celebrate their (second) Jewish wedding.

None of the bride's or groom's relatives in Nigeria had had the opportunity to travel on so short notice to Israel. One may also question whether they would have made the effort. They may have asked themselves, "Isn't the Igbo way to marry Jewish? Why had the couple to marry for a second time? Why did they convert?"

But the couple had decided on this path out of love for the *haredi* way of Judaism, and all who had accompanied them on

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# CHAROSET RECIPES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Passover begins sundown on April 2, 2007. We continue our new tradition of featuring Charoset recipes in our pre-Pesach Kulanu newsletter.

## Chag Sameach!



We are delighted to have these two recipes, plus text, from Sheilah Kaufman, who has been a traveling cooking instructor for over 27 years and has authored 24 cookbooks. These are excerpted from her 2002 book, *Sephardic Israeli Cuisine*.

## SEPHARDIC HAROSET FROM TURKEY

Haroset is used during the Passover Seder to portray the bricks and mortar the Israelites used to build the Pharaoh's storehouses. Ashkenazic Haroset is usually made from chopped apples, chopped walnuts, sweet red wine or grape juice and a dash of cinnamon. Sephardic Jews around the world use many different fruit mixtures. During the holiday it is also used as a spread on matzoh.

- 8 ounces pitted dates
- 8 ounces raisins, dark or golden
- 2 cups grated peeled apples
- 1/2 cup finely chopped nuts
- orange juice or wine to moisten.

Grind (chop in a processor or blender) all the fruits together. Moisten with juice or wine. Stir in nuts. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

## ABRAVANEL'S HAROSET

Stephen Mendes Abravanel told me about various Spanish-Portuguese *minhagim* related to the festival. He offered this recipe for haroset as handed down in his family. His family immigrated to Amsterdam from Portugal via Antwerp in the 17th century and from Amsterdam to America in the first half of the 19th century. He says:

"As explained to me by my grandparents over 50 years ago, the concept is to make the haroset as the Torah quotes -- 'as black as pitch or mortar but sweet' as written in *Shir Ha Shirim* -- *shachora ani v'na'va* -- I am black and beautiful.' We always served the 'Portuguese haroset' on a small silver filigree plate which further beautified the observance of the commandment (*hiddur mitzvah*). This recipe, as far as I can tell, is unique among the recipes for haroset that I have seen but ...with all modesty, is the best haroset I have ever tasted."

- 1 pound of dates
- 6 ounces of almonds - already ground very, very fine - almost to a powder

- 3 tablespoons cherry jam
- 8 ounce glass of fresh orange juice with pulp or enough juice to cover dates

- 3 tablespoons of sweet grape wine, cointreau or sherry

Soak the dates in fresh orange juice, to soften, for an hour. Place the dates with the juice into a blender and chop/blend the dates as fine as you can -- remember it should resemble black tar or mortar. Remove the dates, place in a bowl and mix with the wine and cherry jam. Sprinkle the almond powder over the haroset before serving.

And this year we expand to include other Passover recipes. These two, plus text, are from Amy Riolo, food writer, cooking instructor, and lecturer. They will appear in her work-in-progress, *A Taste of Egypt*, hopefully to be published in 2007.



## CHICKEN, SPINACH & MATZO PIE/MAYEENA

*Mayeena* is the Egyptian word for a matzo casserole. Throughout the Mediterranean, Jewish cooks have developed many ways to make this traditional Passover Seder dish. Although this recipe calls for cooked chicken leg meat, you could substitute chicken breast, or use leftover turkey, beef, or veal. Some people like to use ground

meat. To make the dish in true Egyptian style, make extra broth while cooking the drumsticks. Serve the broth as a light first course before you serve the *Mayeena*. You could make this dish up to a day ahead, refrigerate it, and reheat it just before serving. Serves 8

- 6 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 pound cooked chicken leg meat, cut into bite-size pieces
- salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1 cup freshly chopped parsley
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 5 eggs, lightly beaten.
- 1 cup chicken broth (reserved from pre-cooking the chicken)
- 6 organic, whole wheat matzos

Preheat the oven to 375F degrees. Oil a 9x13-inch baking pan with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook the onions and garlic together, uncovered, until the onions are translucent. Add spinach to the skillet and stir. Cook 1 minute, uncovered. Add chicken meat to the skillet and stir. Cook another minute. Season with salt, pepper, parsley, allspice and cinnamon. Lower the heat to low. Wait 1 minute. Carefully pour the egg mixture into the skillet, stirring vigorously, so that the eggs do not curdle. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring. Remove from heat. Pour the chicken broth into a large shallow pan or bowl. Dip a matzo into the broth so that it is saturated and slightly softened, yet still intact. Line the bottom of the baking pan with matzo. Repeat the dipping process and use the second matzo to line the rest of the bottom of the pan. Break up a third matzo, dip it in the broth and use it to patch the remaining areas of the bottom of the pan. Spread 1/2 of chicken spinach mixture over the bottom layer of matzo evenly. Ladle or pour 1/4 cup of the chicken broth over the spinach mixture. Create the top matzo layer by soaking 2 more matzos in the chicken broth and placing them on top of the chicken and spinach. Soak the remaining matzo in the chicken broth and lay it on top, as needed, to cover the filling. Pour the remaining broth over the matzos. Carefully brush the remaining olive oil over the top of the matzo casserole. Bake for 30 minutes, or until golden. Serve hot.

## APRICOT PUDDING/MAHALLIBAYAT AMR AL-DIN

The sweetness of Egyptian fruit is unparalleled. Fruit juice stands are the first place I visit when I arrive in Cairo. Egypt's dried fruit is also extremely delicious and is usually reserved for holidays. This is one of the many special desserts prepared during Passover and Ramadan. The term *Amr al-Din* refers to dried apricots in Arabic. *Mish mish* is the word for fresh apricots. The English and European terms for the apricot come from Islamic Spain, where apricots were referred to as *al burquq*, which means precocious -- because they bloomed in March. Serves 8 to 10

- 1 pound dried apricots
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons potato starch dissolved in 1/4 cup cold water
- handful of blanched almonds and/or raisins to decorate

Chop apricots into small pieces. Place them in a large bowl and cover them with 4 cups boiling water. When the apricot pieces dissolve, add sugar and stir. Puree the mixture in a blender. Pour the apricot juice into a medium saucepan. Add cornstarch mixture and stir. Heat on medium-low for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring. Pudding is finished when it thickens and pulls away from the sides of the pan. Pour into individual serving dishes or a large, shallow bowl. Sprinkle raisins and nuts on top and refrigerate until set, around 2 hours.

