

# KULANU

“all of us”



Helping Lost Jewish Communities  
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Volume 11 Number 3

Autumn 2004

## GENOCIDE IMMINENT AGAINST TUTSIS OF BURUNDI

By Rabbi David Kuperman

*We are going to grill them on skewers as a foretaste. You know, to put an end to a species of animal you have to scarf it up without pity, as we did with the cattle of the Tutsis. The Tutsis will be treated as we treated their cattle, which they used to enslave us: we will eat them.*

It is frightening and mind-boggling to review the Hutu hate talk and literature against the Tutsis prevalent some ten years ago. That is so especially when you remember that such talk led to 150,000 dead in Burundi in 1993 and between 800,000 and a million dead in Rwanda a year later, and that Hutus cannibalizing Tutsis is literal, not figurative. How much more so when, right now, according to many Tutsi sources both in Burundi and in exile, and according to many articles in the press, some explicit and some less so, expressions of that hatred have again reached a level bound to foment genocide.

But since, in Burundi, the murder, rape, terror, thievery, military rule, imprisonments (by the thousands) without trials or public explanation have been ongoing, how can you tell it is worse?

My informants tell me that Hutu in the marketplace mock Tutsis by saying that their current possessions are irrelevant since soon enough they won't need anything at all. News services have reported a spate of lynching of Tutsis who have been accused of sorcery or inoculating their Hutu neighbors with disease organisms.

Hate broadcasts from Tanzania into Burundi demonize Tutsi to the point that their death appears to be the only appropriate solution. South African "peace keepers" are raping and murdering Tutsi women. Just as happened before the massacre of 1993, huge numbers of jeeps and motorbikes, providing swift transport for executioners pursuing their victims into the bush, have flowed into the poor country of Burundi as gifts to Hutu militia.

The population is rapidly shifting, with Tutsis at the northern border fleeing into Rwanda and Hutus crossing into Burundi from Tanzania and Congo, to which they had fled to escape prosecution or retribution for genocide. Many of the guardians of the government have removed their families from the country in preparation for the worst while threatening to withhold money for AIDS drugs to keep their military officers in line.

Human rights organizations in the United States and elsewhere are voicing their displeasure against facile talk of peace, reconciliation, and democracy that obscures human rights violations, rationalizes the expropriation of Tutsi land, and consistently promises to forgive all criminals and crimes, recent and remote.

But accounts of hate talk and physical attacks against Tutsis fall on deaf ears

for those in the United States and Europe who are committed to the concept that the peace process in Burundi, imposed by outside powers, is progressing. **As if history did not teach us that talk of peace can be entirely compatible with mass murder, as it was in Europe at the beginning of the Holocaust, in Washington just before Pearl Harbor, and in Burundi itself in 1993!** Peace processes and constitutional formats that provide full democracy without human rights seem to be the order of the day. When I mention the fully democratic and legalized annihilation of Jews by one of the most democratic governments in the world just sixty years ago, there is silence. Talk of the divide between democracy and human rights for minorities is just not popular. And who wants to hear that, in the absence of democracy, human rights existed in pre-colonial Burundi and Rwanda, and nation did not lift up sword against nation?

What's the problem? It should sound familiar to Western Jewish ears. **The**

**Tutsis are too proud, too wealthy, too self-centered, and too unwilling to marry those outside of their culture and religious traditions. The Tutsis own too much land in a country that has too little.**

The Tutsis are powerful but evil, even sharing the power of the evil eye with their Falasha kindred hundreds of miles down the course of the Nile River.

Sanity insists that this time genocide can be aborted. But sanity has no small battle to make against the forces of insanity. The UN, with its budget in excess of \$400 million for a peace force of about 5,000, has accomplished little, while militias far outnumbering the UN troops roam unrestricted throughout the country, murdering, raping, and stealing. And the largest of these militias is a partner in the coalition government!

The Africans who have taken refuge in North America and Europe are models of decency and productivity. But in many places in Africa, with the passing of colonialism, too little has been developed to replace the body politic, the traditions, the religious systems, the judiciary, and the restraints that preceded colonialism.

So who will exercise sanity, and who will abort the imminent genocide? We will. Who else will be responsible, if we are not?

Being your brother's keeper is a universal responsibility for all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. I stress our responsibility especially because we as Jews have sworn never to forget. I stress our responsibility not only because the Tutsis of Burundi share in our heritage as people of Israel but because they are, like all human beings everywhere, children of God. I labor our responsibility because Havila, an organization of Tutsis in exile in Europe that seeks the return and redemption and above all the survival of the Tutsi people, wants to know what genocide of Tutsis in Burundi means to Western Jews.

I say to you, tell them.

### AN APPEAL FOR HELP FROM KULANU'S PRESIDENT

The deterioration of the status of a remnant of the biblical people of Kush so far up the Nile from the more familiar Beta Israel of Ethiopia challenges us in more ways than seem tolerable. We can ask why there is so much trouble for these proud upholders of an ancient national and religious tradition, but right now a more important question presents itself: HOW CAN KULANU AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

U.S. Members of Congress have been alerted, and now they must be encouraged to transform their concern into action. Now that Tutsis are providing information from the ground and Human Rights has real currency as an idea and as an organizational force, we must build on this. We need to find reporters who speak French fluently, Jewish and non-Jewish, who will carry their cell phones and be ready at all times to answer calls from Burundi. We need to be able to purchase and service a large number of cell phones for critical sources in Burundi, to pass timely information and to facilitate the rescue of those who come under attack. We need funds to help endangered people to move to safer locations and to redeem imprisoned military officers and members of Havila. And we are drawing down the Kulanu treasury until soon there will be none left.

Emergencies are rarely on schedule, and schedules do not like emergencies. Please break your schedule. Call Kulanu at 301-681-5679 to offer your support and help. Seek a broader base of support in your synagogues. Tap your contacts in government, the press, and Jewish organizations and move them to action. Check out our Web site ([www.Kulanu.org](http://www.Kulanu.org)) for information about the Tutsi and the latest developments in Burundi, and spread the news. And make a restricted gift to Kulanu, designating the Tutsi fund, by sending a check to Harriet Bograd, Kulanu Treasurer, 165 West End Avenue #3R, New York, NY 10023.

Jack Zeller

# ABAYUDAYA YEAR IN REVIEW

By Chaya Weinstein

(A report on the progress in the community since the Autumn 2003 newsletter by Kulanu's Volunteer Coordinator. Contact her at [madamchaya@earthlink.net](mailto:madamchaya@earthlink.net).)

**EDUCATION:** Kulanu continues to raise funds for primary and high school scholarships. At the high school, a science lab is being built. Thanks to a grant from Tikvat Israel Congregation of Rockville, MD, Hadassah Infant School has acquired additional land and is building three classrooms and a larger dorm. They hope to expand the school's offerings through grade 7, so that graduates will be able to proceed directly to Semei Kakungulu High School. There is also a university scholarship fund administered by Jeffrey Summit through Tufts University Hillel. Rabbi Summit is an accomplished ethnomusicologist whose award-winning CD, *Abayudaya: Music from the Jewish People of Uganda*, was released by Smithsonian Folkways last year. Profits fund university education. Additional donations will fund women's vocational scholarships.

**WATER:** With help from Kulanu, Woodland Community Temple of New York, and Temple Isaiah of Lexington, MA, eight large water collection tanks have been installed in the community to trap rain water that can be safely used for bathing and laundering. The community is now working on fundraising for the purchase of water pumps. All of these benefits are shared with all people of the surrounding community.

