

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** We've made it to Tongshan Road. In the old days, it was spelled T-O-N-G, but it's pronounced Tangshan Road, T-A-N-G.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Patrick Cranley is a tour guide from a company called Historic Shanghai. He's standing in what's known today as the Hongkou district of Shanghai, China.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** Okay, so let's cross the street and head down Tangshan Road in search of 599.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Patrick takes people on tours to neighbourhoods where Jews lived in the 1930s and 40s, building lives in Shanghai to escape Nazi persecution. After 20 years as a guide, Patrick knows these streets well.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** And lovely tree lined streets up here right? So there were thousands of families living in these neighborhoods.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** We've asked Patrick to find the location of a house - 599 Tangshan Road - where many years ago, a German Jewish man named Hans Jacoby lived with his wife, Emma.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** This is a challenge because when they move the residents out of these neighborhoods, they take down the address signs. So we'll have to do a little bit of detective work to find which one is 599.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** There's no official memorial to Hans Jacoby. He wasn't famous. He was a talented but largely unknown artist. His legacy is less about his paintings - and more about his words.

His journals are in LBI's archives. He was one of about 20,000 Jews who escaped Europe to Shanghai in a desperate attempt to flee the Nazis...

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** This is probably the entrance to his lane. To their lane.

We can't get in, although maybe this guy over here will let us in. At least he should be able to confirm that this was 599.

*[PATRICK SPEAKING MANDARIN]*

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Eighty years ago, this is where it happened: the surprise collision of Jewish and Chinese worlds.

Jacoby's diary, written in German in his slanted penmanship, is a remarkable document of brutality, loss, and the day-to-dayness of survival.

It's a story of the resilience of a people in a place they never imagined they'd end up...like so many stories of exile.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** So we've managed to find Lane 599 on Tangshan Road, which is where the Jacobys lived. And the entrance is quite nice. But if we were able to walk in, we would see the main lane where hundreds and hundreds of families lived at one time. And as Hans describes in his journal, the conditions were quite uncomfortable. But everybody was in the same boat.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** A boat without a harbour - caught in a storm.

*[OPENING THEME]*

Welcome to Exile - a podcast from LBI, the Leo Baeck Institute, New York. I'm Mandy Patinkin. When everything is taken away, then what? From LBI's archives, untold stories of Jewish lives in the shadow of fascism.

Today, Hans Jacoby and the Jews of Shanghai.

November 9th, 1938. Hans Jacoby is in Gotha, Germany.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I saw a structure 200 to 300 metres away. It was covered in smoke and flames. I asked a person passing by what was happening here. He told me: "The Jewish church is burning". At that moment I knew for sure whose hour had come. It was also at that moment that the wild chase for my life began.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** When Kristallnacht happened. That was news all over the world immediately.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Steve Hochstadt is a retired history professor at Illinois College.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** The Nazis made no attempt to hide what was going on. And this was reported everywhere and it was terrible. But it did not significantly change Western powers ideas about how many Jews should be allowed in.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Despite the Nazi persecution of Jews, immigration quotas hardly changed. Many Jews fled to neighbouring countries, crossing borders illegally, only to be interned. Ships loaded with refugees crossed the Atlantic only to be turned back. The writing was on the wall - including for Jacoby.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I had to flee Germany by night and fog, literally, to save my life. Then, I traveled halfway around the world, just to find a place where I could live and work freely.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** With doors in the west closed, word traveled quickly of a door left open in the east...or rather a door left unattended.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** In some ways, Shanghai was a loophole in the world wide response to refugees trying desperately to get out of Nazi Germany.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** By 1938, the British, Americans, French, and eventually the Japanese, had shared authority over Shanghai - putting too many cooks in that kitchen. In all of this confusion, passport policies were hardly enforced. So if you could make it to Shanghai, you could probably get in. But what exactly were you getting into?

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** Shanghai was a mystery to most people in the West in the 1930s. But people used to talk about Shanghai, that it was a place of prostitution, gambling, gun, running liquor, and that this word - Shanghai, to be shanghaied - meant to be taken prisoner on the high seas.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Whether any of it was true or even fair, Shanghai had a terrible reputation among many Jews. It wasn't Jacoby's first choice. Shanghai was a last resort. A desperate measure for a desperate time.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** You got to Shanghai. It was very foreign, but you really were safe. For a while.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** So we've just entered the former Wayside Park, now Huoshan Park, and you can see that it's one of the best maintained parks in the whole city.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** In this park, there's a plaque dedicated to the Jewish refugees of Shanghai.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** First thing that strikes you about it is that it's in three different languages: Chinese, English and Hebrew. And the plaque says, From 1937 to 1941, thousands of Jews came to Shanghai fleeing Nazi persecution.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Historian Steve Hochstadt was there when the plaque was unveiled.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** That was a moving event for me and I think for the other people who were there when it was unveiled and dedicated.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Steve interviewed over 100 Jews for his book, *Exodus To Shanghai*.

