

Introduction

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This volume presents a selection of articles and chapters published over the past several decades by Irene Eber, the pioneering scholar in the second half of the twentieth century in the field of Jews and China. While Eber has expanded on these themes and topics in her many publications over the past fifty years, each of the essays in this book presents a unique entrée into the subject. What makes this collection valuable is that it represents the full range of the history of Jews in dialogue with China and China in dialogue with Jewish culture.

Irene Eber, who died April 10, 2019, was the Louis Frieberg Professor of East Asian Studies, emeritus, in the Department of East Asian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she taught Chinese history and culture for thirty years (1969–1999). A brief account of her life will place the scholarship of this remarkable person into context. Born in Halle, Germany, into the Geminder family in 1929, Irene and her family were deported by the Nazis to Mielec, Poland, in 1938.¹ There she attended the Bais Yaakov School for religious girls until the family was incarcerated in the Dębica ghetto. There they hid in an attic to avoid deportation to Auschwitz.² Irene, at age thirteen, disobeyed her father and decided to escape from the ghetto. Digging under a fence, she took a train back to Mielec, but the Polish inhabitants of her former hometown refused to help her until a Polish refugee family hid her in a chicken coop for almost two years.³ Her father was shot in a

work camp; her mother, a typist, worked in the office at Oskar Schindler's camp, where she and Irene's sister, Lore, survived the war.⁴

After the war, Irene, by then age fifteen, was reunited with her mother and sister, and the three went to Germany, where they first stayed with her mother's sister. Somewhat later, Irene left and went to several displaced persons camps in the American zone⁵ until she was able to make her way to New York, where she found a job, attended night school, and learned English. In 1955, she earned her B.A. in Asian studies at Pomona College; in 1961, her MA at the State University of California, Sacramento; and in 1966, her PhD in Asian studies at Claremont Graduate University.⁶ Before she arrived at Hebrew University, where she served several terms as chair of the Department for East Asian Studies, Eber taught at Whittier College. During her tenure at Hebrew University, she was periodically a visiting professor or scholar at the University of Michigan, Wesleyan University, and Harvard University.⁷ The recipient of major grants, Eber had served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Sino-Western Communications*, *Moresheet Israel: A Journal for the Study of Judaism*, and *Zionism and Eretz-Israel*; had been the curator and consultant to the exhibitions *Jewish Communities in China* (Widener Library, Harvard University) and *The Jews of Kaifeng* (Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, Tel Aviv); and organized and/or chaired numerous conferences and workshops, such as *The Bible in Modern China and Confucianism: The Dynamics of Tradition* (both at the Hebrew University).

Eber was the author or editor of some eleven books and published more than sixty-six scholarly articles and numerous book reviews and introductions, as well as her own short stories.⁸ Her most recent book, *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, 1933–1947: A Selection of Documents* (Goettingen, 2018), presents a groundbreaking documentary history of the approximately twenty thousand Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who survived World War II by finding refuge in Shanghai. This collection of almost two hundred sources—originally composed in German, English, Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, and Chinese—attests to the efforts of these Jews, made stateless by the Nazis, to sustain their material needs as well as their community and culture in the face of poverty, displacement, and political adversity. The documents, culled from Eber's collection of some two thousand items, show how these Jews received help from Jewish aid committees in Shanghai and international aid organizations, how they were perceived by the Chinese

and Japanese authorities, and the reactions of Nazi officials in Shanghai. With this documentary evidence, Eber shows the complexity of this historical moment and prepares the ground for solid, fact-based future scholarship on this fascinating period.

In *Voices from Shanghai: Jewish Exiles in Wartime China* (Chicago, 2008), Eber collects and translates a first-time selection of poetry, fiction, diaries, memoirs, and letters written and published in Yiddish, German, and Hebrew by some of the Jews who took refuge in Shanghai from the Nazis. This collection gives evidence of the creative and cultural expression of these European Jews and attests to the role that literature and culture play as modes of human survival under the direst circumstances. Eber's other books include her major study *Wartime Shanghai and Jewish Refugees from Central Europe: Survival, Co-existence, and Identity in a Multi-ethnic City* (Berlin, 2012) and *Chinese and Jews: Encounters Between Cultures*, which came out in Hebrew (Jerusalem, 2002) and in English (Valentine Mitchell, 2008).