**ELECTRICITY:** Kulanu has raised funds to cover the cost of electrical transmission, and the community is now working on raising money for wiring costs. The electricity will come to the main synagogue, high school and surrounding homes on Nabugoye Hill, benefiting the Abayudaya as well as their Christian and Muslim neighbors.

Richard Sobol, a photographer who authored the inspirational book, *Abayudaya: The Jews of Uganda* (that also contains a CD recording by Rabbi Jeffrey Summit) continues to be involved in raising funds for both electricity and water in conjunction with Temple Isaiah.

**ABAYUDAYA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION:** Women have been given full rights of participation in secular and religious leadership. They recently were awarded their second grant from Aid to Artisans to fund their craft projects. (Beautiful kippot and *tallitot* are available at [www.kulanuboutique.com](http://www.kulanuboutique.com).) The women continue to organize and co-teach a Shabbat study group that has now expanded to four synagogues. They also teach women and girls the use of the computer, Internet and e-mail. This year, I am trying to raise funds to increase their monthly allotment to cover costs of expansion, as well as to find donors for funding of vocational education.

**CULTURAL EXCHANGE:** There have been five individual volunteers who have lived and worked with the Abayudaya from one to three months in the past year. They have worked on areas such as secular and Jewish education and health care. One student researcher conducted a study of Abayudaya women's changing roles.

Artist Gary Rosenthal worked with Kulanu to create a Purim celebration in Uganda. He funded his *Hiddur Mitzvah* project partly by conducting grogger-making workshops in synagogues. Rabbi Joseph Prouser went to Uganda for the celebration with his wife Ora and their three children. The community made costumes, performed a play, and read the Megillah by flashlight.

Last summer, Rachel Namudosi Keki, 21, a high school graduate, singer, and daughter of J.J. Keki (an Abayudaya leader who also serves as local councilman) came to the U.S. for five months. She worked at Camp Yavneh as a counselor and toured the East Coast, giving presentations about her community. I am pleased to report that she is now studying at an academy near Kampala. Her goal is to qualify for university.

Her father J.J. Keki is slated to visit New York, Baltimore and other cities this winter and is available for presentations.

Rabbi Gershom Sizomu, spiritual leader of the community, has spent the past year in Los Angeles with his family. He is in a five-year rabbinical training program at the University of Judaism on scholarship. He and his family returned to Uganda for a month this summer, to an exuberant welcome. In 2005-06, he and his family will be living in Israel. He has been able to present at numerous synagogues and special events throughout the U.S. He sang and spoke at a Chanukah fair at the JCC in New York City in December 2003, and at a multi-cultural Shavuot festival in Berkeley in May 2004, sponsored by the Institute for Jewish and Community Research led by Gary and Diane Tobin of San Francisco. I had the opportunity to meet him at those events, as well as at a conference sponsored by the Institute and at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival.

The San Francisco Jewish Film Festival was held in July. I organized a group of 15 people from my synagogue to attend a screening of a film about the Abayudaya called *Moving Heaven and Earth* by David Vinik and Debra Gonsler-Vinik. The film was screened three times to superb reviews. My friends were very moved by the film and the chance to meet Rabbi Gershom there. The film has also been accepted at film festivals in Washington DC, Northampton, Rochester, Maine, San Diego, Seattle and Vancouver.

**TOUR OF JEWISH UGANDA:** In January 2004, the first two-week Tour of Jewish Uganda was organized by Laura Wetzler, Kulanu's Regional Coordinator for Uganda. Eight people participated in this tour. The 2005 trip is scheduled for January 9-24; see the notice in this newsletter and contact [laura@laurawetzler.com](mailto:laura@laurawetzler.com) for more details. The tour is meant to engage Americans in learning about and sharing meaningful time with the Abayudaya, while providing training and fostering economic development in the community. Two physician assistants who attended the tour brought medicine and provided emergency medical assistance. After the tour, Laura Wetzler and Harriet Bograd, Treasurer of Kulanu, visited various dignitaries and NGOs to network on behalf of the Abayudaya.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

**1. Donations.** Many people give *tzedakah* (charity) for the Jewish New Year and at other holiday times and special occasions. (We also have been developing a Frequent Flyer plan for those inspired to donate on an ongoing basis--contact me for details.) Donation checks can be made out to KULANU and mailed to Harriet Bograd, Treasurer, 165 West End Avenue, #3R, New York, N.Y. 10023. Her e-mail is [hbograd@compuserve.com](mailto:hbograd@compuserve.com), phone 212-877-8082. The checks should be earmarked Abayudaya Community/Chaya.

**2. Buy crafts and other products.** The Abayudaya kippot are quite beautiful and popular sellers. They make great gifts, and have been ordered in quantity for Bnai Mitzvah and wedding parties. Abayudaya music on CD is also very popular. To order these products or books, please contact me or visit [www.kulanuboutique.com](http://www.kulanuboutique.com). We are also trying to incorporate the products into gift shops and fundraising venues, so please contact me if you have any ideas.

**3. Visit or volunteer with the community.** Come as a guest or as a volunteer. As the Volunteer Coordinator for Kulanu, my role is to provide you with information, encouragement and logistical support to optimize your volunteer experience. Please contact me for more details about volunteering. For information about the upcoming tour to the Abayudaya and wildlife safari, e-mail [laura@laurawetzler.com](mailto:laura@laurawetzler.com).

**4. Hire a speaker.** There are speakers from the community or who have visited the community who are available to speak at synagogues or Hebrew schools. Please contact me for details.

# Reforging Chinese/British Links in London

By Xu Xin

In a wonderful reciprocal gesture resulting from a Jewish Heritage Tour of China, Trudy Gold, chief executive of the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC), invited me to visit London and participate in a truly international experience. In May, I had guided 55 highly interested British citizens on a tour of Jewish Life in China; now, in July, I would participate in a week-long cultural seminar on the "Jewish Experience." During my stay I enjoyed enormous hospitality extended to me by those who had visited China the previous May as they liberally opened up their homes.

The seminar aimed to provide the local Jewish community with various topics, including "Dimensions of Modern Jewish Identity," "Anti-Semitism," "Shoah," and "Israel," presented by an international field of scholars, I was very impressed both by the quality of presentations and depth of discussions. In addition to attending the seminar, I gave two lectures: "China and Jews" and "Israel through Chinese Eyes."

Though it was not my first time in Great Britain (my first visit was in July 1988), this trip was even more colorful, eventful and enjoyable --- far beyond my expectations.

## The British Library

A wonderful and very pertinent exhibit -- THE SILK ROAD -- was underway at the British Library, presenting a colorful glimpse into lives through the manuscripts, artifacts, paintings, and textiles which lay hidden in desert ruins until their discovery in the early 20th century. Who could miss such an opportunity? I had a long wished to visit the Library as I missed it during my first visit.

Historians of the Jewish Diaspora in China know that a famous 8<sup>th</sup> century letter written in Hebrew script and found along the Silk Road in the beginning of the 20th century is in the Library's collection. This document serves as strong evidence that Judaism was one of several religions from the ancient Near East which traveled thousands of miles along the Silk Road into China. It is also considered the earliest example of a document of any length in New Persian. I was thrilled at the opportunity to see the original.