He's also the grandson of Viennese Jews who fled the Holocaust and found refuge in Shanghai.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** I knew about Shanghai Jews since I could first talk to my grandparents. But I didn't do anything scholarly with them until I interviewed my grandmother just for family history and realized that this was an amazing story that I had a connection to.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** About 3 km from the plaque, on the banks of the Huangpu river was the port where refugees like Steve Hochstadt's grandparents would have arrived.

The same port where Hans Jacoby and his wife, Emma, first set foot in Shanghai. Emma's sister and her husband were already there, waiting to greet them.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Turning to my brother-in-law, I hesitantly asked, still full of uncertainty:

"Am I finally free now?"

"You are free," he answered, "you are absolutely free. I breathed a sigh of relief.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** The Jacobys weren't the first Jews to experience the promise of Shanghai. A century before them, wealthy 'Baghdadi' Jews from the Middle East immigrated in search of even bigger fortunes.

Displaced Jews started arriving later, pushed out of Russia by the revolution. And finally, the most recent wave was a steady flow of European Jews fleeing the Nazis.

Most of those settled in the Japanese-controlled area of Hongkou - or at least that's what it's called today. Back then, it was known as the Hongkew district.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** When we arrived, there were around 13,000 to 14,000 immigrants living in Hongkew. Plus 100,000 to 200,000 Chinese from the lower and lowest middle class living within the same area.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Hongkou had already been the home of hundreds of thousands of Chinese refugees, who themselves were forced to flee their homes after Japan's invasion of China.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** Hongkew was a slum. And then in 1937, the Japanese and the Chinese fought over it. And so it was partly bombed out and destroyed. It was the least desirable part of Shanghai, which is why so many refugees ended up there.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** As undesirable as it was, the horrors unfolding back home must have been the first thing on the minds of Jewish refugees in Shanghai. And though they had been able to escape Nazi persecution - they weren't able to escape the Nazis themselves.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** There was a German consulate that wanted to know about refugees from Germany. There were Nazi newspapers. They might see a Nazi flag. But the Nazis really had no power in Shanghai unless the Nazis could convince their allies, the Japanese, to do something about the Jews.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** So we'll walk down along Ward Road.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Ward Road is the neighbourhood where many Jewish refugees who arrived with nothing were funneled.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** Each of the rooms had many, many bunk beds in them.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** These dormitories were like halfway houses financed by Shanghai's wealthy Baghdadi Jews and American-Jewish aid organizations.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** So there were lots and lots of people living in one room altogether sharing kitchen facilities, sharing bathroom facilities. And with very little space for their personal belongings.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** The Jacobys were lucky - they escaped Germany with some of their assets and had the means to settle outside the cramped conditions of Hongkou.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Two weeks after we arrived, I started to look for a new place outside of Hongkew. Somebody told me there was a house available in a Chinese line, a few kilometres outside the city. Would I be interested in it? There was a direct bus connection to the city. Why not? Why not have a look?"

We really enjoyed meeting Chinese families. The Lings, the Shis, the Wangs or the Yaos often came by just to say hello, to show their personal interest. Of course, all of them wanted to see our house, wanted to explore how those foreigners were living. They were especially interested in Emmy's practice. They thought her instruments were scary.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Free from Nazi persecution, the Jacobys could resume their work - Emma as a doctor and Hans as an artist.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** My Chinese paintings have not been selling very well so far. In order to make money, I didn't have a choice but to go with what sells easily: European landscapes.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** The distance between the two cultures began to close, ever so slightly, as the Jacobys settled in their new neighbourhood.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** There were no knives or forks, we ate like the others with chopsticks.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Jacoby writes of elaborate meals with new friends.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** A bowl with duck, the whole duck cut into wafer-thin slices, that's something that a foreigner can only get to know and appreciate while being here.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** But he was still a foreigner – even in these moments where he felt like he belonged.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** During the day, the lane and the big garden behind it were full of children playing. They were shy at first but soon became trusting. I picked up a child and let him ride on my shoulders just as my late father would do with me.

Very soon, whenever the children saw me, they would come running towards me, stretch out their little hands and shout: "Nakoni! Nakoni!"