Eber's books extend beyond the history of Jews in Shanghai and beyond the twentieth century. Her definitive biography of the translator into Chinese of the Hebrew Bible, *The Jewish Bishop and the Chinese Bible, S. I. J. Schereschewsky, 1831–1906* (Leiden, 1999), was also published in Chinese translation in Taiwan (2003), and she coedited a collection, *Bible in Modern China: The Literary and Intellectual Impact* (Nethetal, 1999), of which the Chinese edition appeared in Hong Kong (2003). She edited a volume on *Confucianism: The Dynamics of Tradition* (New York, 1986), translated from the German Richard Wilhelm's *Lectures on the I Ching: Constancy and Change* (Princeton, 1979), and wrote on modern Chinese authors in *Voices from Afar: Modern Chinese Writers on Oppressed Peoples and Their Literature* (Ann Arbor, 1980).

Martin Buber Werkausgabe, Eber's volume in German on Martin Buber's writings on Chinese philosophy and literature (Gueterslohe, 2014), was groundbreaking, as was her searing account of her life as a young girl in Poland during World War II, *The Choice* (New York, 2004), which was translated into German (Munich, 2007) and Chinese (Beijing, 2013). As her books demonstrate, this prolific, pioneering scholar achieved international distinction by introducing readers in English, Hebrew, German, and Chinese to the various intersections and cross-pollination of Jewish and Chinese cultures.

Jews in China: Cultural Conversations, Changing Perceptions stands as Irene Eber's twelfth book. It makes available to teachers, students, and scholars, as well as to general readers an overview of the range and depth of her work in the field of Jews and China and presents a sampling from Eber's extraordinary scholarly career. The fourteen essays published in this volume were selected from her sixty-six articles published in journals and anthologies between 1972 and 2010. Eber organized this volume according to the overarching theme of cultural translation, which she places in a historical context.

The book's three sections move from historical context and narrative to translation of classical or traditional texts in both Judaism and Daoism to the reciprocal translation of modern literature, both Chinese and Jewish. The first section, "Overview," presents three essays that set out chronologically the history of Jews in China over a period of almost a millennium. The first of the three essays in this section, "Overland and by Sea: Eight Centuries of the Jewish Presence in China," describes the diversity and distinctiveness of Jewish communities in China from the first arrival of Jews in that nation in the late eighth or early ninth century. Jewish cotton traders from Persia via India traveled the Silk Road or came by sea and established a community in the northern city of Kaifeng, where they intermarried with the native population yet maintained their Jewish religion and identity for almost nine hundred years, building a temple for worship, scribing Torah scrolls and other liturgical texts in Hebrew, and recording their communal history in Chinese on stone stelae and in genealogical books. Acknowledged and tolerated by the emperor and local governments, these Jewish families produced sons who either became merchants or entered the government. In the seventeenth century, Jesuit missionaries discovered the Kaifeng Jews and recorded their presence in words, drawings, and rubbings. In the nineteenth century, the community experienced a decline through their Sinification, the destruction of their temple by floods, the death of the last rabbi, and the lack of continued knowledge of Hebrew. A Protestant bishop purchased the stone stelae, inscribed with the community's history in 1489 and in 1663, and preserved them. While previous scholars have documented this moment as the end of the Kaifeng Jewish community, Eber argues more subtly that Sinification was not a destructive erasure of Judaism in this population. Rather, the Jews' adaptation to Chinese culture by taking on Chinese names and not, it seems, establishing charitable societies, as was conventional among Jewish communities elsewhere in the world,

was a case of true intercultural intermingling and transformation. These Jews became Chinese Jews through their lineage in a “family-centered identity” (p. 243) and in the correspondences or similarities between Chinese philosophies and folk practices and Judaism. Integrated into Chinese society, these Jews nonetheless remained Jews, albeit living a new kind of Judaism—a truly Chinese Judaism.