# Egypt's Synagogues

By Amy Riolo

Egypt's synagogues are a testament to the role that Jews have played in Egypt's history. Jews have been spiritually linked to Egypt since the days of Moses. In 70 CE, many Jews immigrated back into Egypt to avoid Roman persecution. At one time there were as many as 40 synagogues in Egypt. Today there are twelve. The Ben Ezra and Adly Street Synagogues in Cairo, as well as the Nabi Danial Street Synagogue in Alexandria, are excellent examples of an illustrious Jewish history in Egypt.

The earliest Jewish settlements in Egypt were around the areas of the West Bank of the Nile (in Giza), and in Fustat (which is what Cairo was called before it was founded in 969 AD). There is historical evidence of synagogues dating prior to Ben Ezra (310 BCE), but they were destroyed in antiquity. It is believed that there was a Jewish temple on the beautiful Elphantine Island in modern day Aswan. There was also a temple in Giza where Moses was born and lived. A rock from this area, where Moses used to sit and pray, was placed at the entrance of the Ben Ezra synagogue.

*Haret El Yahud bil Muski* (Jewish Square in Muski) became a very prominent Jewish neighborhood during the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. As the Egyptian Jewish population grew, Jews became increasingly more dispersed throughout the country. They settled not only in



Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo

Cairo, but in the beautiful oasis of El Fayoum, and other cities such as Alexandria, and Aswan as well. The *Haret El Yahud bil Muski* quarter of Cairo became known as the center for Jewish life. Many Jews chose to live there for religious and practical reasons. Living in a close knit community provided

the benefits of being near synagogues, religious schools, and kosher butchers. This type of lifestyle promoted a sense of community, which in turn strengthened the faith of the people who lived there. In 2003, the Egyptian Department of Antiquities began restoring *Haret El Yahud*. Although today this area is an extremely busy, densely-populated market area in downtown Cairo, everyone from taxi drivers to merchants still refers to it by its original name, *Haret El Yahud*.

Coincidentally, in the 10th century AD, the Al Azhar Mosque, which is to this day the authority of Sunni Muslim religious life, is located nearby. Al Azhar was built by the Fatimids (a Shiite Muslim Dynasty in power at the time). Many of the Fatimid rulers promoted cross-religious festivities, often encouraging Jews, Christians, and Muslims to celebrate each other's holidays. During the Fatimid Era, Egyptian Jews enjoyed high levels of social status, and the Fatimid government even paid the salary for the head of the Jewish community and funded some of its projects. This period became known as "The Golden Era" of Jews in Egypt. By the 12th century, there were 80,000 Jews who called Egypt home; 7,000 lived in Fustat (Old Cairo) alone.

During the 15th through the 19th centuries, many Jews (and Muslims) who escaped persecution in Southern Europe found a safe haven in Egypt. Sultan Hussein Kamel opened the doors of Alexandria to mass Jewish immigration. There, the Jews set up a cultural center, hospitals, and synagogues. Many Jews earned their livings as merchants, artists, doctors, and politicians. A prominent Egyptian theologian, philosopher, and doctor of the period was Musa Bin Maymoun. There was even a Jewish Pasha in Egyptian history named Yosef Cawati Pasha. ("Pasha" was an honorific title given to people holding

# Do Tuaregs Have Jewish Roots?

By Karen Primack

When my husband and I lived in Niger in the early 1990s, we got to know and admire members of the exotic nomadic Tuareg tribe that has historically roamed the Sahara and Sahel regions of North Africa. These Muslim tribesmen were known for their camel caravans carrying salt, for their physical beauty, and for their excellent metal and leather jewelry and crafts.

Once, when my husband Aron was having a silver ring fitted in a Tuareg shop, the jeweler asked, to our surprise, "Isn't Aron a Jewish name?" When he said Yes, the jeweler whispered, "We Tuaregs are like Jews. We wander as the Jews did." (The conversation took place in French.)

Because the jeweler's "admission" was whispered, I wondered if there was a closer connection than the fact that both peoples wandered. I haven't been able to find much specifically on the subject of Jews and Tuaregs – other than that there was a Tuareg queen in early medieval times who converted to Judaism. Of course Kulanu's friend and scholar, George Lichtblau, *z"tl*, wrote for years about the presence of Jewish communities in North Africa and West Africa, going back to Biblical times, so the idea isn't far-fetched. (See "Jewish Roots in Africa," by George E. Lichtblau, in *Jews in Places You Never Thought Of*, edited by Karen Primack, KTAV/Kulanu 1998).

Now, a beautiful book on the Tuaregs has come out, with an enticing passage connecting some of them to a Jewish past:

*There are several accounts of the origins of the inadan (artisan caste of the Tuareg), but it is likely that they are, in part, descendants of Jews who were forced out of southern Morocco in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and followed long-established trans-Saharan trade routes to the region of the Tuareg. Some inadan even today claim Lord Dauda (David) as their patron saint. They have a complex and ambiguous relationship to the larger group and are often not considered "true" Tuareg, as their social origins were from outside the culture. They are essential to the Tuareg for they make all weapons, tools, leather objects, jewelry, and camel saddles. Their fellow-Tuareg, however, regard them with some suspicion or apprehension because of their ability to make objects from the mysterious interaction of fire and metal; their secret language (Tenet); their capacity to engage the world of spirits with a mystic power known as ettama or tezma; their role as confidants and ambassadors operating between*



The author with Tuaregs in Niger, 1990

*Tuareg families and groups; and their lack of social reserve, a trait highly valued by noble Tuareg.*

— "An Introduction to the Tuareg" by Thomas K. Seligman, an essay in *Art of Being Tuareg – Sahara Nomads in a Modern World*, edited by Thomas K. Seligman and Kristyne Loughran, published by Cantor Arts Center (Stanford) and Fowler Museum (UCLA) 2006.