When I got to the Library, I was surprised and delighted to be met by three experts -- Susan Whitfield, director of the International Dun-

huang Project and curator of the exhibition, Ilana Tahan, curator of Hebrew Section, and Graham Hutt, curator of Chinese Collections -- thanks to the arrangement made by my friend Simon Olswang, a governor of the board of the Library.

Dr. Whitfield not only generously gave me a personal, introduction to the exhibition and pointed out some of most interesting items displayed, but also kindly presented me with a copy of her book, *The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith*, specially prepared for the exhibition, which gave much in-depth information.

Not only did I see the original letter during the tour, but I was also able to view a surviving Torah scroll from the ancient Kaifeng Jewish community. According to its recorded history, the scroll was purchased in Kaifeng by agents of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews in 1851 and brought to London by the Society and presented to the British Museum on December 11, 1852. It is complete, in excellent condition, and is actually ranked as the No. 2 scroll among the 13 scrolls once owned by the community because it is marked with the Hebrew letter *bet* on its back, according to Michael Pollak, who had examined most surviving scrolls from the Kaifeng Jewish community and wrote *The Torah Scrolls of the*



*Chinese Jews* (published by Southern Methodist University in 1975). The Torah scroll has two rods, each with a pointed knob at one end. The 94 parchments (skins) are bound together with silk thread, a unique feature that distinguishes Torah scrolls made in Kaifeng from those made elsewhere.

While I had hoped and expected to view the letter during my visit to the Library, I never thought that I would be able to view this Torah. However, the scroll was pulled out of storage and laid on a viewing desk before my arrival. Mrs. Tahan kindly told me a brief history and allowed me to examine it. I felt very happy and privileged when I actually touched and examined it. Mrs. Tahan also showed me some other Hebrew books printed in Shanghai during World War II. Obviously all those books testify to the historical links between the Chinese and Jewish peoples and the long history of the presence of Judaism in

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## Hanukkah Begins on December 7! What better gift than something from the Kulanu Boutique?

Aish Chai Lapel Pin	\$30
Challah Cover from Ghana	25
CD of Ethiopian Jewish Music	15
CD of Ugandan Jewish Music	15
Under One Canopy: Readings in Jewish Diversity	15
Kippah from Uganda	15
Cassette tape of Ugandan Jewish Music (Special sale!)	7

See *Kulanu Boutique* page in this newsletter or go online at  
<[www.KulanuBoutique.com](http://www.KulanuBoutique.com)>

KULANU ("ALL OF US") is a tax-exempt organization of Jews of varied backgrounds and practices dedicated to finding lost and dispersed remnants of the Jewish people and assisting those who wish to (re)join the Jewish community. Kulanu is undertaking a variety of activities worldwide on behalf of these dispersed groups, including research, contacts, education, conversion when requested, and relocation to Israel if desired. This newsletter is published quarterly by Kulanu, 11603 Gilsan St., Silver Spring, MD 20902.

# KULANU BRIEFS

## Kulanu Tour to Uganda January 9-24

The exciting Jewish Life in Uganda Mitzvah Tour 2005 is filling up, but there are still a few spaces left. Don't miss out on this opportunity to visit the wonderful Abayudaya community, go on an African safari, and do a mitzvah at the same time! See the trip information on page 10 or contact [laura@laurawetzler.com](mailto:laura@laurawetzler.com) (413 634-5617).

## New "Shalom Africa" Website

**Rabbi Howard Gorin** has begun an extraordinary website to help emerging African Jewish communities bring Jewish observance to their members. See [www.rabbihowardgorin.org](http://www.rabbihowardgorin.org) for his "Shalom Africa" site, containing resources on the Jewish calendar, *divre* Torah, and candle-lighting procedures and times. Gorin urges his African readers to "feel free to refer to this site anyone you know who is interested in Judaism, even if said person has yet to return all the way to authentic Judaism."

Also included at this web address are his first-hand descriptions of the Jewish communities in Uganda and Nigeria, where he has traveled and taught. (He led the *Beit Din* to Uganda in 2002.)

## A Hebrew-Luganda Chumash

Inspired by the success of Rabbi Joseph Prouser's Hebrew-Luganda *Megillah* booklets, which the couple brought to Uganda last Purim, **Dr. Ora Prouser** has embarked on a *Chumash* program. As a first step, she has compiled and sent to the community a Hebrew-Luganda version of *Genesis* using an existing Luganda translation of the Bible (compiled by Christians) and adding an introduction for each *parsha*. Over the long term, she hopes to work with Abayudaya leaders to refine the Luganda translation to be more compatible with Judaism, and to add some commentary.

## Hebrew Centre Opens in Nigeria

After Rosh Hashana services, Remy Ilona and Remy opened the first Hebrew Centre in Nigeria -- a library, and the beginnings of an academy where the Hebrew language and basic Judaism will be studied. In attendance was a cross-section of Nigerians, including an academic, a leading Roman Catholic lay leader, members of Abuja synagogues, and other Igbo Christians. Ernest Moshe Mbanefo assisted Ilona in setting up the facility. Ilona and Harley Springman, a Canadian Jew, gave *dvarim*, "*Hatikvah*" was sung, and Aharon Amram performed Jewish folk songs from Yemen and Morocco.

## Call for Papers on Yemenite Jewish Women

Proposals for scholarly submissions are invited by the journal *Nashim* for its upcoming issue devoted to "Yemenite Jewish women: their migrations and integration into their new communities; their cultural contributions and activities in the present and the recent past; and their history in Yemen and outside." The deadline for receipt of proposals is February 1, 2005, and for articles is May 1, 2005. Submissions in all disciplines, including literature and the arts, are encouraged. Send proposals for submissions by e-mail (preferably) to [nashim@schechter.ac.il](mailto:nashim@schechter.ac.il); by mail to *Nashim*, The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, POB 16080, Jerusalem 91160; or by fax to +972-2-6790840. All scholarly articles will be subject to academic review. *Nashim* is published jointly by the Schechter Institute of Jewish Stud-

ies, the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, and Indiana University Press.

## Bnai Anousim Visit Israel

The Amishav organization sponsored a solidarity visit to Israel for 19 Spanish and Portuguese *Bnai Anousim* (descendants of forced converts to Catholicism) in August. The group heard lectures on Judaism, Israel, and anti-Semitism, spent Shabbat in Jerusalem, and visited Safed, home to a number of famous synagogues built by Sephardi exiles from Spain in the Middle Ages. They also presented a document signed by hundreds of *Bnai Anousim* around the world to Israeli minister of diaspora affairs Natan Sharansky. This *Megillat HaAnousim* reads in part, "Ever since they were compelled to abandon their faith, the path of our forefathers has been long and difficult over the past 500 years, but nevertheless we are here."

## Crypto Sephardic Union Helps Anousim Return to Israel

**Yaffah DaCosta** made *aliyah* to Israel on August 4, possibly as the first *Anousim* to be admitted with a Return Certificate. She believes that millions of *Anousim* may qualify for this alternative to a Conversion Certificate. To help other returnees, she and some colleagues set up a new Crypto Sephardic Union [www.cryptounion.com](http://www.cryptounion.com) with branches in several US cities and one in Israel, which she heads. The Union aims to help people collect their portfolios of evidence of their maternal Jewish descent and approach rabbis who are issuing Return Certificates.

