Notes

Introduction

1. Translated from my interview with Martin Beutler, Berlin, June 29, 1995, Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, p. 545. This passage is published in my book, Shanghai-Geschichten: die jüdische Flucht nach China (Berlin: Hentrich und Hentrich, 2007), p. 241, which uses interviews in German to present the stories of 12 Shanghai refugees who later returned to Germany and Austria.


3. Among the first were Evelyn Pike Rubin, Ghetto Shanghai (New York: Shengold Books, 1993); and I. Betty Grebenschikoff, Once My Name Was Sara (Ventnor, NJ: Original Seven Publishing Co., 1993). By combining the details of his own family’s stories with considerable research about the whole community, the late Ernest Heppner’s Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993) is the best of the memoirs. See the bibliography for this growing literature.


5. Leo Spitzer, Hotel Bolivia: The Culture of Memory in a Refuge from Nazism (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998) notes the wide spectrum of estimates for German Jewish refugees to Bolivia, ranging from 7,000 to 60,000. Spitzer’s estimate is 20,000 (p. 203, n. 2).

Notes


7. Relatively precise estimates exist for the early years of Nazi power, from 1933 through 1937. Beginning with 1938, yearly totals of the masses of Jews who poured out of the Third Reich vary widely, and many sources do not even attempt estimates.

8. Niewyk and Nicosia, Columbia Guide to the Holocaust, p. 420, cites a figure of 40 percent from the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland, which however seems much too high.

9. This phrase comes from Leo Spitzer, Hotel Bolivia, p. 63.


13. The full transcripts of these and many other of my interviews in the Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project are available online through Bates College.

14. A fine general history is Betty Peh-T’i Wei, Shanghai: Crucible of Modern China (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1987).

15. Translated from my interview with Heinz Grünberg, Vienna, May 31, 1995, Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, p. 1. This interview, conducted in German, is also quoted extensively in Shanghai-Geschichten.

16. For example, the discovery a few years after publication in 1995 that Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood (New York: Schocken, 1997) by Binjamin Wilkomirski was an invention.


18. This is Langer’s argument about “deep memory,” based on hundreds of Holocaust interviews, in Holocaust Testimonies.


20. On this subject, see also Helga Embacher and Margit Reiter, “Geschlechterbeziehungen in Extremsituationen: Österreichische und deutsche Frauen im Shanghai der dreißiger und vierziger Jahre,” in Exil

I In the Third Reich


4. For example, Varian Fry, an American journalist who helped several thousand anti-Nazi and Jewish refugees to escape from Vichy France in 1940, was constantly harassed by American authorities.

5. Ho describes his diplomatic career in My Forty Years as a Diplomat (Pittsburgh, PA: Dorrance Publishing Co., 2010), translated and edited by his son, Monto Ho.

6. Rebetsin means wife of the rabbi and was a term of highest respect in Jewish communities.

7. On June 14, 1938, the Nazis promulgated an addendum to the Nuremberg Laws, which made it easier to plunder Jewish businesses. On that night, between 1,500 and 2,500 Jewish men who had any kind of criminal record, including traffic offenses, were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

8. In order to get a visa to enter the United States, Jews had to have an affidavit from a U.S. citizen promising to support them in case they could not support themselves.

9. Kurt Schuschnigg (1897–1977) succeeded the assassinated Engelbert Dollfuss in 1934 as Chancellor of Austria. In 1938, he was imprisoned by Nazi Germany following the Anschluss and survived Dachau and Sachsenhausen.

10. The Physikum is the first major exam during medical study.

11. The first mass rail transports of Jews from Vienna to Poland took place in October 1939.

12. The Stürmer was a violently antisemitic Nazi newspaper published by Julius Streicher.

13. This treaty was signed in August 1939.

14. On April 26, 1938, the Nazi government issued the Order Requiring the Declaration of Jewish Property, which forced all Jews to declare their holdings in Germany over 2,000 Mark, including art, jewelry, and businesses.
2 Leaving Home


2. Christiane Hoss, “Abenteurer: Wer waren die Shanghai-Flüchtlinge aus Mitteleuropa?” in Exil Shanghai 1938–1947, ed. Georg Armbrüster, Michael Kohlstruck, and Sonja Müllerberger, (Berlin: Hentrich und Hentrich, 2000), p. 107. Numbers of arriving refugees come from a compilation of information about ship arrivals and numbers of refugees on board, which were consistently reported by the Shanghai Municipal Police to the Shanghai Municipal Council, the real government of the city run mainly by foreign businessmen and diplomats. The reports are located in the records of the SMP, file D5422(c).