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## Resources of Note

Visit Manuel Azevedo's [ladinablog](http://www.ladina.blogspot.com/) (<http://www.ladina.blogspot.com/>) for Portuguese Jewish history and culture. The blogspot has features in Portuguese and English, contains many pictures, and includes a "History of Portuguese Marranos in a Nutshell." It also contains news bulletins such as this one: "The Royal Wine company, founded in 1848, has produced the world's first kosher port wine with grapes grown in the Upper Douro Valley at the *Quinta do Brunheda* vineyard in Portugal."

The Guatemalan Jewish website at [www.casahillel.com](http://www.casahillel.com) is an impressive Spanish-language site with comprehensive information on the meaning of Jewish observance and rituals, the history of Judaism, weekly *parsha*, et al.

Infolive.tv is Israel's first 24-hour news channel broadcasting live on the Internet in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Arabic. See [www.infolive.tv](http://www.infolive.tv).

## Jewish Genealogy Conference

The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) will host the 27th Annual Jewish Genealogical Conference July 15-20, 2007, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conference will include speakers, workshops, a daily Jewish film festival, and proximity to the city's famous Family History Library. For further information, see [www.slc2007.org/](http://www.slc2007.org/).

## Special Chanukah Celebrations

The Jewish Community of **Algarve**, in Portugal, celebrated with a latke picnic lunch in Portimao. They had a communal candle lighting, with members bringing their own chanukiahs and candles.

Jews in **Paris** celebrated with a third-night candle lighting and a Reggae concert featuring "Imanuel King of Israel and the Lost Tribes," sponsored by the Liberal Jewish organization NITSA (<http://www.cjl-paris.org/>).

Members and friends of the **Indian Jewish Congregation of USA** had a Chanukah celebration at New York's City Hall with a menorah lighting and singing of prayers in the traditional Indian way.

## Speakers Spread the Word

**Rabbi Barbara Aiello**, who currently directs the new Jewish Culture and Hebrew Language Institute in the Calabria Region of Southern Italy, will be in the US (Florida, New York City, and Chicago) March 14 - April 15, 2007. She is available to speak about Italian *Anousim*. Interested groups can check her website at [www.rabbibarbara.com](http://www.rabbibarbara.com) and contact her at [rabbi@rabbibarbara.com](mailto:rabbi@rabbibarbara.com).

**Anne Katz-Jacobson** has been busy this fall and winter, addressing Cape Cod's Halcyon Condo Community, Hadassah of Cape Cod, Sister of Falmouth Synagogue, Bnei Brith of Riverdale, Hadassah of Riverdale, Hadassah of Tarrytown, and Cape Cod Synagogue. She speaks about her health teaching last spring among the Abayudaya and their neighbors, and her planned return next April. A teacher and nurse-midwife, Katz-Jacobson taught groups of girls and women, including outreach workers and traditional midwives.

**Ray Kaplan** spoke at the JCC in Tenafly, NJ, on January 2 about Kulanu, the Bnei Menashe, *Anousim*, and Jews of China.

A 4-session fall course on "Jewish Cultures Across the Globe," sponsored by the DC Jewish Study Center, featured classes on China and the Jews with **Arthur Rosen**, India's Jewish history with **Nissim Reuben**, Jews of the Balkans with **Isaac Nehama**, and Ottoman Jews' costumes and textiles with **Amalia Levi**.

Toronto's Darchei Noam Congregation featured a seminar series

entitled "Our Global Jewish Village" in November and December. Events included Lost, Found and Re-Emerging Jewish Communities with **Simcha Jacobovici**, the Multiracial Jewish Community of Canada with **Ann Samson**, and the Multiracial Jewish Community of Israel with **Liane Sela** and **Stanley Morais**.

The Manhattan JCC presented a talk on the Jews of Libya with **Vivienne Roumani-Denn** on December 13 and will present a talk on Faith and Perseverance among the *Bnai Anousim* of Lisbon on February 15 with **Rabbi Jules and Navah Harlow**.

## Travel Opportunities

Ladino Turismo is now offering heritage walking tours in Porto and Lisbon, Portugal. Other towns and cities will be added shortly. Speakers on Portuguese Jewish history and culture are available. Tours are offered in Portuguese, English or French. For more information contact [ladina.sefarad@gmail.com](mailto:ladina.sefarad@gmail.com).

A new travel agency in Burma, Myanmar Shalom Travels & Tours, wants to show travelers their country and also to reconnect Jews from other parts of the world to their small Jewish community -- in order to "once again fill the quiet but very beautiful Rangoon synagogue with joy and with song" on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays. Visit [www.myanmarshalom.com](http://www.myanmarshalom.com)

## Jewish Multiracial Retreat

Plan now for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Jewish Multiracial Network Retreat, to take place June 1-3 at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in Falls Village, Connecticut. This annual event attracts Jewish multiracial families, singles and couples for outdoor activities, panels and discussions, and festive Shabbat and Havdallah services. For more information, see [www.jewishmultiracialnetwork.org](http://www.jewishmultiracialnetwork.org) or call 800-824-5991.

## Documentaries-in-Progress

The nonprofit video production company JEM/GLO is at work on a documentary film about the interfaith Mirembe Kawomera ("Delicious Peace") coffee cooperative, started by JJ Keki, an Abayudaya farmer and leader. The organization ([www.jemglo.org](http://www.jemglo.org)) welcomes tax-deductible contributions to further the project. Donations can be sent to JEM/GLO, PO Box 43335, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043.

A recent graduate of USC's school of Cinematic Arts, Bohne Lipsey spent time in Northeastern India interviewing and filming for her documentary-in-progress, *The Never-ending Story*, about the Bnei Menashe. One of the highlights was spending hours with Dr. Khuplam, a respected elder from the village of Saikul who traveled through various mountainous villages in 1949 to collect the dying stories of his "old religion." Lipsey is seeking funding to continue her film project. She can be contacted at [bohne.leah@gmail.com](mailto:bohne.leah@gmail.com).



*Lipsey with Bnei Menashe woman in village of Kangpokpi*

## Mazal Tov!

To **Molly Sonenklar**, formerly a volunteer with the Abayudaya, who has made aliyah and is volunteering for Brit Olam, the Israeli volunteer organization with projects all over Israel and in developing countries (including Uganda). See <http://www.britolam.org>.

To **Sarah Gold** and **Menachem Pritzker** on their engagement. Sarah is another former volunteer with the Abayudaya and a Kulanu List moderator. The wedding will take place in Israel this spring.