## Indian Synagogue Plans 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

Shaar Hashamaim (Gate of Heaven) Synagogue in Thane, India, will celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in December. It recently renovated its ceiling and mikveh, and is now seeking donations for an extension to accommodate its new Jewish Educational-Cultural-Social-Religious Community Centre. Its activities serve 40% of India's Jewry. For information, contact [ghsyntna@bom3.vsnl.net.in](mailto:ghsyntna@bom3.vsnl.net.in).

## Lisbon Synagogue Turns 100

On hand to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Shaare Tikvah synagogue in Lisbon in September were Portugal President Jorge Sampaio, other government officials, Catholic, Muslim, Bahai representatives, and ambassador of Israel Shmuel Tevet.

## Jewish News in Porto

Kudos to **Sergio Pinheiro** and the Hebrew Cultural Association in Porto, Portugal, who are setting up a Center for Jewish Studies in Porto and developing an outreach program to educate and revitalize Portuguese *Anousim*. Also, kudos to **Yaakov Gladstone** and **Dr. Harold Michal-Smith** for their early support of the new Center.

On September 8, a new Torah scroll was dedicated at Porto's famous Makor Chaim synagogue, with **Rabbis Elisha Salas** (who resides in Porto) and Shlomo Moshe Amar (visiting from Israel) in attendance.

## Speakers Spread the Word

**Mollie Berch** is teaching a five-week course at Tifereth Israel in Washington, DC, on the literature of Jewish women "from Muslim societies, Latin America, and elsewhere."

**Amichai Heppner** recently addressed a local Hadassah chapter on Kulanu and the Jews of Veracruz, Mexico.

# KULANU BRIEFS

**Rabbi Howard Gorin** continues his legendary quest to spread the word about the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda to every state in the Union. Most recently, he spoke in South and North Dakota.

**Yohannes Zeleke, Jack Zeller, Rabbi David Kuperman, Joe Hantman, and Karen Primack** are teaching a Jewish Studies Center course in Washington on Jews in Places You Never Thought Of.

Two Kulanu activists will lead workshops at the Jewish Folk Arts Festival in Rockville, Maryland, on November 21. **Judy Neri** will discuss Writing about Jewish Life around the World, based on the book *Under One Canopy: Readings in Jewish Diversity*. **Carolivia Herron's** workshop on Writing Jewish Memoirs will share her writings on her African-American journey to Judaism.

## Calling All Volunteers!

Based on her 9-month experience of living and working with the Abayudaya in Uganda, Kulanu's Volunteer Coordinator, Chaya Weinstein, has completed work on *Pearls of Wisdom: A Guide for Volunteers with the Abayudaya Community of Mbale, Uganda*. The guide will be available to those individuals interested in volunteering in the Abayudaya community. We hope to develop guides for other communities as well. Meanwhile, potential volunteers for any location should contact Chaya <madamchaya@earthlink.net>.

## Mazal Tov!

To **Lisa and Avi Berg** and to **Irwin and Elaine Berg**, parents and grandparents of **Jacob Scott Berg**.

To **Gloria and Leslie Mound**, great-grandparents of **Or Rifka**.  
To **Rufina Bernardetti Silva Mausenbaum** on the birth of granddaughter **Gia Gavriella**.

To **Romiel Daniel**, the first Indian Jew to lead a synagogue in the US. He recently became president of the Ashkenazic Rego Park Jewish Center in Queens, NY. A trained cantor in both Ashkenazi and Sephardi *nusach*, he serves as a "relief" cantor and rabbi at the shul when those officials are absent.

## Condolences

To **Cantor Ramon Tasat** on the passing of his mother, **Victoria Tasat**, in Argentina.

## Refuah Shleymah

We wish a speedy recovery to **Mama Naume**, one of the revered Abayudaya matriarchs, who is ill in Uganda.

## Todah Rabah!

The **Madav IX Foundation** has approved a \$10,000 grant to Kulanu, including \$6,200 for Mexico Anousim, \$2,000 toward the Kulanu newsletter, and \$1,800 for Amishav's work in Spain, Portugal and Turkey.

**Woodlands Community Temple** of New York, and **Temple Isaiah** of Boston donated \$3000 EACH for electrical wiring for the Abayudaya.

To **Rabbi Jeffrey Summit** at Tufts University, who continues to raise funds on his own to subsidize Abayudaya university students. The current recipients are: Moses Sebagabo (law), Samson Wamani (clinical medicine), Eric Itakali (secondary education), Isaac Byaki (tourism and hotel management), Solomon Isabirye (newly admitted).

**Herman Storick** donated and shipped these carefully-selected volumes from his personal library to Remy Ilona's new Hebrew Centre in Abuja, Nigeria: *Encyclopedia Judaica*, *I Am Jewish* by Judea and Ruth Pearl, *The Gift of the Jews* by Thomas Cahill, *Lovesong* by Julius Lester, *The 72 Names of God* by Yehuda Berg, *Conversion to Judaism* by Lawrence J. Epstein, and *On the Doorposts of Your House* by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

**To these donors:** Aron & Karen Primack (\$2,000), Amichai and Shana J. Heppner (\$1,800), Jack and Pauline Freeman Foundation (\$1,000), Abe Pollin (\$1,000)

**To donors of \$300-\$500:** Barry Zeve, Rabbi P. Michael and Israela Meyerstein, B'nai Israel Congregation, Stephen A. Holstein, Lynda L. Howland, Temple Beth Avodah, Woodlands Community Temple

**To donors of \$125-250:** Beth El Temple Center (Belmont MA) Social Action Committee, Congregation BJBE, Barbara J. Zakheim, Irwin & Elaine Berg, Jerry & Sharon Knoppow, Dana Lande and Avi Meyerstein, Marvin and Alice Marguiles, National Ramah Commission Nyack, Dalia Rotter, Eleanor Steinhauer, Temple Israel (Cape Town, South Africa) (In honor of wedding of Paulo & Melanie Pandolfi), Temple Israel (Boston), Temple Sinai, Emily Chaya Weinstein, Sharon Minsky (from the 5th grade class of the religious school)

**To the \$100 Club:** Samuel Baum, Beth El Congregation of the South Hills (Pittsburgh) (from the Tzedakah money of a religious school class), B'nai B'rith Foundation, Rose Bromberg, National Ramah Commission, Diane Gerstler, Joseph & Bea Hantman (in memory of Jeannette Okin), Robert Honig, Joan E. Sarnat, Rachel & William Segal, Herman & Cecilia Storick, Rachel Strong, Temple Beth El (Ithaca) Rabbi Scott Glass Discretionary Fund, Drs. Jack & Diane Zeller, Central Synagogue (NY), and Raymond & Rebecca Kaplan.

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## Jews in Goa

By Nissim Moses

(A version of this article appeared in Casa Shalom Journal.)

Prior to the Inquisition in Portugal, many Jews involved in the spice trade, commerce, and import and export of commercial items spread out to all colonies of the Portuguese domain of influence. The Portuguese Jews arrived in India as traders probably well before the year 1496 CE, when it was socially acceptable to be Jewish in Portugal. At first, the Jewish community flourished openly. The full evil of the Inquisition and its terror, through criminal Priests later canonized as saints such as Francis Xavier (his grave is in Goa's Church-Basilica of Bom Jesus) and others, was only felt from around about the year 1560 onwards.