6. Reports of German Consul General Bracklo to Foreign Ministry Berlin, February 24, and March 27, 1939, and to German Embassy Shanghai, March 20, May 24, and June 30, 1939, all in Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, R9208/2329.

7. The literature about Sugihara tends toward the hagiographic: see the book by his widow, Yukiko Sugihara, Visas for Life (Sacramento, CA: Edu-Comm Plus, 1995). There is little written about Zwartendijk.

8. The Wiener Schneiderakademie (Tailor Academy) was a major training school for the clothing trade in Vienna.

9. Grey refers to the Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith), the major national Jewish organization in Germany, and its chapter house in Munich.


11. Karl May’s many books imagining the lives of cowboys and Indians in the American West were tremendously popular in Germany.
3 Culture Shock and Community Creation in Shanghai


4. Reisman means the Public and Thomas Hambry School.

5. ORT is a Jewish education and vocational training organization.

6. Because toilets were rare in Hongkou, human waste went into buckets, which were collected by the poorest of Chinese sanitation workers.

7. Richard Tauber was one of the great Austrian tenors. His family had a Jewish background.

8. Ernst Toller was an anarchist playwright who briefly served as president of the Bavarian Soviet Republic in 1919.

9. A small number of doctors’ families were allowed to spend the entire war outside of the Designated Area, including Josef and Amalia Hochstadt, my grandparents.

10. The injection was in his right thigh, and soon after, he became lame in that leg below the knee.

11. The tefillin or phylacteries are little black boxes containing verses from the Torah to be worn on the forehead and on the upper arm during prayer.

12. See the interview with Herbert Moss in the Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project housed at Bates College.

13. Major Gerhard Kahner was head of the Gestapo in Shanghai from 1940 to 1943.


15. Friedrich Hermann Glimpf was an important Nazi, the chief of the German news agency, the Deutsches Nachrichten Büro, until late 1943, when he became chief correspondent for China.

16. The Hilfsfund, or the Kitchen Fund, provided free meals for refugees.

4 In the Designated Area

2. SACRA stands for the Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaborating Relief Association, formed by Russian Jews after the Japanese Proclamation in February 1943 to help with the relocation of Jews into the Designated Area. The SACRA building in which Culman lived was located at Tongshan and Kungping Roads.

3. A number of Polish refugees refused to move into the Designated Area, claiming they were not stateless. Many months after the deadline for moving, they were arrested and put in the Ward Road jail. At least five contracted typhus and died, while others became seriously ill. Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis and Jews: the Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai 1938–1945* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1976), p. 529.


5. The refugee Max Buchbaum had been the middleweight amateur champion in Berlin.

6. The Alcock Heim was around the corner from the Ward Road prison.

7. “Mensch, ärgere dich nicht” means “man, don’t get angry.” It is the name of a German board game similar to Parcheesi.

8. The Emigrants Hospital was first opened in the Washing Road Heim in 1939, then moved to the Ward Road Heim. Outpatient clinics also were established at some of the other Heime.

9. The actual figure for deaths among the refugees was probably closer to 1,500.

10. Doris Grey here tells from personal experience and with more accuracy the same story about newborns dying that Herbert Greening told a few pages ago from the outside, without direct knowledge. See the conclusion for further discussion of this incident.

11. Dr. Tibor Kunfi from Vienna served on the Medical Committee of the larger Committee for the Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, set up in 1938. This Committee was sometimes known as the Speelman Committee, after its first treasurer, Michel Speelman.

12. *Yecke* is a pejorative word for German Jews used by Austrians. Grey hints here at the continuation in Shanghai of European resentments among national Jewish groups.