To **Ana and Brian Kurland** on the arrival of twins, **Mori** and **Jora** (Moshe Emanuel and Lior Jora). Ana Kurland is an authority on

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Anousim and moderator of the Anousim List.

To **Jen and Brian Primack** on the arrival of **Sadie Julia**. Proud grandparents are Karen and Aron Primack.

## Condolences

To **Aleene Smith** on the passing of her husband **Mortimer Smith**, a generous and devoted Kulanu supporter.

## Todah Rabah!

Kulanu is extremely grateful to **Tamar (Tamu Ngina) Kemp**, our talented Boutique developer and manager since 2002, a time of great growth for our program. She is leaving us and we will miss her hard work and creativity, but we wish her well in her new position as administrative assistant to a physician who is starting a center for Integrated Medicine. She writes: "This is a wonderful opportunity for me about which I am extremely excited, as I have a strong interest in educating the public about preventive and alternative/holistic health care. I have enjoyed working hand-in-hand with Dr. Jack Zeller, Harriet Bograd and Karen Primack--Thank you! This transition is bittersweet for me as I will definitely miss being in-the-know with Kulanu; however, I really feel it's time in my life for a new direction. Kulanu will always remain near and dear to my heart as I strongly believe in its mission. *Todah rabbah --chazak chazak v'nitchazeik!*" She will continue to be a moderator of the AframJews List for Jews of African heritage, at <http://www.afrajews.com>, and will try to keep up with her art work (see <http://www.maznavim.com>).

Kulanu is also grateful to these extremely generous supporters: **The Estelle Friedman Gervis Charitable Foundation**, which donated \$7500, to **Anonymous** for \$6500, and to **Ruth Wolman** for her \$3000 donation.

To these donors of \$1000-\$2500: **Lionel Okun, Temple Sinai,**

**Aron and Karen Primack, The Forest Foundation, Lois Levy, Irwin and Elaine Berg, Harriet Bograd and Ken Klein, Angela and Carl Milner, Rabbi Brant Rosen.**

To these donors of \$500-\$800: **Shomrei Torah Synagogue, Ziv Tzedakah Fund, Agency for Jewish Education of San Diego County, Woodlands Community Temple, Temple Sholom, American Jewish Committee – Milwaukee Chapter, H.D. Gordon, Hillel Council of New England, Smith College, Rabbi Bruce Bromberg Seltzer, Amy Kahn, Marcia Kaplan, Aleene Smith, Temple B'Nai Israel.**

To these donors of \$125-\$400: **Hope and Matthew Feldman, Joseph Berman, Norman and Laurie Goldberg, Gary Katzman, Henriette Klein, The Altman-Arnov Charitable Foundation, Jack and Jean Bark, Lauri Donahue and Rabbi Barry Leff, Dorothy Nemetz and John Todd, Julius and Barbara Shair, Hillel Foundation of Ithaca College, Dr. Stanley Azen, Bert Davidson, Carl and Carol Oppenheim.**

And to the \$100 Club: **H. Clay Bassett Jr. and Joanna Douglas Bassett, Linda and Ross Bodin, Oscar Brown, Rhoda and Bob Chanin, Norman & Elissa Chansky, Riva and Jerry Edelman, Falmouth Jewish Congregation Sisterhood, Charles Fishman & Stephanie Peters, Lonnie & Liz Gross, Walter and Florence Haas, Marlene and Samuel Halperin, Gail R. Harris, Harriette Hirsch, Phillip and Inge Horowitz, Amy Kahn, Raymond Kaplan, Eugene and Beth Kava, Mak'hela, Inc., Ruth and Howard Menken, Edward and Dorothy Miller, Gail and Paul Padalino, Mordecai & Paula Rosenfeld, Jerry and Arlene Russell, Charles Scheidt, Schneider Family, Charlotte Schwartz, Ralph Shapiro, Sherman & Rita Shapiro, Peter & Betty Silverglate, Solomon Schechter Day School, Herman Storick, Melle Family, Max & Esther Ticktin, Charlotte Wasserman, Dr. Norman Weiss, Ronnie Williams and Suzanne Arnpolin.**

## The Passion of a Young Volunteer

By Max Yadin

It is Friday evening. The sun has recently set, and a cool summer breeze sweeps through a small synagogue on top of a foothill. In the distance, lush green mountains are visible, and the smell of food cooked before sundown fills the air. A beautiful rendition of *L'cha Dodi* dances from the mouths of the congregation, and all present know that they are experiencing the truest sense of the Shabbat spirit.

Though these words could easily describe *Kabalat Shabbat* in any of a number of familiar locales, this scene was one that I experienced last summer in eastern Uganda. For 14 days I lived with the Abayudaya ("People of Judah") Jews, a relatively small community of 700 who have been practicing Judaism since 1919.

Recently, in 2002, the community underwent a formal conversion at their own request, overseen by a *beit din* of Conservative rabbis led by Rabbi Howard Gorin of Tikvat Israel, Rockville, Maryland. The community's spiritual leader, Gershom Sizomu, is currently studying at the University of Judaism in California, earning his ordination as a Conservative rabbi. While studying in Jerusalem this past year, Gershom and his wife Tziporah gave birth to their third child, the first and only Abayudaya to be born in the State of

Israel.

My journey to Uganda began last year, in the auditorium of the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School. A representative from a Jewish community my peers and I had no idea existed came to speak to us about Jewish life in Uganda. He spoke about their founder, Semi Kakungulu, a group of committed people, and a culture that seemed very different, yet somehow familiar to the Jewish community of Washington, DC, in which I was raised.

What began, as a vague interest in a little-known Jewish population became a philanthropic project that I became passionate about, investing my time, efforts, and funds to help realize a goal of raising \$3000, the amount needed to purchase textbooks for one of their schools. My initial drive to raise money opened the door to the opportunity to be the youngest volunteer to travel to Uganda in order to work and visit with the Abayudaya.

With the full support of my family and the help of Kulanu, I departed home for Africa in late July. Although I have traveled overseas with organized

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The author with Abayudaya friends

# BOOK COMMENT

DICIONARIO SEFARDI DE SOBRENOMBRES/ DICTIONARY OF SEPHARDIC SURNAMES by Guilherme Faiguenboim, Paulo Valadares, Ana Rosa Campagnano. Printed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. 527 pages.