With equal nuance, Eber examines the “mosaic” of Jewish communities in the international city of Shanghai, focusing on the Baghdadi Jewish community, whose members flourished as merchants of opium, as bankers, and as real estate moguls in Shanghai from the mid-nineteenth century through 1949. She also discusses the larger Russian Jewish community in Shanghai, who arrived in 1904 and in 1917, following, respectively, the Russo-Japanese War and the Russian October Revolution, many of them having come south from Harbin. She then focuses on the German and Austrian Jews who fled Hitler and found a haven in Shanghai starting in 1938 and on the Polish Yiddish-speaking Jews, both secular and religious, who arrived in Shanghai from Lithuania and Japan. In this brief essay, Eber shows the complexity of the interaction between the various groups of Jews in Shanghai, their religious lives, their communal organizations, their secular entertainment and publishing, and the range of ways they survived economically under the Japanese military rule of Shanghai during the Pacific War in World War II.

“Chinese Jews and Jews in China: Kaifeng–Shanghai,” the second essay, develops in more detail Eber’s ideas about how the centrality in Chinese culture of family identity, rather than communal identity, influenced the Kaifeng Jews and transformed their Judaism into a Chinese Judaism. This essay, first published in 2015, brings the questions of the identity of these Chinese Jews into the twenty-first century and examines the relationship between current Kaifeng residents of Jewish lineage and Jews of the United States and Israel. Similarly, Eber revisits the topic of the Shanghai Jewish communities and their organizations, institutions, and cultural manifestations to expand in greater detail the broad strokes of her earlier essay. She also considers Judaism in China today, in Hong Kong and Shanghai.

The third essay in the “Overview” section, “Flight to Shanghai: 1938–1939 and Its Larger Context,” places the initial arrival of the Jewish refugees from the Nazis into the context of Shanghai and its recent history. The essay focuses on Jewish immigration to Shanghai before 1938, on the German interests in East Asia from 1935 to 1939, on the “Shanghai scene” into which the refugee

Jews from Germany and Austria arrived in 1938–1939, and on the ambivalent responses by the Japanese, the Chinese, and the British to the arrival of some twenty thousand stateless Jews. This first section, “Overview,” moves from a large-scale outline of the historical picture of Jews in different regions of China over almost a millennium to a focused analysis of two crucial years before the start of World War II.

Section 2, “Translating the Ancestors,” contains three essays on textual and literary translation of classical texts of Chinese literature and the Hebrew Bible. The first of these, “A Critical Survey of Classical Chinese Literary Works in Hebrew,” reviews the century of translations of Chinese literature into modern Hebrew since the revival and development of modern Hebrew starting in the nineteenth century. Eber notes that many of the earlier translations came into Hebrew through intermediary languages, such as Russian, English, or German, but that a number of more recent translations have been made directly from the Chinese by “a small and dedicated group of Hebrew speakers and native-born Israelis” who learned Chinese at universities in Israel, Europe, and China (p. 302). The popularity of translations into Hebrew of Chinese writings grew after China and Israel established diplomatic relations in 1991, tourism ensued, and media images of China expanded through television and, more recently, the internet. Eber notes two of the many problems of translating from Chinese into Hebrew—how the convention of omitting diacritical vowels from modern Hebrew leads to mispronunciation of Chinese names and concepts and how and whether Hebrew translators have transliterated Chinese names and concepts according to the now obsolete Wade-Giles system or according to the current standard of pinyin. The essay then discusses the limited number of sources available in Hebrew on China, from the first history of China in Hebrew by S. M. Perlmann, *The Chinese* (1911), through the authoritative but now dated 1974 *Hebrew Encyclopedia*. Eber contrasts this paucity of historical sources with the plethora of translations made in the 1960s and 1970s from Russian and English of Mao Zedong’s writings, works about the Chinese Communist revolution and the Cultural Revolution, and a biography of Mao. Eber attributes this Israeli fascination with China’s then contemporary history to an interest in societal transformation that corresponded to the development in Israel of secularism and of the labor movement’s “socialist economic ethos,” as well as the success of the kibbutz movement. In subsequent decades, as

Israeli society changed, so too changed the interests of Hebrew readers of Chinese texts in translation.