13. Sumner here refers to Bruno and Lisbeth Loewenberg.

14. Ruth Sumner’s friends were Inge Pikarski and Eva Wolffheim.


## 5 The End of the War

1. Dr. Samuel Didner was a refugee from Graz, in Austria. His story is featured in James R. Ross, *Escape to Shanghai: A Jewish Community in China* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

## 6 After the War

1. Heinz (Pit) Bergman was Eva’s boyfriend.
7 Auf Wiedersehen, Shanghai! But Where Do We Go?

1. The information here about how refugees gradually left Shanghai comes from many articles published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in this period, newly available online at http://archive.jta.org.
2. For a better understanding of the difficulties, physical and psychological, faced by those who returned to Germany and Austria, see the interviews in Hochstadt, Shanghai-Geschichten: die judische Flucht nach China (Berlin: Hentrich und Hentrich, 2007), pp. 175–229.
3. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency published many articles about the delaying tactics of the Consulate in Shanghai and the eventual effort of the State Department in Washington to accelerate approval of immigration to the United States: see dispatches for July 16, September 25, September 30, and December 27, 1946, and January 26, 1947.

8 Another New Life

1. Michael W. Blumenthal became secretary of the Treasury under President Jimmy Carter. Hans Eberstark was a linguist who founded Mensa Switzerland.

9 My Life as a Refugee

1. This famous incident occurred in February 1943, when nearly 2,000 Jewish husbands of Christian wives were arrested and incarcerated in the Rosenstrasse in Berlin on their way to deportation. The mass protest of hundreds of women resulted in their release.

Conclusion

3. Penguin canceled the 2009 publication of his “memoir,” Angel at the Fence.
8. For this reason, I also believe that Greenspan’s method of repeated interviews with fewer people, as recounted in On Listening to Holocaust Survivors, offers the possibility of revealing a different and broader range of memories than the much more common single interview.
10. For the role of Nazis within the German community in Shanghai, see Astrid Freyeisen, Shanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2000).
11. Over 60 individual Special Branch reports in D5422(c), Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP) files, running from November 1933 through 1940.
12. D.S. Pitts, “Central European Jews – Arrival in Shanghai,” March 15, 1939, D5422(c), SMP files; letter of March 28, 1939, from the secretary of the Municipal Council to the Commissioner of Police, D5422(c), SMP files.
13. The Association of Former Residents of China in Jerusalem (Igud Yotzei Sin) is dominated by Jews with a Russian background. The history of the central European refugees in Shanghai is underrepresented in their Bulletin.
14. Aviva Halamish, “Palestine as a Destination for Jewish Immigrants and Refugees from Nazi Germany,” in Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States, ed. Frank Caestecker and Bob Moore, p. 143.
15. The Shanghai Municipal Police files have voluminous records of the meetings of the many clubs that were founded because the police were responsible for ensuring that political issues would not be discussed.
Bibliography

Interviews (all interviews by Steve Hochstadt, unless otherwise noted)


Other Primary Sources

Hull, Cordell, telegram to U.S. Embassy in Berlin, United States National Archives, file number 893.55J/4, microfilm publication LM63, roll 143.


Reports of German Consul General Bracklo to Foreign Ministry Berlin, February 24, and March 27, 1939, and to German Embassy Shanghai, March 20, May 24, and June 30, 1939, all in Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, R9208/2329.

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, March 6, 1940.


Shanghai Municipal Police, SMP file D5422(c).

**Memoirs and Oral Histories**


**Films**


**Novels**


**Secondary Sources**


The Narrators

Melitta Colland

Melitta Colland (née Sommerfreund) was born in November 24, 1917. One of her brothers left Vienna for Panama, another went to Shanghai in December 1938, and she sailed with her mother, Sarah, on the Conte Verde to Shanghai in the summer of 1939. She immediately started her own dress shop. After the war broke out, Colland lost the business and had to move to Hongkou. In 1944 she married Dr. Bruno Meyerowitz, a refugee from Germany. They had a daughter, Asherah, in September 1945.