Dr. Garcia De Orta, a "New Christian," was brought to India in 1534 by the then Viceroy to study the "Flora and their Medicinal Properties" of these tropical islands. Based upon his studies De Orta wrote a book, *Coloquios Dos Simples & Drogas He Cousas, Medinias Da India* in Goa in Portuguese, published by another Jewish printer Joao De Endem in 1563. This book was later translated and published in English by Sir Clemens R. Markham, London in 1913. He was the first European to write and publish a book on tropical medicine and attempt to synthesize between Western, Eastern and Oriental medicine. De Orta's book was later adapted and edited by another between 1568 and 1571. His book was printed in Burgos in 1578 and was titled *Tractado de las Drogas*. Dr Garcia De Orta passed away sometime between 1568 and 1570. As per the accounts given by

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# Growing a New Jewish Hub in Guatemala

By Jeffrey M. Freedman

I have been traveling to several Central and South American countries as part of my interest in photography, and I have tried to get a flavor for the Jewish culture in each of these areas. Recently, I visited Guatemala and spoke with several members of the Jewish community.

While preparing for my trip to Guatemala, I read an article in the *Jewish Ledger* by Rabbi Abraham Tobal of the Mount Sinai Alliance in Mexico City, where he identified a significant Jewish issue. He stated “the loss of Sephardic tradition is not caused by mixed marriages. These are just a result of cultural erosion that can be compared to the Holocaust. The Holocaust killed physically, and this kills our essence.”

Rabbi Tobal’s observation applies not just to the Sephardic tradition in Mexico City, but to all of the small, struggling Jewish communities -- Sephardic and Ashkenazi -- throughout Central and South America.

Outside of Mexico City and in small Central American countries such as Guatemala, the challenge of preserving Jewish tradition is huge.



*Shaarei Binyamin in Guatemala City*

In fact, it’s not unusual for Jews living in any of the Latin American countries to travel to Mexico City looking for a Jewish spouse.

Guatemala is a country approximately the size of Louisiana, with a population of 13.9 million, of whom about 280 families, or 800 individuals, are Jewish. One of the

biggest problems this small community is facing is how to preserve and grow the Jewish population.

“There are no new Jews moving to Guatemala,” said Jaime Russ, a senior member of the community. “And many of the young Jews move away because they don’t have good opportunities here and they are drawn to the culture in the United States.”

This exodus is mainly the result of the limited career options and limited “dating pool,” not because of environmental conditions. Guatemala offers a temperate climate and a stable political structure. It has a lengthy and rich Jewish culture dating back to the late 1800s, when many German Jews immigrated in response to the first signs of anti-Semitism and a stagnating European economy.

“Back then, there was a mix of professions: doctors, writers, businessmen and farmers,” Russ said. “Many of them couldn’t find Jewish mates in Guatemala even at that time, so about 40 percent went into mixed marriages, and many abandoned their Jewishness.”

Later, after World War I, there was another influx, with Guatemala absorbing many Jews who had been turned away from the United States when its quotas for immigrants were filled. And some single Jews came when they were turned away by Cuba, because Cuba would only allow married couples to immigrate there.

These people did not arrive with great wealth. Many were like the grandparents of Zelik Tenenbaum, who came to the Central American country from Poland with a single gold coin to their name in 1930. “They were tailors, and that’s how they started out,” Tenenbaum said.

The second generation of Jews began to contribute significantly to the economy of the country, managing textile mills and coffee plantations, and getting into real estate, construction and holding companies. During a brutal 36-year civil war that ended in 1996, many Jews left Guatemala, depleting the population. And now the third generation is gravitating more towards professional careers and studying in the United States, not wanting to return to their homeland.

“I have four daughters,” the 42-year-old Tenenbaum said, “and it is important to me that they marry Jewish men so that they can continue with our traditions. We take them to the United States and other Latin American countries for them to meet Jewish boys and girls. We want them to have a strong Jewish identity. We are working with the Joint Distribution Committee to bring Jews from other countries here. But looking forward – it’s tough.”

Guatemalan Jews have created a strong sense of community and freely practice their faith. Ninety-eight percent of the population lives in Guatemala City, where there are two temples, the Sephardic, with about 180 members, and the Ashkenazic, with about 200 members. Rabbi Richard Kaufman, who is originally from Uruguay, serves the two temples.

“Both temples work together to be a united Jewish community,” Jaime Russ said. “Both are a mix of Orthodox and Conservative – the food is Kosher, we celebrate all the holidays – if one temple has a program, the whole community becomes involved.”

The Guatemalan Jewish community is one large family, agrees Marcelo Acebrud, executive director of the Comunidad Judia Guatemalteca. “We may have different political and religious beliefs, but we are still one family. We celebrate together, we mourn together, everyone respects one another,” he said. “We are very proud of Jewish projects, and we are lucky to have men with vision.”

One such man with vision is Joey Habie, a businessman who is leading the construction of Har Carmel, which, if it were being built in the U.S., would be called a planned community.

“A trust fund was created by the Jewish community and 150 acres of real estate was purchased just 25 minutes outside of Guatemala City for \$1.25 million,” Habie said. “We are building housing, a synagogue, a community center, soccer fields, a park . . . this will be a far-sighted project.”

There will be 200 lots of 10,000 square feet each sold at \$25,000 per lot with five years to pay at no interest.

“We expect 250 people will live here – half the lots are already sold – some will be here full-time, some will have vacation homes. There will be senior housing so that seniors can live together in a Jewish environment,” he said.

Talent from within the community will be evident in all aspects of this project, just as the community joins together to look after its members in other ways, such as employment and health issues, Acesbrud says.

Although their community is small, the Jews in Guatemala make a contribution in more ways than just as part of the economy. Jews have been elected to high-level positions in the government, such as the Guatemalan Congress, and they serve in many government offices.

“Jews are respected in Guatemala. We participate in the political and civic arenas,” Acesbrud says. “There are four million evangelical Christians in Guatemala, but there is no problem with anti-Semitism. It’s a very integrated society – everyone participates at every level.”

Habie’s community of Har Carmel will provide a hub for the Jewish population that is also a safe haven with state-of-the-art security linked to local law enforcement.

“These are normal precautions in today’s world,” says Habie. “Security is a world-wide issue.”

Har Carmel is attracting American Jews who are building vacation homes, and Jews from Argentina who are fleeing the economic crisis in that country. It is beginning to look like the project will fulfill its goal to help build up the Jewish community in Guatemala.

With that prospect, Zelik Tenenbaum’s four daughters will hopefully find husbands and settle down in their homeland to preserve the Jewish traditions and it will no longer feel, as their father says, “like we are the last of the Mohicans.”

*(The author can be reached at 424 Main Street, Suite 622, Buffalo, NY 14202 or < jeffrey@jeffreymfreedman.com> His photos can be viewed at <www.freedmanphotos.com>.)*

# One of a Special People

By Gershom Sizomu

I am the spiritual leader of the Abayudaya (Jews) in Uganda, Africa. Our number is small, but we are a strong, spiritual and deeply religious Jewish community. There are more than 600 of us, although our numbers have dwindled from several thousand.

Born in 1969, I am 34 years old. My wife, Tzipporah, and I have brought our two young children with us on my 5-year journey through rabbinical school here in Los Angeles. We are far from our home. In 1919, Shimei (Semei) Kakungulu, the founder of our community, was a military general. After reading the Bible, he abandoned his military service, broke away from the Imperial British East African Company, where he served as a local governor of the eastern region, and rejected ongoing missionary efforts still prevalent in our country.