Eber traces translations of classical Chinese philosophy into Hebrew back to 1937, with A. E. Aescoly's partial rendition from the German of the *Daode jing*, and Martin Buber's translation of another eight chapters, from either German or English, in 1942. Donald Leslie translated seventeen chapters directly from Chinese (1964), and Yuri Grause translated the complete text from Chinese into Hebrew in 1973. Eber compares Grause's 1971 translation with a more scholarly and literary translation by Daor and Ariel in 1981, as well as with a "mystically inclined" rendition by Ben-Mordekhai in 1996 and a comic book version by Saragusti in 1995. Turning to translations of the *Zhuangzi*, Eber comments on a selective translation of only the stories by Israeli novelist Yoel Hoffman (1977) and a more complete selection of entire chapters by Donald Leslie (1964). Her evaluation of the *Liezi* rates the annotated version by Dan Daor very highly. But she considers Leslie's 1969 scholarly translation of the Confucian text, the *Lunyu*, clumsy in style and questions his rendering of key Chinese terms, which distorts the concepts. These problems raise the question of how a translator can render "culture-specific philosophical concepts" without sacrificing the flexibility of meaning in the original language and imposing "Western philosophical assumptions." Eber praises Andrew Plaks's translation of the *Daxue* for its facing-page format of the Chinese with the Hebrew, its numbered sentences, and its interpretive notes. Eber is critical of the two translations into Hebrew of the *Yijing*—by Visman in 1983 and by Yuri Grause in 1993—because both fail to place the work into its centuries-long scholarly and philosophical context.

When Eber turns to Hebrew translations of Chinese fiction and poetry, she emphasizes the rather arbitrary selections of Chinese authors and the mixed success of translations. In the 1940s and 1950s, many works by a single author, Lin Yutang, were translated into Hebrew from the English as well as an autobiography of a woman soldier, Xie Bingying. After 1983, fiction by the eighteenth-century writer Shen Fu was translated directly from the Chinese into Hebrew by Dan Daor as well as a collection of short stories by famous May Fourth writers. Eber lauds these works as well as the renditions by Amira Katz, who translated some of these stories and other collections of short fiction by Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, and Feng Menglong. Both Daor and Katz translated classical and modern fiction, depending

on publishers' demands, and both translators evince sensitivity and effectiveness in transforming Chinese into readable idiomatic Hebrew. Eber is critical of the uneven quality of Hebrew translations of Chinese poetry, mostly from intermediary languages. Dov Sadan (Dov Stock), a founding scholar of Yiddish studies in Israel, translated the eighth-century classic poet Li Bai into Hebrew in 1930 with questionable results. Perhaps Stock translated Li Bai from the Yiddish translations by Meyer Shtiker (New York, 1926).⁹ In 1960, the Israeli poet Aharon Shabtai translated thirty-two Chinese poems, ranging from Li Bai and the ninth-century poet Du Mu to the eighteenth-century Manchu poet Nalan Shengde, alongside translations from the Japanese. Neither Stock nor Shabtai indicates what their source texts were—in other words, what intermediary translations of these poems they used for their Hebrew translations. More substantial selections of Chinese poems appeared in Hebrew translations by Ben-Zakai (1970) and Garin (1990), but Eber questions the choices and results of these works too. In contrast, verse translations of classical poetry of the Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.) directly from the Chinese by Yuri Grause (1977) and Dan Daor (2001) merit Eber's praise for their selection, poetic form, and sensitive choice of diction and phrasing in Hebrew that reflects the Chinese original. In Eber's judgment, the most significant translation into Hebrew is *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Plaks and Katz.

Eber concludes this essay by noting the three types of Hebrew translation that were under way at the writing of this essay in 2003: (1) reliable translations directly from the Chinese, (2) translations catering to fashionable notions of “the East,” and (3) informative translations of contemporary Chinese fiction. Although the “perfect translation” is impossible, Eber values the translations that she deems successful by those who know Chinese culture and, better yet, the language and who are able to bring Chinese philosophy, fiction, and poetry across into Hebrew in a sensitive and interpretive way.