Ernest Culman

Ernest Culman (formerly Ernst Culmann) was born in Liegnitz on December 2, 1929. His father, Engush, a doctor, was arrested on Kristallnacht. Culman, his older brother, Hans, and their parents sailed on a Dutch ship to Shanghai in June 1939. His father had difficulty establishing himself as a doctor, so his family and some friends started a luncheon business. Later his mother, Beth, baked cakes and took in sewing. Culman attended the Shanghai Jewish School, and after 1942 the Kadoorie School. He celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in Shanghai. The Culman family lived in the SACRA building on Tongshan Road, which was bombed by the Americans on July 17, 1945, but none of them were hurt.

After the war, Culman apprenticed in camera repair. The family left Shanghai in January 1947 for San Francisco, and settled in Baltimore. Culman continued in camera repair, was drafted during the Korean War,
and later became a manager with Industrial Photo and Pen Camera. He and his wife, Anya Hoffman, live near Washington, D.C.

**Herbert and Ilse Greening**

Ilse Greening (née Braunsberg) was born in Hannover on July 11, 1919. She began working for a lawyer at age 16. Herbert Grünberger was born in Königshütte on December 13, 1912, and moved with his family to Hindenburg in 1922. He studied medicine in Bonn, Berlin, and Breslau, and graduated in 1936. He became an intern in a hospital in Hannover. Ilse and Herbert were married in December 1938, and took the freighter *Oldenburg* to Shanghai in April 1939, with Ilse’s mother, Erna, and younger sister, Eva.

In Shanghai, Ilse’s uncle, Bruno Italiener, helped them rent an apartment in the French Concession, but they soon moved to Hongkou, where Herbert set up a medical practice in Kung Ping Road. Ilse worked in the Chartered Bank of India and China. After Pearl Harbor, the bank was taken over by the Japanese authorities. Both Ilse and Herbert attended to the Chinese wounded by the American bombing of Hongkou in July 1945. Their son, Michael, was born in December 1945.

They left Shanghai for Australia in January 1949, changing their name to Greening, and arrived in the United States in August 1950. Herbert joined a medical practice in New York, where their daughter was born. After retirement, they moved to Florida. Herbert Greening died on April 30, 2004, and Ilse Greening on November 18, 2008.

**Doris Grey**

Doris (originally Dorchen) Grey was born in Hindenburg, Upper Silesia, on June 21, 1912. She studied nursing and worked in Breslau, before moving to Berlin and becoming head nurse at the Krankenhaus der Jüdischen Gemeinde. In Berlin, she married Willy Cohn, born circa 1899. On May 5, 1940, they left Berlin for Genoa, where they sailed to Shanghai on the *Conte Verde*. Doris worked at the Emigrants Hospital in the Ward Road Heim as head nurse, while her husband continued his work as an art dealer. They lived on Point Road.

Ralph Hirsch

Ralph (originally Rolf) Hirsch was born on December 2, 1930, in Berlin. After attending the Volksschule, he had to transfer to a Jewish school after Kristallnacht. The Hirsch family left Berlin in October 1940 by train to Moscow, and then by the Trans-Siberian Railroad to China. They settled in Hongkou. Hirsch attended the Kadoorie School, as did his younger brother, Claus. Their father, Gerhard, worked occasionally for the Joint Distribution Committee and as an accountant for some refugees’ small businesses until the war ended. Their mother, Editha, opened a hat shop, and when that did not succeed, a candy store.

In May 1947, the family left for the United States. Hirsch was a city planner in Philadelphia and now lives in Germany. He is married to Angelica Hack, an art historian and museum curator.

Gérard Kohbieter

Gérard (formerly Gerhard) Kohbieter was born in Berlin on May 30, 1922. He sailed alone to Shanghai in March 1939 at age 16. In Shanghai he worked as a magician and lived mainly in the Alcock Heim. He also sold books.

In 1947 he arrived in New York, and later lived in San Francisco, working as a magician under the name Gérard Slaxon. He finally settled in Berlin. Shortly after this interview, he died on January 4, 1995, of complications from an operation. He is survived by his widow, Renate Kohbieter.

Alfred Kohn

Alfred Kohn was born in Berlin in January 1927. His family, including his younger brother, Ingolf, traveled to Shanghai on an Italian ship in late 1939. His father, Chaim, began work as a furrier for a Russian Jewish firm. Kohn played soccer and boxed in the Hongkou ghetto, and became a well-known sports figure, nicknamed Lako, “der lange Kohn,” He worked as a radio technician and in a kitchen. After the war, he worked for the US Army.