*Reviewed by Harry A. Ezratty*

Even if you don't have a remote Sephardic ancestor lurking somewhere in your family lineage, this Portuguese/ English genealogical dictionary will fascinate you. It beckons to you with crooked finger to open its cover and examine its insides. Who can resist a subtitle that cries out: "Including Christianized Jews, Conversos, Marranos, Italians, Berbers and their History in Spain, Portugal and Italy"?

And this book delivers. Divided into nine working chapters, it covers Jewish history in Iberia and elsewhere, the Sephardic Diaspora, and the origin, transformation and morphology of family names. The authors produce an amazing list of surnames; a geographical survey of where they may be found on the globe; and an extensive bibliography of books, documents, and other material in which a family name may be found. Finally, the authors list once again, one after another, all the names in the book for an easy reference.

We are reminded that the Sephardim of Iberia and Italy were the first Jews to use family names, probably starting in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and the names are often the same as their Christian neighbors, such as Castro, Mercado, Franco and Cardozo. (Many Ashkenazim did not assume family names until Napoleon, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, required all persons to do so in the territories he conquered.) The authors even provide us with a list of 250 of the most used Sephardic family names, starting with Leon and ending with Villareal.

The most fascinating chapter is the one in which family names are listed and explained. The authors tell the reader cities in which the name may be found both past and present, throughout the world, e.g. Toledo, Cuba, London, New York, Buenos Aires. They tell us the origin of a name and its meaning. They tell us that 39 percent of all Sephardic names have a Spanish-Portuguese origin; that Hebrew accounts for 19 percent and Italian 18 percent; and that Arabic, Berber

and French account for 16, 5 and 2 percent, respectively. The remaining 1 percent is a stew of English, Turkish, German, Bulgarian and Dutch. Then the authors refer the reader to documents in which the name may be found, citing historical figures of the same name whenever possible.

I found some surprises: English playwright and Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter traces his family name to the Spanish Pinto. And movie star Rita Hayworth's real name, Cansino, has Jewish roots in Seville and is a corruption of the Spanish word *cansado*, meaning tired. Her cousin was the famous Spanish novelist, Rafael Cansinos-Assens, who acknowledged his family's Jewish background.

Recently I had the opportunity to put the book to practical use when I gave a seminar in Sephardic history to a group of *Anousim* in New Mexico. Part of my presentation included a session in genealogy. Each participant gave me two family names which I looked up in this book. Almost every one of them had a documentary reference to the infamous Inquisition in Mexico City which destroyed the territory's Governor, Carvajal, and his family. Indeed, there was a Carvajal present at the seminar. Other Inquisitional information is listed for Toledo, Madrid and Seville.

*The Dictionary of Sephardic Surnames* has its small drawbacks. Some family names are not listed. Someone at the seminar had another and similar book where some missing names were found. And the English translation might have been better. In checking my family name, I noted that documentary references were not complete. But these shortcomings are minor when the overall effort is evaluated.

It is a remarkable book. As far as I can ascertain, it is the most detailed and comprehensive Sephardic genealogy of its kind for popular use. If one is into the beginnings of Jewish surnames, this book is a must. My copy was a gift. My wife located it in one of the Jewish book catalogs we regularly receive. Amazon.com also carries the dictionary.

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## A Volunteer's Passion (cont.)

*(Continued from page 5)*

groups, this would be my first solo experience. I was a little nervous, but the idea of Shabbat in Africa released a calm and confidence that stayed with me as I boarded three planes over two days, stopping in London, Nairobi, and finally Entebbe.

The two weeks I spent with the Abayudaya were the most remarkable of my 17 years. I was humbled to be included in a committed and loving Jewish Community as an honored guest, especially when I consider how much I gained in comparison to what I was able to give. I have learned much from the students I tutored, and am proud of my efforts to help purchase textbooks for one of their village schools -- the first in Eastern Uganda to have a book for each student.

Despite the inconveniences of a program of pre-trip vaccines, bathing with a bucket, and sleeping under mosquito netting, I know I will return, because the memories of debating with Rabbi Gershom over Maimonides' thoughts on free will, interacting with the young children and the village elders, and breaking the *Tisha B'Av* fast with the entire community make me committed to continue my efforts to assist these remarkable Jews, who live in such abject poverty.

I will diligently respond to email (the school has one computer), and write to my new pen-pals so they can practice their English, and try to raise more money, as there is still so much the students need. I have gained life perspective and an even greater love for Judaism because of the time I spent with the Abayudaya.

I want to thank all of the people who contributed to the textbook project, my family and community, and Kulanu. I would also like to thank the Shaare Torah Social Action Committee for its contribution to my project, and the support it offered. Most of all, however, I would like to thank the Abayudaya people for their generosity, warmth, and friendship.

*Max Yadin is immediate past president of Simon Atlas AZA, and is currently in his senior year at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville, MD.*

# Lighting Ceremony in Porto (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

quisition for places *incognito*, such as Amsterdam, London, New York, Salonica, Venice and Brazil.



Also, in this place, we remember Gabriel da Costa (Uriel Acosta) who was born just around the corner on Sao Miguel Street before he fled to Amsterdam, where he inspired the great philosopher Bento Espinosa (Baruch Spinoza), whose family came from Evora, Lisbon, Porto and Ponte de Lima. Uriel is the great forgotten Marrano intellectual of Porto.

We hope that in this era of tolerance, our people are able rescue their cultural and religious memory.

# Haredi Igbo Wedding In Jerusalem (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

this path wanted them to have a beautiful wedding.

Slowly, slowly the wedding was taking shape and the catering service and band arrived. I started to unpack my equipment and made the first recordings. The bride started to get a bit nervous about the recording, and when she asked me if I was Jewish, an old Jewish joke came to my mind: A Chinese rabbi asks his Ashkenazi counterpart if he is really Jewish. When the Ashkenazi guy says yes, the Chinese rabbi replies: "Funny, you don't look Jewish."

Telling the bride that I had visited the Igbo heartland didn't really help, even if she did look surprised. We hadn't met before and I can't blame her. Conversion is and remains a controversial issue in Israel and is almost a daily issue in the news. Not to mention the immigration police, who have been strict on Nigerian citizens in the past and in the present.

