

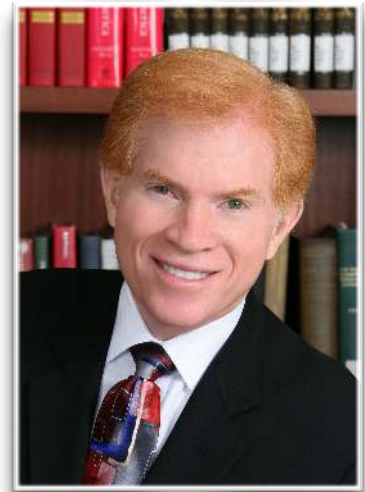


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Dr. Gary P. Zola to Speak at Chinese American Museum Conference in Washington, D.C.

Safe Harbor: Shanghai — Surprising Stories Of Jewish Refugees In World War illustrates how China offered rare, safe harbor for Jews escaping Nazi Europe in the 1930s

CINCINNATI, OH:— On Thursday, October 31, 2019, Dr. Gary P. Zola, Executive Director of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives and the Edward M. Ackerman Family Distinguished Professor of the American Jewish Experience & Reform Jewish History at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, will be a keynote speaker at a unique one-day conference hosted by the Chinese American Museum in Washington D.C. The conference coincides with the museum’s special exhibition entitled, *“Safe Harbor: Shanghai — Surprising Stories Of Jewish Refugees In World War.”*



From 1933 to 1941, Shanghai became a modern-day “Noah’s Ark” accepting around 30,000 Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust in Europe. In the “Designated Area for Stateless Refugees” in Tilanqiao area of Shanghai, about 20,000 Jewish refugees lived harmoniously with local citizens, overcoming harsh and challenging conditions together. By the time the Second World War ended in 1945, most of the Jewish refugees had survived.

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“The story of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, China constitutes a rare example of a safe harbor for Jews escaping Nazi Europe in the 1930s. This episode is particularly noteworthy because it took place under an increasingly restrictive Japanese occupation during the war,” explained Dr. Zola. “Yet my address, which will open the conference, is intended to provide attendees with a broad overview of the interesting, though little-known historical connections between the Chinese-Americans and Jewish Americans.

This interaction began in the late 1840s, when both Chinese and Jewish immigrants began to arrive in the United States. The great Gold Rush that began in 1848 drew Jews and Chinese to this western region of the country. Here, these two different immigrant communities developed a complex relationship. They were strangers, neighbors, and economic adversaries with competing interests. Vivid examples of their extraordinary relationship in the 19th and early 20th centuries will illuminate this idea.”

The cross-cultural stories that will be shared throughout the conference emphasize the interconnectedness of different groups of people and their common histories. The exhibition and the conference provide opportunities to bring diverse audiences to the Chinese American story and this truly international perspective during World War II.

“Dr. Zola is uniquely qualified to set the tone and context for *the Safe Harbor: Shanghai* lectures, first as a historian and scholar providing insight about the Jewish American experience, and second as a leader who served on the *Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad*,” noted David Uy, Executive Director of the Chinese American Museum. His expertise will be critical in examining this important part of Chinese and American history.”

MEDIA: For more information, please contact Joyce Kamen at 513-543-8109.

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The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, founded in 1947 by its namesake on the historic campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, is committed to preserving a documentary heritage of the religious, organizational, economic, cultural, personal, social and family life of American Jewry. The Marcus Center contains over 15,000 linear feet of archives, manuscripts, nearprint materials, photographs, audio and videotapes, microfilm, and genealogical materials.

3101 Clifton Avenue Cincinnati, Ohio 45220 513.221.1875 AmericanJewishArchives.org



The arrival of Jewish refugees from Austria in Shanghai in 1938. The refugees are disembarking from the Italian ship "Conte Verde".

(Photo: National Archives)