Shimei circumcised himself, his children, and the males of our tribe. He started strict observance of Shabbat every Saturday. More than 3,000 of his followers -- our previous generation -- celebrated Jewish festivals, observed fasts and began complete adherence to kashrut, as written in the Five Books of Moses. When I was only 2 years old, Idi Amin Dada, legendary for his cruelty and corruption, grabbed political power and the presidency at gunpoint. Between 1971 and 1979, Amin ordered us to stop our religious observance and warned us against calling ourselves Jews. He gave us three alterna-



tives: convert to Islam or Christianity, become unaffiliated, or face public execution.

While many of our people succumbed to the first alternative and converted, my family and several

other families continued to observe Shabbat and the other mitzvot in secret. Most often, we held services in bedrooms, where we would worship in whispers to our God. In 1989 at the age of 20, I was arrested with three fellow Jews. We were caught mobilizing our youth to learn about Judaism and the Hebrew language, and we were also rebuilding the foundation of our main synagogue, which had been destroyed during Amin's regime. We suffered at the hands of local Christian and Muslim government administrators, who were not at all interested in the existence of a Jewish community.

To be Jewish in Uganda we must withstand many levels of intimidation, oppression and abuse. We face restricted access to social services owned or managed by Christians and Muslims. But Uganda is not our only challenge. I do not look Jewish in the eyes of the international Jewish community and I am frequently asked, "How did you become Jewish?" and "Who converted you?" A beit din (rabbinical court) of Conservative rabbis performed "mass conversions" for our community members to bring us officially into the Jewish world family in February 2002.

When I'm weak from my Yom Kippur fast, I realize I am a fragile being, but my God lives forever and ever. I look forward to every Shabbat, which brings meaning, joy, comfort and spiritual restoration into my life for 26 hours. Communal Pesach seders and celebrations of every holiday from Shavuot and Sukkot to bar and bat mitzvot connect me at once to the past, present and future of the Jewish people.

I will forever walk in the path of Torah and identify with the holy

traditions of Judaism passed down from one generation to another. I will work hard to ensure that Judaism continues for the sake of maintaining an even stronger bond between me and my God, who is most high. He is the creator of space and all its mysteries, world architect, the source of life, and a permanent force behind nature and cosmic order. Although I have faced life-threatening dangers during my 34 years as a Jew in Uganda, I am also one of a special people—the Jewish people—who have resisted many centuries of hatred and oppression and continue to say shalom to the world.

*(Gershom Sizomu, leader of the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda, received his bachelor's degree at the Islamic University in Uganda and is currently studying at Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies of the University of Judaism. This article is excerpted from I Am Jewish: Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl, by Ruth and Judea Pear [Jewish Lights Publishing 2004] which contains reflections from 146 well-known and not-so-well-known Jews).*

## OPINION

### Daydreaming at the Maccabi Games

By Karen Primack

As you probably know, the Maccabi Games are a 20-year-old series of competitions in many sports with all Jewish athletes, sponsored by JCCs and other Jewish facilities across the US and around the world. For the first time since it was founded, the Games were held in the Washington, DC, area in August (shortly before the "real" Olympics in Athens) and I was able to attend several events.

The opening ceremonies were impressive, as 39 delegations of athletes and coaches marched at an arena with 10,000 spectators. Most were from the United States, but competitors also came from Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Australia, Great Britain, Poland, and Israel.

There was an emotional tribute to the 11 Israeli athletes killed at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, featuring the daughter of one of the athletes. And the crowds' support for the State of Israel was touching, with the heartfelt singing of *Hatikvah*, the enthusiastic appreciation of the entertainment by Israeli Scouts, and the wild cheers as the Israeli athletes marched in.

To my "Kulanu eyes," the only thing missing was color. Oh, the teams' uniforms were colorful, and the huge Mexican hats were distinctive. But with rare exception, skin color was white.

I couldn't help daydreaming about future Maccabi game in a more-perfect world with Jewish Tutsi basketball players from Rwanda and Burundi, Jewish runners from Uganda and South Africa and Ghana, Jewish table tennis stars from China, and Jewish soccer (football) stars from Latin America. Perhaps they would be living in their native countries, or perhaps in Israel or another country, but in this more-perfect dream world they would be well-educated, practicing, recognized Jews of many colors and many exciting abilities!

# LETTERS TO KULANU

## Kulanu Newsletter Is Read in Prison

I love receiving the Kulanu newsletter. I like learning about communities around the world. And it has been really helpful in countering anti-Semitism here in prison. A lot of African American inmates convert to a pseudo-Islam like the Nathan of Islam or Five Percent Nation, which both are extremely Judeo-phobic. They claim that European Jews aren't "real Jews," that the original Hebrews were all black, and that white Jews are all racists and "imposters." I've been able to show the newsletter to some guys who had been hearing this talk from other inmates, and the solidarity between Israeli, American, and African Jews – especially the pictures – helped to make them less likely to swallow such stories. So I appreciate that.

(Name and location withheld)

## Igbo Appreciation

I was a Christian pastor; now I am a Jew. I belong to the Beith Knesseth Siyah Israel synagogue, Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria. I earn my living as a transporter. I have worshipped and worked with Drs. Davidson, Hudes, and Mr. Evan Green. I must commend the initiators of this programme which is helping Igbo people to become real Israelites. You are holy people.

Ernest Obidike "Moshe" Mbanefo

Umuolum, Anambra State, Nigeria

(Editor's note: Kulanu facilitated visits by Drs. Jeff Davidson and Karen Hudes, who were traveling to Nigeria for the World Bank. Evan Green of Canada visited on his own while in Nigeria on business. The grand initiator is Remy Ilona, who coordinates the aspiring Jewish communities near Abuja.)

## A Pleasant Surprise

"Life is full of surprises and not just unpleasant ones" has always been my motto, and it was just very recently that I once more renewed my belief in this attitude.

I became interested in the book *Jews In Places You Never Thought Of* by Karen Primack when I first saw it on the Kulanu website. I have always been interested in ethnic and cultural diversity within the Jewish people as well as in dispersed Jewish communities around the globe, and a great part of my spare time in the past few years has been devoted to reading almost anything and everything available on the subject.

Needless to say, I was eagerly impatient while waiting the whole six weeks it took the book to arrive in Athens from the U.S.A. It was a Tuesday afternoon that I saw the thick yellow envelope laying at my front door. "Love at first sight" would be the right words to describe

my reaction to it. As soon as I read the contents I realized that everything I have for so long been interested in was there.

It was only at 5:30 in the morning I realized I had spent the entire night sleepless reading it. In my opinion the book is a gem. Written in a simple, understandable, and simultaneously concise way, it is a real "guide to the perplexed" (the first of its kind as far as I know) regarding the origin, history, and whereabouts of various dispersed Jewish communities all over the world -- of "Jews by choice" and groups of Jewish ancestry.

I strongly believe it's a book every Jew should read, since it shows the spiritual, theological, cultural, and social strength of Judaism through centuries of hardship and struggle -- and it also proves beyond any doubt that Judaism is still a religion that is spiritually, socially, psychologically, and emotionally attractive for a considerable number of people around the globe.

Another element that makes this book exceptional is the fact that it does not just quote historic, cultural, and social information; it also contains personal narratives from people who visited the communities and groups described in it.

It's definitely a book that could only be written by people belonging to an organization like Kulanu, and in that perspective it's the ideal book for those involved in Jewish outreach action and members and leaders of Jewish youth movements and community centers. What should perhaps be further done is a second part or an update since so many steps have been taken in the past ten years regarding almost all the groups and communities described in the book.