But the bride accepted my camera and I hope the couple will be happy with the video.

(Continued on page 8)

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# *Haredi* Igbo Wedding In Jerusalem (cont.)

The separation of men and women had already hinted on the fact that it would be an observant wedding. More and more people started to arrive and the crowd got more and more diverse. Although the majority were white, many African and Asian faces could be seen. A filming colleague turned out to be Shlomo Gangtse of the Bnei Menashe community.

The couple was well received by the many friendly faces that came to give tribute to the happy event.

Suddenly some of the men were rushing outside the hotel, where the groom was arriving in a car to shouts of “*Mazel Tov!*” Many arms tried to grab him and to wish him well. Soon after he arrived, singing, dancing and praying started.

After a while everybody went into the courtyard, where the *chuppa* was set up, and the *rabbanim* proceeded with the wedding ceremony, which was crowned by the braking of the glass. Merry and rowdy dancing started, and the appearance of 70-year-old rabbis dancing wildly in front of the couple (including handstands) was stunning.

After several hours of celebration I had to drive back home to Herzlyia, and I had the opportunity to give Amalia, an Israeli Jew of Yemenite background, a ride back. She had met the couple at the Kotel and since then been in touch with them. Our conversation turned around the topic of *gerim* (converts to Judaism) and how beautiful it was to see how this couple had

been received by the *haredi* community, and how their love for Judaism was also inspiring to us.

Concerning the conversion of the couple, one might mention that almost nobody at the wedding was aware of the strong identification of the Igbos with an Israelite heritage. The couple might not have stressed their Igbo identity for several reasons, but one might have been that the Igbo-Jewish link has not been officially recognized. The *haredi* community in this particular case had accepted them because they converted to a very observant way of Judaism. A more general question that will come up in the future will be whether the Igbo - once renouncing Christianity and just accepting Chukwu Abiame/the God of Abraham - should be officially recognized as Jews or as Bnei Yisrael even without conversion.

Speaking about my research project, I have encountered a wide interest among all the Israelis I have met so far. Upon hearing that there's a group of 40 million people called Igbo who identify as children of Yisrael, they know some things could get shaken up!

*Editor's note: The author is currently in Israel doing research for his PhD in Social Anthropology. There he is seeking Igbos and non-Igbos interested in speaking with him on the Igbo-Jewish link. He is also looking for some extra income in order to support his young family and to continue with his research. Feel free to contact Daniel Ls at [lis\\_daniel@gmx.net](mailto:daniel@gmx.net).*

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## Dedication in Nanjing

*By Beverly Friend*

Little did anyone think, 20 years ago, that the travels of one professor from Chicago State University heading to teach English at Nanjing University would result in the opening of the Diane and Guilford Glazer Institute of Judaic Studies at Nanjing University.

Jim Friend was the first Jewish professor Xu Xin had ever met -- but he was far from the last. Following that meeting, Xu went on to live with a Reform Jewish family (the Friends, while teaching in the US), to return to China via Israel to initiate a Center for Judaic Studies, to work on a one-volume Chinese edition of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, to learn Hebrew at an Ulpan in Israel, to study at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, to write original works in English and Chinese, to translate works of Jewish-American and Israel authors, and to run international symposiums and special seminars for Chinese professors of history and Western civilization.

Now, his dream has come true with the establishment of the Glazer Institute, fulfilled by the donations from the Glazer family and the contributions of many other charitable trusts and individuals.

As members of the Friend family, Tracy, Lynn and I were thrilled to be there on a most spiritually gratifying 10-day pilgrimage that was enhanced by two contrasting but equally uplifting Shabbat services (Reform in Beijing and Chabad in Shanghai), and highlighted by the dedication of the Institute.

The celebration opened November 20 with a formal discus-

sion between Nanjing University Vice President Zhou Xian and Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk, honorary Chancellor of Hebrew Union College as well as Chair of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Academic Committee, who was scheduled as the keynote speaker for the next day. They discussed the unique role this department will play at the university before heading for a banquet hosted by the school.

The dedication itself opened the following morning with speeches delivered in a tiered lecture hall before an audience of about 80 that included University president Zhang Rong; Kenneth Jarrett, U.S. Consul General in Shanghai; Amir Lati, Israeli Deputy Consul General in Shanghai; professors and scholars from Nanjing and other Chinese universities; benefactor William Fern; Episcopal priest John Blessing; Arthur Rosen, chairman of the board of the Sino Judaic Institute; Mattan Lurie, on behalf of the Glazers; Jerry Gotel of the London Jewish Cultural Centre; representatives from Jewish communities and corporations in China; and members of the Friend family.

Tracy Friend, who is both the president of B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim in Glenview, Illinois, and a composer of liturgical melodies, presented Xu with 54 CDs donated by a broad band of American Jewish artists. She and Rabbi Gottschalk's granddaughter Atara performed four musical selections as part of the ceremony.

Xu prepared and distributed a glossy blue and white booklet with the speeches printed in both English and Chinese in order to avoid the need for lengthy translations. After Xu's welcome and description of what has been accomplished and the goals still to



# PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE

Compiled by Howard and Miriam Young

✍️ “Latino New Mexicans See Hints of Jewish Past” by **Matt Crenson** (AP, December 10) discusses research by New Mexico state historian Stanley Hordes, who found that *viejitos* (Hispanic old-timers in some rural villages) were following an array of Jewish customs. [www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino](http://www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino).

✍️ In “The Zimbabwean People of the Book,” **Cindy Mendel** in the November 29 issue of the *Jewish Ledger* reports on Relly Coleman, who collected and shipped textbooks to the Lemba in Zimbabwe. [www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino](http://www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino).

✍️ “Castro Can’t Make It But Jews in Cuba Mark 100 Years on Island” headlined a story carried by the JTA on November 30. In it, **Larry Luxner** reports on the state of the 700 Jews still living in Cuba and their plans for celebrating their 100 years on the island. He notes that the Castro regime has never prevented Jewish organizations from delivering medical and food supplies to the Jewish Community. [www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino](http://www.jewishresearch.org/newsletter/htm#Latino).