In the other two essays in section 2, Eber turns our gaze to the first translation of the Hebrew Bible into Chinese by Samuel Isaac Joseph (S. I. J.) Schereschewsky, a Lithuanian Jew who converted to Christianity and became a Protestant missionary bishop in Shanghai. These two essays expand on previously unexamined aspects of the biography that Eber wrote about Schereschewsky, *The Jewish Bishop and the Chinese Bible: S. I. J. Schereschewsky, 1831–1906*.¹⁰ In “The Peking Translating Committee

and S. I. J. Schereschewsky's Old Testament" (1998) Eber examines the complexities of Protestant missionary Bible translations into Chinese and examines the mid-nineteenth-century Peking Translating Committee's rendering of the New Testament from the Greek into Mandarin, the spoken language of northern China, and Schereschewsky's Mandarin translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew. As the first translations from the Bible's original languages into spoken Chinese, these versions greatly expanded the readership of the Bible in China. The Translating Committee, which began its work in Peking in 1864, consisted of four missionaries (two British and two American) who were proficient in Chinese from having lived in China for years as well as a number of Chinese scholars who set the appropriate style and characters to keep the text appropriately accessible and understandable and who taught the missionaries about Chinese culture and language. The committee members worked harmoniously on drafting, criticizing, and revising the translation as it progressed. Because Schereschewsky was, by birth, a Jew from Lithuania who had achieved an advanced rabbinic education before he converted to Christianity in 1855, his colleagues on the committee assigned him the translation of the Old Testament. Supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, the committee took some ten years to complete the translation. The New Testament was published in 1872; the Old Testament appeared in 1874 and 1875. The Mandarin Bible was the most widely used in China for forty-five years. Eber examines the strategies and principles by which Schereschewsky translated the Hebrew text into an idiomatic and culturally accessible Chinese. He eschewed an incomprehensible literal translation for a translation that relied on Chinese idiom and included explanatory phrasing or explicitness where the Hebrew text was suggestive or implicit. Schereschewsky chose to transliterate the sound rather than transmit the meaning of proper names, but finding the right word for God in Chinese was problematic both theologically and pragmatically. Depending on the context, Schereschewsky varied the terms he used for the deity. Eber brilliantly argues that this interpretive mode of translation developed from Schereschewsky's knowledge of German biblical criticism as well as his yeshiva study of the great eleventh-century commentator on the Pentateuch, Rashi. That Rashi's interpretations, rendered into Chinese by a former Jew, would shape the translation of the Old Testament that would help convert Chinese people to Christianity is an astounding discovery.

Equally amazing is Eber's discussion of the controversy of how to translate the term *God* into Chinese, an argument that caused theological and political rifts among the Protestant missionaries in China. Eber brings to life the unsuccessful peace-making efforts of the Peking Translating Committee to establish an acceptable choice. Schereschewsky's challenge was more difficult, though, because the Hebrew Bible uses different names for God in different parts of the text. He managed to retain these differences, although not without causing controversy, because he had the final word on the Old Testament translation.

In "Translating the Ancestors: S. I. J. Schereschewsky's 1875 Chinese Version of Genesis" (1993), Eber examines more closely how Schereschewsky's Jewish background shaped his translation enterprise. A detailed biographical sketch shows how the orphaned boy's traditional Jewish education was set off by the *Haskalah*, or Jewish Enlightenment, which introduced Western education and culture to eastern European Jews, and by the government-sponsored rabbinical seminaries under the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, which taught secular alongside traditional subjects. In such a seminary in Zhitomir in Ukraine, Eber reasons, Schereschewsky likely read a Yiddish or Hebrew translation of the New Testament. In Breslau, he was influenced by a Jewish convert to Christianity, one Dr. Neumann, who may have introduced him to modern biblical criticism. In 1854, now in America, he converted, was ordained a deacon, and left for China in 1859. His involvement with the Peking Translating Committee began in 1864 and ended in 1875, after which Schereschewsky raised funds for and helped found St. John's University in Shanghai. He was elected as missionary bishop of Shanghai but became paralyzed in 1881 and spent his last twenty-one years revising his translation of the Bible and producing a new translation of the Bible into classical literary Chinese.