In September 1947 Kohn arrived in the United States and began work in the fur business in New York. He was the New York Golden Gloves champion in 1948, and was defeated in the championship bout in 1949, after which he gave up boxing. He is retired and lives with his wife, Hedy, in Florida.
Lisbeth Loewenberg

Lisbeth Loewenberg (née Epstein) was born on January 4, 1922. She and her mother sailed to Shanghai from Trieste in 1940, when she was 18. Her father had already sailed there in 1939 and was teaching music at the Kadoorie School. He died in Shanghai of cancer in 1942. Lisbeth worked in Shanghai as a secretary. There she married Bruno Loewenberg (born 1890) from Berlin, who had spent 13 months in Buchenwald. He ran a lending library on Ward Road.

In 1948 they emigrated to the United States and settled in San Francisco, where Bruno owned the Lion Book Shop and Art Gallery and Lisbeth worked for Collier’s magazine. Bruno Loewenberg died on October 29, 1986, and Lisbeth Loewenberg on September 7, 1996.

Eric Reisman

Eric Reisman (originally Erich Reismann) was born in Vienna, Austria, on April 26, 1926. His parents, Hermin and Oskar, were born in Theben-Neudorf, Czechoslovakia. At the time of the Anschluss, Reisman’s mother was forced to scrub the sidewalk outside their apartment. Reisman, his older brother, Paul, and their parents managed to get a Chinese visa from Consul Feng Shan Ho, which helped them get a passage to Shanghai on the Conte Biancamano in November 1938. In Shanghai Reisman attended the Public and Thomas Hambry School, then the Kadoorie School. He celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in Hongkou in April 1939. After Pearl Harbor, the house they had bought was confiscated by the Japanese. Reisman worked in a pharmacy and learned to box. The family lived on Tongshan Road. After the war ended, he worked for Northwest Airlines at Kiangwan airport.


Otto Schneppe

Otto Schneppe was born in 1925 in Austria. In January 1939, at age 13, he left Vienna, and met his parents, Bruno and Elisabeth, in Shanghai, where they had arrived a month earlier. Schneppe attended the Shanghai Jewish
School, then the Public and Thomas Hanbury School, and finally graduated from St. John’s University in 1947. He earned money by teaching English to Chinese.

He received a doctorate from Berkeley in 1951 and taught at the Technion in Haifa for 13 years. In 1965 Schnepp took a position in the Chemistry Department at the University of Southern California, where he eventually became chair. Schnepp returned to China as science advisor to the United States Embassy in Beijing in 1980. He retired from the USC Chemistry Department in 1992, and became director of the USC East Asian Study Center in 1994.

Lotte Schwarz

Lotte Schwarz (née Cohn) was born in Halle on September 7, 1910, and grew up in Nordhausen. She worked for the Hilfsverein in Hannover. In February 1938 she married and moved to Berlin. On June 14, 1938, her husband was arrested and sent to Buchenwald. In August they sailed to Shanghai from Trieste on the Conte Verde. The Schwarzes opened a small coffee shop, the Quick Restaurant, in Hongkou. Their daughter was born in 1940.

They sailed to San Francisco on the General Meigs in 1948, and then settled in southern California. Lotte Schwarz worked for many years for the Judy Crib Sheet Company. She died on October 3, 2005.

Ruth Sumner

Ruth Sumner (née Wendriner) was born in Silesia on August 24, 1927, and grew up in Bobrek and then Beuthen. When she was six, her mother was killed by an intruder to their home. Her father, Kurt, owned a bar, but sold the business and retired to Beuthen. On Kristallnacht, her father’s brother was arrested and killed at Buchenwald. Her father and she then sailed to Shanghai on the Hakone Maru in January 1939; shortly afterward, her sister left for the United States. In Shanghai, her father opened the Roof Garden Mascot restaurant on Wayside Road. They lived together with her aunt, Erna Schaie, on Tongshan Road.

After the war ended, Ruth got married in Shanghai to an American soldier, Forrest Sumner, and had a child within a month of arriving in the United States in 1947. They live in Florida.
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