✍️ **Andree Aelion Brooks’** article “Return Receipt Requested” appeared in the December 2006 issue of *Hadassah Magazine*. It reports on *Bnai Anousim* (children of forced converts), men and women who trace their descent from the forcibly converted Spanish and Portuguese Jews of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The writer notes that “millions” of potential returnees can be found among this group. However the cultural chasm between the *Bnai Anousim* and the dominant Ashkenazi Jewish community discourages more from coming forward for conversion. Their sense of not being wanted leaves many in this group lingering on the sidelines or organizing congregations on their own. “Full integration may take several generations,” notes a cantor of an Albuquerque congregation.

✍️ In the December/January newsletter of the Agency for Jewish Education of San Diego County, **Alan Rousonik**, executive director, reported on the visit to San Diego of Aaron Kintu Moses, spiritual leader of the Abayudaya of Uganda. He noted that Kintu Moses was a “true mensch... and ... wonderful with the students.... What inspired me about Aaron was his sincere desire for anything Jewish – books, ritual objects, and knowledge in general – because they lack so much in his community.... (C)ommunities like the Abayudaya benefit by forming closer ties to the world Jewish community and we benefit as they remind us of the richness of our religion.”

Reports by Erin Richard on the visit of Aaron Kintu Moses appeared in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* of November 13, the *Toledo African-American Newspaper* of Nov. 6 and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* of Nov. 4. All reports mention Kintu Moses’s description of the private schools in his community in which Muslim, Christian, and Jewish students attend classes together and learn about all their religions. “We don’t have children fighting because of differences,” he noted.

✍️ In the *Washington Jewish Week* of November 23, **Aaron Leibel** writes in “It’s Easy To Kasher a Chicken” how the Abayudaya Jews are able to observe Judaism with help from abroad. He reports that today there are five synagogues and one member of the community is studying to become a rabbi at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles.

✍️ **Farzand Ahmed**, in “Is It the Lost Tribe of Israel?” from *Asia Today*, November 6, reports on a study of DNA samples collected from the Afridi Pathans in Uttar Pradesh that indicates they may be a “lost tribe of Israel.” However the Pathans are apparently not ready to accept themselves as Jews.

A later related story, “Researcher Claims Proof of Tribe of Ephraim in India,” by **Matt Zalen**, appeared in the *Jerusalem Post* of November 14. Dr. Aafreddi, an Indian historian, says he may have found a genetic link between members of his clan in northern India, the now-Muslim Afridi Pathans, and one of the Ten Lost Tribes. However,

Hillel Halkin claims, “There is no such thing as a Jewish DNA. There is a (genetic) pattern which is very common in the Middle East, and 40% of Jews worldwide have it. But many non-Jews and people in the Middle East have it also.”

✍️ **Lauren Kramer’s** story in the *Jerusalem Post* of November 9 provides a detailed report on one of the oldest synagogues in Barbados. It was completely restored to its original design in 1987 and is open to tourists.

✍️ “Exodus of Jews from India’s Northeast to Israel” by **Harinder Mishra** (PTI – Press Trust of India, November 21) describes the largest-ever immigration to Israel of Indians who claim to be descendants of an ancient Jewish tribe. The group of Bnei Menashe was allowed to enter Israel only after the Chief Sephardi Rabbi declared them descendants of Israel.

Concerning the same story, **Michael Freund** in the *Jerusalem Post* of November 22 provides an eyewitness description of the trip by air of the Bnei Menashe in “Aliya Voyage Across the Millennia from India.” He notes that “just as the prophets foretold so long ago, the lost tribes of Israel are being brought back from the exile.”

✍️ In the *Washington Jewish Week* of November 16, **Sarah B. Steinberg’s** article, “An Effective Voice for Jewish Studies in China” reports on her visit with Xu Xin, director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, who has built a library of Jewish texts, and teaches many courses in Jewish studies.

✍️ “Portuguese Jews in England,” a piece about Jews who arrived in England some 350 years ago, occupied 8 pages of the prestigious Portuguese national newspaper *Publico* on December 24.

✍️ In “The Ark and the Flowerpot,” **Ari Greenspan** and **Ari Zivotofsky** report in the November 2 *Jerusalem Report* about their trip to Portugal and their search for the roots of the ancient “Marrano” community. They note that for 500 years, “those hidden Jews lived their lives in the mountains of Portugal and secretly passed on their customs from generation to generation.”

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## Nanjing (cont.)

(Continued from page 8)

be met, I gave a brief history of the origins of the China Judaic Studies Association.

The highlight of the three-hour ceremony was Rabbi Gottshalk's formal address where he cogently stated: "Somehow, somewhere, those concerned with the future of the human community must take the first steps to clear away the debris that bars people from each other. The basic values which make relationships possible deal with the power of the spirit, not the spirit of power. You who are here at this Center and at the University have opportunity to make a creative difference."

Following the speeches, awards and fellowships were granted to graduate students before the group proceeded to the unveiling of the five rooms on the eighth floor of the brand new 12-story Center for International Studies.

Outside the door of each, a handsome silver plaque with the China Judaic Association logo announced the individuals being honored.

The James and Beverly Friend Memorial Exhibition/Conference Hall is the largest, a brightly lit room graced by a large oval wood conference table and three walls of display. The

(Continued on page 10)

# Egypt's Synagogues (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

high positions in society during the Turkish rule of Egypt.) There were also Jewish members of Congress and Senate.

Many of Egypt's Jews immigrated to France in the beginning of the 20th century, and to Israel in the latter half. Today only about 200 Jews from the original community remain. Proud to be both Jewish and Egyptian, they feel that their history and culture is evident in Egypt's synagogues. The location of the synagogues is evidence that the three main religious groups in Egypt coexisted peacefully for many years.

The Ben Ezra Synagogue is the world's oldest synagogue still in existence. It was built in approximately 310 BC. The current building is not the original structure. The synagogue went from being a synagogue, to a Coptic church, and back to a synagogue again. The synagogue was used as a Coptic church from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the Jews left for Jerusalem, until the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when Jews bought it from the Sultan of Ibn Tulun for the 20,000 dinars that the church owed in taxes. They then named the synagogue Ben Ezra. (When Jerusalem was burnt by the Romans, the scribe Ezra returned to Fustat with his followers, his Torah, and his prayer books.) Two small confessional rooms inside the synagogue bear witness to its Christian era.