The essay continues by analyzing the relationship between vernacular Bible translation and the missionary's work and points out the special problems the translators into Chinese faced: the daunting literary heritage of China, the many vernacular languages within China, the divide between written and spoken Chinese, and the lower-class implications of the northern vernacular. Eber also examines more closely the invaluable role played in the Peking Translating Committee's translation project by the anonymous Chinese informants. Returning to her discussion of the term question, Eber focuses on the role of Schereschewsky's translation choices and his

interpretive notes on the translation and presents close readings of his renditions of the creation story in Genesis 1 as well as problems he encountered when translating God's covenant with Abraham that required circumcision (Genesis 17:10–11). The most vexed of the problems of translation, though, was that of the concept of the promised land in Genesis 12—that is, the biblical ideas of nation and peoplehood; in his translation, Schereschewsky avoided such political diction. Eber explains that Schereschewsky's notes "do not attempt to present theological interpretations, and they are not a vehicle for the Christian message in the OT. Rather, they exemplify the translator's concept of a Chinese Christianity 'trained on the soil and for the soil.'"¹¹ At the same time, Eber shows how the translator based his notes on the medieval Jewish commentary tradition of Rashi. Schereschewsky glossed details in the text and supplied the meanings of the Hebrew proper names that he chose to transliterate. These notes, Eber argues, bring the biblical text to life for the Chinese reader, anchoring it in concrete terms and imparting a distinctly Jewish scholarship into the beginnings of Chinese Protestant Christianity. Even more intriguing is Eber's statement that the translator's profound respect for Chinese civilization led to his belief that "becoming Christian did not mean becoming Westernized, that a genuinely Chinese Christianity was both possible and desirable."¹²

Section 3 of the collection, "Modern Literature in Mutual Translation," gathers eight essays that highlight the theme of cultural reciprocity between modern Jewish and Chinese cultures through the act of translation. In a book full of surprises, this section presents some of the most unexpected examples of cultural exchanges. Two essays here examine Yiddish poems written by Jews in China in the 1930s and 1940s: "Bridges Across Cultures: China in Yiddish Poetry" (2001) and "Meylekh Ravitch in China: A Travelogue of 1935" (2004). In "Bridges Across Cultures," Eber presents poems written by four Polish Yiddish poets during their sojourns in China in the 1930s and 1940s. Meylekh Ravitch (the pen name of Zekharia Khone Bergner, 1893–1976) traveled across China for six months in 1935 as an emissary for a Jewish organization that supported vocational training for Jews and as a representative of the Yiddish PEN Club of Warsaw, which he had helped found. He kept an extensive travel journal and wrote poems describing the suffering and poverty that he observed and heard about among Chinese people during this turbulent time. In contrast, six years later, E. Simkhoni (Simkha Elberg), Ya'akov Fishman, and Yosl Mlotek

arrived in Shanghai from Poland via Lithuania and then Kobe, Japan, in 1941 as stateless refugees from Hitler. Despite their own displacement, poverty, and immense losses, each of these poets wrote with compassion of the enormous suffering they observed among the Chinese in Shanghai—“coolies,” young prostitutes, street vendors, and beggars. Eber develops a more extended discussion of Meylekh Ravitch’s travelogue and poems in her 2004 essay “Meylekh Ravitch in China,” where she places his poems on the Trans-Siberian Railway journey and on Harbin, Peking, Shanghai, and Canton into the context of his daily journals.

Two essays in section 3 focus on the translation of Yiddish literature into Chinese. In “Sholem Aleichem in Chinese?” (2010), Eber presents her personal account of why she translates Chinese and Yiddish. A casual remark by her long-ago professor Chen Shouyi that Yiddish fiction had been translated into Chinese awoke Eber’s curiosity, which prompted her to read the Chinese translations of short stories by classic Yiddish writers Sholem Aleichem, I. L. Peretz, and others alongside the Yiddish originals. These bilingual readings led her to realize that the Chinese translators had themselves used translations into English or Esperanto in order to make the Yiddish stories accessible to their Chinese readers and to understand what drew the Chinese translators to Yiddish in the 1920s. Juxtaposing Martin Buber’s translation of Chinese philosophy into German in 1910 and 1911 and into Hebrew after 1938 with Schereschewsky’s 1974 translation of the Hebrew Bible into Chinese, Eber asserts the importance of translations and translating to the imagination and understanding of all the peoples in the world.