My thoughts and feelings regarding the interest of the book were proven the first time I introduced it to some Jewish and non-Jewish friends.

"Jews in Africa and Asia? You must be kidding." "Wow, is there such a book? I have never seen anything like that before." "Where did you get it from?" "Are these people really Jewish?" "I really have to buy and read it myself." These were some of the spontaneous reactions of the people who saw it.

Listening to my friends' comments, I started thinking about the sentimental consequences this book could have and the feelings and thoughts it could incite regarding "who is a Jew" or "what does a Jew look and behave like" -- generally the Jewish cultural, social and ethnic identity.

Simultaneously I realized that the book was a real statement against racism. It gives a clear message to everyone that racialistic perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs are far away from the spirit of Judaism both as a religion and culture.

Pantelis Katzolis

Athens, Greece

## PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE

*Black Judaism – Story of a Movement* by **James E. Landy**, came out in 2002, published by University of Chicago Press.

Kulanu received several scanned partial news articles by email from Sadok Yacobi, spiritual leader of Bene Yacob synagogue in the Guntur district of Andhrapradesh, India. The articles report on the police arrest in late August of eight suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists who had planned to attack Americans visiting Andhra Pradesh and the little-known Jewish community in Guntur, as well as to incite communal tension through a series of explosions during a Hindu festival in Hyderabad. According to one of the articles, a group of 100 burqa-clad women forcibly entered the police commissioner's conference hall, claiming the arrests were illegal.

Details of the forcible impoverishment and expulsion of Iraq's 2600-year-old Jewish community in the late 1940s and early 1950s are reviewed in **Edwin Black's** article in the October 14 *Washington Jewish Week*, "Farhud Left Iraqi Jews Dispossessed." The article is adapted from Black's recently-released book on 7000 years of Iraqi history, *Banking on Baghdad* (Wiley).

**Rachel Pomerance's** October 14 JTA article, "Gadhafi Courting Libyan Jews," reports on the Libyan leader's invitation to some of his country's erstwhile Jews now living in Italy to meet in Tripoli. Most of Libya's 40,000 Jews fled to Israel in 1948, and the remaining 6000 were expelled after the 1967 Six Day War. The Libyan government now appears willing to compensate Jews for expropriated communal property.

(Continued on page 12)



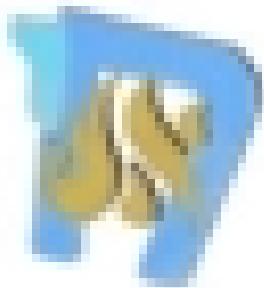
## AISH CHAI: Life Comes Out of the Fire of the Inquisition

After 500 years, the resurgence of interest in Judaism by those descendants of *Anousim* who were forcibly converted to Christianity in Spain and Portugal is nothing short of a miracle. Since hundreds who did not submit were burned at the stake in *autos-de-fe*, some have likened this Return to life reviving out of the ashes.

So we were delighted when we came across a certain creation by Deborah Potash Brodie of Dor L'Dor. Measuring three-quarters of an inch, it is a lapel pin fashioned of Sterling silver with gold plate, depicting in Hebrew letters *Chai* (Life) coming out of *Aish* (fire). We are now offering this pin for \$30 at

the Kulanu Boutique (see page 11 of this newsletter or go to <[www.KulanuBoutique.com](http://www.KulanuBoutique.com)>.

We thought that wearing this pin would be the perfect way for *Anousim* and Friends of *Anousim* to honor and identify with this chapter in Jewish history that is both tragic and hopeful. Kulanu will use the funds raised through the sale of this pin for our education programs to assist descendants of *Anousim*.



## Jews of Goa (cont.)

(Continued from page 5)

his sister to the Tribunal of the Inquisition, he was buried in a traditional Jewish manner.

As a token of appreciation for his excellent services rendered to the senior officials of the colony and the military, Dr. De Orta was given one of the major islands of what later developed into Bombay City. He constructed a *quinta* (manor house) there in 1564. The English, upon acquiring possession of Bombay Island from the Portuguese, established themselves at his *quinta* and bestowed upon it the name of Bombay Castle. It had commanding views of the harbor and town, as well as re-enforced fortifications and supplies. Bombay Castle would remain the residence of the Governor of Bombay for more than one hundred years, until the growth of the city and the need to change the image of the British in India required the residence to be moved in 1757 to new quarters on Apollo Street. Bombay Castle has recently undergone major restoration by Captain Christopher Chamberlain of the World Ship Trust. Bombay Castle has grown to become the INS Angre naval base, which includes the Naval Barracks, the Naval Dockyard and the Headquarters of the Western Naval Command. This structure is closely related to the growth of Bombay as a commercial and maritime center.

At the persistence and insistence of Francis Xavier, the Inquisition was instituted in Goa in 1561 and lasted until 1574, then restarted in 1579 and lasted till 1821. Up to that time the Catholic priests and missionaries were often involved in violent acts of converting the Hindus and Muslims to the Christian faith. With the institution of the Inquisition, they turned their full wrath on the Marrano Jewish community of Goa. They learned that the sister of Dr Garcia De Orta was a "Marrano" practicing Judaism and brought her before the tribunal,

(Continued on page 10)

## Reforging Chinese/British Links in London (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

China. Mr. Hutt showed me the scroll of the Chinese version of the Diamond Sutra (printed in 868), the earliest dated printed document of the world, and many other fine Chinese collections of his section.

What a satisfying, enjoyable visit!

### Synagogues

The Bevis Marks Synagogue in London is the oldest synagogue in England still in regular use. Beautifully built with a distinguishing Sephardic style, it opened in 1701. I was given a personal tour and met a London celebrity, Aubrey Rose, who was giving a Jewish tour for a reporter from Germany. I took some pictures and brought back a few postcards, as one of our PhD candidates at Nanjing University is doing his thesis on Jews in England.

As a Chinese scholar studying the history of Jewish Diaspora in China, I felt grateful and privileged to attend, and even more so when I was invited by the rabbi to speak, at the Shabbat service at New North London Synagogue. In a very short time, I explained the early ties between the London Jews and China. History shows that Jews from London are actually the first group of Jews who came to do business and live in Modern China. Moreover, most of members who belonged to the early Jewish communities established in Chinese cities such as Hong Kong and Shanghai around 1900 were subjects of Great Britain. It is such a link that makes me feel so close to the London Jews.

Twenty Jewish children from Chernobyl also attended the service. Later, I was told that the congregation brings in 20 children from surviving families of the Chernobyl disaster for two months each summer in order to give them a chance to experience a Jewish life. With shining eyes, they sang a very beautiful Jewish song together. It was quite touching.

In addition to my wonderful hosts, I was honored to meet a number of fascinating people, including Dame Jessica Rawson, warden of Merton College, who is an expert on Chinese art, Melanie Phillips, a well-known columnist for *The Daily Telegraph*, and Stephen Feinberg, director of national outreach education at the US Holocaust Museum. All provided enlightening conversations.

Several newspapers, such as *The Guardian* and *The Jewish Chronicle*, interviewed me for potential future articles. I left England filled with plans for future connections between the two countries. During the visit, I had a chance to brief the LJCC on our various Judaic Studies programs. Clive Marks, President of the LJCC, pledged that the organization will do its best to help transfer funding for our Jewish projects. Trudy Gold and Jerry Gotel, director of Overseas program of the LJCC, held many discussions with me about a possible seminar on Holocaust Education to be held in China in August 2005 with the support from the Task Force of the European Union on Holocaust Studies. The LJCC is also planning to send another delegation to visit China in 2005.