The land of the synagogue is also significant to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. In the basement of the synagogue, there is a well filled with water which was part of the Nile during the time of Moses. It is said that this is the spot where Pharaoh's daughter found Moses in the papyrus reeds. Some say that Moses prayed in this area for God's assistance in helping him convince Pharaoh to let him lead the Jews out of Egypt. Jews from all over Egypt have come to Ben Ezra for spiritual guidance.

Numerous religious books and documents were found buried in Ben Ezra. (Since it is forbidden to tear or throw away printed material bearing the name of God, the materials were buried there.) More documents were found in the Jewish Bassatine Cemetery of Cairo. The books and documents have been distributed to learning centers around the world, where they are still being studied. Ben Ezra is currently open daily for tourism. It was categorized as a "monument" by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities in 1984.

Cairo's first mosque, the Amr Ibn Al As, is located just down the street from the synagogue. *El Mouallaqa*, "The Hanging" church (without traditional foundations, it is suspended on beams from underneath) and the *Mar Girgis* "St. George" church are also nearby, along with many others. Both Rabbinic and Karaite Jews lived side by side, in security and peace with their Christian and Muslim neighbors in Fustat.

The *Shaar Hashamayim* (Gates of Heaven) synagogue was built in 1905. Egyptian Jews always referred to it as the Ismalia synagogue because it is located near what used to be called Ismalia Square. Now it is known by everyone as the Adly Street Synagogue. This synagogue was always a source of pride for members of the Jewish community because it was an elite synagogue in a fashionable area. It was a center for daily life, Shabbat prayers, plush weddings, and religious ceremonies. In the autobiographical novel *Midan Tahrir* by Carmen Weinstein, a 1940s wedding celebration there is described.

Both Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews contributed financially to Adly Street Synagogue's construction. It was designed by Maurice Yoseff Cattawi Pasha and included elements of ancient Egyptian style to remind the Jews of their deep roots in the Nile. Restoration of this synagogue began in 1980. In 1989, its library contained 7,000 volumes of books from various Jewish synagogues, schools and homes throughout Egypt. The last great Rabbi "Haim Nahoum Effendi" of Egypt, who was also a member of the Egyptian Senate, once presided

over the synagogue. It has a courtyard which contains gardens, a celebration hall, administrative offices, and a women's gallery. The Adly Street Synagogue has also been categorized as a "monument" by the Department of Antiquities in Egypt. Today the synagogue is open for Shabbat prayers and special occasions.

The synagogue on the bustling and vibrant Nabi Danial Street in Alexandria is elegant and stately. The synagogue takes its name, (*El Ma'bad Al Yahu Anbi*) from the prophet Yahu. Many rabbis had visions of him in this synagogue. It was built in 1881, and contained a building for rabbis who presided over Jewish life in Alexandria and a court. The second floor contains a women's balcony. This synagogue boasts elegant chandeliers, silver artifacts, and a library with ancient artifacts. This well preserved synagogue opens for Shabbat and special occasions only. It is surrounded by guards who do not permit photography from the outside.

If you happen to have the opportunity to travel to Egypt in the future, make sure to visit one of these beautiful synagogues. Information about the Jewish Community Center in Cairo can be obtained by visiting [www.geocities.com/Rainforest/Vines/5855](http://www.geocities.com/Rainforest/Vines/5855).

*Amy Riolo is a Washington-based food writer, lecturer, and cooking instructor. She was raised in an Italian-American family that nurtured her early interest in cooking, and as a student at Cornell University became passionate about Islamic design motifs from Cairo. After meeting and marrying an Egyptian in Rome in 1996, she traveled to Egypt to meet her new family and began combining her passions for food and world cultures to further cultural bridge-building. She speaks English, Italian, Spanish and French, and is studying Arabic; she maintains a home in Egypt.*

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## Nanjing (cont.)

(Continued from page 9)

first is a wall of recessed niches, each containing a Jewish artifact (Menorah, Shofar, Tallis and others). Across from this is an ark containing a glass enclosed, historically significant Torah from Eastern Europe donated by Rabbi Marvin Tokayer. A display case of books stands before the third wall, which has posters and pictures tracing the history of the Association.

The Rabbi Arthur and Elisabeth Schneier Judaica Library currently holds 7,000 books, and will soon grow to over 10,000 with the addition of Rabbi Gottshalk's collection.

The Kaufman Study Room in honor of Teddy Kaufman, president of the Israel-China Friendship Association, provides an ample classroom for students. This room was established by Varda and Sjalom Yorn from Israel.

A cozy seminar room with tables and computers, and the Director's Room, which houses Xu Xin's office, were both established by the London Jewish Cultural Centre.

In a corridor between the rooms, a list of donors hangs in imposing testimony to all who made this Institute possible.

The speeches, unveiling and tour were covered by a host of enthusiastic Chinese reporters and TV cameras preparing for that evening's news broadcast.

(Continued on page 12)

# The Kulanu Boutique

Also accessible online — with photos — at [www.KulanuBoutique.com](http://www.KulanuBoutique.com)

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**Abayudaya: The Jews of Uganda.** 160 pages of beautiful photographs with text by Richard Sobol, complete with a CD of Abayudaya music, with notes, compiled by Rabbi Jeffrey Summit, an ethnomusicologist. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu and the Abayudaya.*

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# Nanjing (cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

The Institute has come a long way since its founding 1992, when China established a full diplomatic relationship with Israel, and meets a growing demand for Judaic Studies in China. Currently it serves 200-300 undergraduates and a dozen graduate students with a faculty of two full-time and four associate members. A search is now underway to add an additional three qualified instructors.

None of this could have been achieved without its guiding light -- Professor Xu Xin -- who received an honorary doctorate from Bar-Ilan University in 2003 "for establishing the academic framework for the teaching of Jewish history and culture in China and for encouraging the development of Sino-Israel ties."

Xu noted that the dedication did not mark the end of the road, but a new beginning of further projects. Directly following the dedication, he set off for Israel to conduct research at both the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Racism and Anti-Semitism at Tel Aviv University and the Vidal Sassoon International for the Study of Anti-Semitism at the Hebrew University. This is in preparation for his latest state-level project, for which he received a grant from the Chinese Ministry of State Education. This will result in three books: one on Anti-Semitism, one on Holocaust Studies, and a third on the Documents of Anti-Semitism.

For further information contact Beverly Friend at [friend@oakton.edu](mailto:friend@oakton.edu).

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