In “Translation Literature in Modern China: The Yiddish Author and His Tale” (1972), her first published scholarly article, Eber presents a full-scale study of Chinese translations of Yiddish literature as if in answer to her professor’s question. With a historian’s eye, Eber catalogs the Chinese translators and analyzes the works they translated from the Yiddish within the political and social contexts in which they published their translations, between 1923 and 1959. Eber’s startling discovery in her essay is the connection between the Chinese literary and intellectual revolution of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 and the secular Yiddish literature written in Poland and Russia starting in the 1890s. Who would have imagined that Chinese writers of the rising nationalism in the 1920s engaged in the project of creating a “new and ‘human’ literature . . . concerned with the universal

experiences of men and women” (294) written in the vernacular rather than literary register of Chinese would find kinship with the Jews of eastern Europe, who were “without a land and without national cohesion” (295)? As Eber puts it, the attraction of Yiddish literature to these Chinese writers was “the portrayal of an oppressed society, oppressed by its own tradition and a hostile environment . . . and of a society faced with the necessity for change and modernization in order to survive” (295).

A third pair of essays deals with the translation of the great German-language Jewish writer Franz Kafka into Chinese (“The Critique of Western Judaism in *The Castle* and Its Transposition in Two Chinese Translations” [1996]) and of classical Chinese philosophy into German by the German Jewish philosopher Martin Buber (“Martin Buber and Chinese Thought” [2007]).

The final two essays in the book address the ways that Chinese and Jews have perceived each other from the nineteenth century until the present and how those perceptions continue changing to create bridges between the Chinese and Jewish cultures. In “Chinese and Jews: Mutual Perceptions in Literary and Related Sources” (2000), Eber compares the perpetually changing views expressed in Chinese writings about Jews and the equally mutable Jewish perceptions of China and the Chinese people in Yiddish literature. The concluding essay in the book opens the door from the present into the future. “Learning the Other: Chinese Studies in Israel and Jewish Studies in China” (2010) brings the discussion of mutual cultural perceptions from the page into the university; reports on the establishment of Chinese and East Asian studies departments at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv University, and Haifa University; and surveys the rise of Jewish studies institutes and centers in China at Beijing University, Nanjing University, the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shandong University, Henan University, and Sichuan University. This final essay provides both practical guidance for a reader who wants to pursue formal studies and evidence of the rich and continuing dialogue in the exchanges between Jewish and Chinese cultures, histories, scholars, teachers, and students.

NOTES

1. Renee Levine Melammed, "The Long Road to China: Irene Eber's Path," *Jerusalem Post*, July 18, 2013, <https://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-Features/The-long-road-to-China-Irene-Ebers-path-320323>, accessed February 4, 2019; Irene Eber, "Holocaust Education and Displaced Persons (DP) Camps," *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 3, no. 3 (2016): 231–236, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2347798916651173>, accessed February 4, 2019. For the most eloquent account of her life from 1939 to 1945, see Irene Eber, *The Choice: Poland 1939–1945* (New York: Schocken, 2004).
2. Melammed, "Long Road."
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. Eber, "Holocaust Education," 234.
6. Irene Eber, "Curriculum Vitae," 1–2. Courtesy of Irene Eber.
7. *Ibid.*
8. See Irene Eber, "'Bright Moon Rises over Heavenly Mountain': Love and Torah Scrolls in Kaifeng," *Kerem* 14 (2014): 123–140.
9. See Kathryn Hellerstein, "China in Two Yiddish Translations: Ethnographic and Modernist Appropriations," in *Un/Translatables: New Maps for Germanic Literatures*, ed. Catriona MacLeod and Bethany Wiggin (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2016), 145–156.
10. Irene Eber, *The Jewish Bishop and the Chinese Bible: S. I. J. Schereschewsky, 1831–1906* (Leiden: Brill, 1999). A Chinese translation of this article was published in 2013.
11. Irene Eber, "Translating the Ancestors, S. I. J. Schereschewsky's 1875 Chinese Version of Genesis," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 56, Part 2 (1993): 231.
12. *Ibid.*, 233.