I cannot thank the people I met enough for their friendship and the ways in which they made my visit so enjoyable. I would never have experienced this overwhelming joy had I not undertaken the field of Jewish Studies -- and it reinforced my firm belief that I truly made a right choice!

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HANUKKAH



# Jewish Life in Uganda Mitzvah Tour & Wildlife Safari

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- Best of all, make a personal connection with our friends in this remarkable African Jewish community!

**Airfare, travel insurance, gratuities and drinks not included**

Suggested Itinerary Subject to Change

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## Jews in Goa (cont.)

*(Continued from page 9)*

upon whose decree she was burnt alive at the stake. Learning from her testimony that Dr. Garcia De Orta had been a practicing Jew they exhumed and burnt his bones. Prior to the Inquisition, Dr. Jeronimo Dias, a Marrano Jew, was strangled and burnt in 1543 because his views conflicted with those of the Christian missionaries.

Besides the persecution of the Marrano Jewish community through the Instrument of the Inquisition, the priests and prelate of the Portuguese Catholic Church confiscated all Jewish property and converted synagogues to churches and probably destroyed all historical records of their deeds. Recent interest among people of the Christian faith in Goa to develop a bridge and reconcile with their past have started to shed more light on the history of the Jewish community in this area. Several synagogues have been known to exist in the Goa area, but they have been converted into churches or left to decay. Pictures of some of these were sent to me by Mr. Cyril Fernandez, a Goa based journalist, who is trying to research the history of Jewish settlement in that area and single-handedly generate interest in the heritage of a long lost and forgotten community of Marrano Jews who lived in Goa.



*Chapel of Our Lady of Camdelaria Church on Divar Island, once probably a synagogue*

Four hundred years after the death of Dr. Garcia De Orta, the Portuguese Colony of Goa issued a Postage Stamp in honor of his contribution to medical science, and Portugal has a 200 Escudo Coin with the picture of Dr. Garcia De Orta on it. How conveniently have the Portuguese forgotten the crimes that they have committed against this great Portuguese Marrano Jew and his family, and others like him, during the three hundred years of the Inquisition.

# The Kulanu Boutique

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

**Aish Chai Lapel Pin**, sterling silver and gold plate. *Proceeds benefit descendants of Anousim.*

**Under One Canopy: Readings in Jewish Diversity**, a 162-page book of poems, essays, stories, and songs by Sephardi, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, African, and Asian Jews. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu.*

**Jews in Places You Never Thought Of**, a 305-page hardback which includes descriptions of personal interactions with returning and emerging Jewish groups around the world; over 30 photographs. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu.*

**Shalom Everybody Everywhere!** acclaimed recording of the unique sounds of the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda. Hear traditional Jewish liturgy and new compositions set to African melodies and rhythms, in English, Hebrew, Luganda, and Swahili. *Proceeds benefit Abayudaya.*

**Hand-crocheted Ugandan Kippot**, dual-colored in two shapes, skullcap and pill-box. *Proceeds benefit the Abayudaya.*

**Hand-Woven Ugandan Tallitot**, white with colored stripes, bag included. *Proceeds benefit the Abayudaya.*

**Challah Covers** from Ghana, very colorful with fine machine embroidery. *Proceeds benefit the Sefwi Wiawso Jewish community.*

**Hand-woven Bnei Menashe Tallitot**, white with black or blue stripes. *Proceeds benefit the Bnei Menashe.*

**Hand-crocheted Bnei Menashe Kippot** (skullcap shape only), muted colors. *Proceeds benefit the Bnei Menashe..*

**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.*

**Make Joy Not War**, Alula Tzadik's CD of Ethiopian and traditional Jewish songs with a World Beat. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu.*

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	Number	Cost Each	Shipping/handling	Total
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<i>Under One Canopy: Readings in Jewish Diversity</i>	_____	\$15.00	\$4 in US & Can. (\$2 each additional)	_____
<i>Jews in Places You Never Thought Of</i>	_____	29.50	\$5 in US & Can. (\$2 each additional)	_____
<i>Shalom Everybody, Everywhere!</i> CD	_____	15.00	\$3 in US, \$4 in Can. (\$2 each additional)	_____
Cassette SPECIAL SALE!!	_____	7.00		
<i>Hand-crocheted Kippot of the Abayudaya:</i> pillbox-shape various colors (sorry, no returns!)	_____	15.00	\$4 (ea. addl. \$1)	_____
<i>Challah Covers from Ghana.</i> (for 12, \$20 each and \$10 shipping)	_____	25.00	\$4 (ea. addl. \$2)	_____
<i>Multi-colored tallit of the Abayudaya</i>	_____	100.00	\$6 in US and Canada	_____
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<i>Kippah of the Bnei Menashe</i>	_____	15.00	\$4 (ea. addl. \$1)	_____
<i>Abayudaya: The Jews of Uganda (List price \$75)</i>	_____	52.50	\$7 in US and Canada (\$3 each additional)	_____
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# Publications (cont.)

(Continued from page 8)

An October article, "Medicis and Jews," by **Joseph Hoffman** on the *Jerusalem Post* Service tells of Edward Goldberg's Medici Archives Project. Medici family archives (1569-1743) comprise 3 million items. Goldberg conceived of organizing the Jewish-related items (about 5 percent of the total) while a graduate student in Florence, Italy, in the 1970s; the project was launched in 1993 and is explained at [www.medicis.org](http://www.medicis.org).

**Dina Kraft's** October 7 article for JTA, "Native Americans Visit Israel," reported on a reception in the Israeli president's sukkah which a group of American Indians attended in full regalia. Their trip to Auschwitz and Israel enabled them to connect with the Jewish people, whom they see as sharing a similar history to their own.

**Steve Israel** wrote a September 30 *Texas Jewish Post* article, "She'll Help Others Return to Judaism, Too," about Yaffah DaCosta's immigration to Israel as an *Anous* and her work with the Crypto Sephardic Union.

The September 29 *Jerusalem Post* published **Kelly Hartog's** article "Out of Africa," a lengthy piece about the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda, including an interview with Gershom Sizomu, their spiritual leader studying rabbinics in Los Angeles.

In a September 5 *Ha'aretz* article, "Crypto-Jews Come Out of the Closet," **Assaf Patrick** discusses the 19-member delegation of *Bnai Anousim* who visited Israel and delivered a megillah declaring their support for Israel to Natan Sharansky, minister for diaspora affairs.

In a September 3 online *Ha'aretz* article, **Daphana Berman's** "Dimona Hebrew Israelites Turn to US Black Leaders for Aid" reports on a visit by a delegation of high-profile African American leaders from the US to Dimona. The Hebrew Israelite community had sought the delegation's support for a housing project.

In the August 27 edition of the *NY Jewish Week*, **Shmuel Steinberg** wrote about NYC's Sheba Film Festival in "Harlem's Ethiopian Renaissance." The festival featured four films in Hebrew and Amharic (with English subtitles) about Ethiopian life in Israel.

An August 15 JTA story by **Larry Luxner**, "Small Cadre of Puerto Ricans Starts Journey Toward Judaism," discusses a group of 30 *Bnai Anousim* on that island studying Judaism on the Internet.

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