I asked a visitor from Hongkew what Nakoni meant. "White devil", I was told. I was flattered.

Later, to my regret, I learnt that it literally translates to "stranger."

**MANDY PATINKIN:** While the Jacobys were building their Shanghai life, chaos was spreading in other parts of the world.

*[CLIP - NEWS REEL]*

**MANDY PATINKIN:** December 7th, 1941... Pearl Harbour

*ANNOUNCER: In that Sunday morning inferno, the pacific fleet appeared to be completely immobilised nearly 3000 casualties added to the catastrophe. Within hours the United States declared war*

**MANDY PATINKIN:** War declarations were being exchanged like business cards. Most international residents of Shanghai - like the British and Americans - were now enemies of Japan. And the Japanese expanded their grip on Shanghai.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I looked out the window and saw Japanese military. The leather gear, boots, belt and harness were made of rawhide, just like the Germans had in World War I. Only small differences: a different headgear and the officers did not carry rapiers but samurai swords.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** And with Shanghai's new rulers came new rules that felt familiar to some.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** All nationals of anti-Japanese nations must wear distinctive armbands. I believe this regulation was instilled in the Japanese by the German Gestapo. The comparison with the yellow armband intended for defamation of the Jews in Germany is obvious.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Even though Nazi Germany may have inspired the armbands, Jews were not a target in Shanghai...not yet. But everyone's day to day life was affected by the escalating war.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Our rent, telephone, light, gas increased by up to 300%. Grocery prices also keep going up, it's a mess.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Under these worsening conditions, the Shanghai Jewish community came together, publishing a call for help in a newspaper - asking each family that has a kitchen to help feed at least one other person. And for families who don't have kitchens, to donate some money each month.

On New Year's day 1942, Jacoby wrote:

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** We celebrated the new year quite modestly, with a glass of beer and cognac with our friends, the Scharnitzkis. We are trapped in a corner here, secluded from the world. We don't have any significant assets and only little income. How will we survive the year 1942? We are in a country whose language we don't speak, whose customs we hardly understand and where showing pity means weakness. The hundreds of poor people who perish on the streets every day are the best proof. I shiver when I think of what may still come for us before the end.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** What did lie ahead was a proclamation by the Japanese...

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** The proclamation in February 1943 was the first obvious piece of Japanese persecution against Jews.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** February 18th, 1943. Under the terms of the proclamation, all stateless refugees must move to a designated district outside of the city. To not offend the people behind the proclamation, the word "Ghetto" is to be avoided. It is a "concentration."

All this is antisemitism in its purest form.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** This so-called Ghetto was a one square mile section of the Hongkou slum. Living there was a hardship the Jacobys could have avoided - at least for a time.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Emmy was informed that her stay in the city as a doctor had been extended. On my advice, to everyone's surprise, she declined the offer....For our future I can only hope that I did the right thing.

It is my intention that we should share the fate of all other emigrants, that we don't seek any special advantage for ourselves, that we join them. And if it comes to it, also die with them.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Before Jacoby moves, he takes a stand. It's during a public art exhibit he helps organize where he confronts his soon-to-be 'captors'.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I arrived a little later than planned, the lodge attendant told me, somewhat excitedly, that a Japanese officer was already waiting for me in the hall.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** As Jacoby showed the Japanese captain and his lieutenant through the exhibit, they stopped to look at a painting of the Alps mountain - the Matterhorn.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** The captain asked: "Who is the painter?". I answered modestly, "I am the painter."

I had every reason to answer modestly as the picture was not an original. I had copied it from a colored photo in the hope of selling it to a Chinese picture dealer. Finally they went to the exit door, the captain turned to me and said obligingly: "I hope to see you again soon, Mr. Jacoby."

"That will hardly be possible, captain, " I answered him. He seemed confused and asked: " Why not? "

I answered as cautiously as I could: "Captain, I will be interned in Hongkew next week by order of the Commanding Admiral of the Imperial Japanese Navy."

Then I bowed and took a few steps back.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** It was a small remark, but a bold one: I, a person whose art you just admired – a fellow human, capable of beauty – I'm being rounded up like an animal, by men like you.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** During the last few days, we have seen move after move, up to forty at a time. A general exodus of the children of Israel, migration of Jews as so often in the history of this people. They already had their existence in Europe destroyed by the Nazis and were driven out of the country. They came to Shanghai and, after years of struggle, gained a firm footing. Now they were expelled again.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** In the one square mile area of Hongkou, Jewish refugees weren't exactly free. There were no barbed wire fences, but there were guards.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** The house in which our little room is located is in a large lane on Tongshan Road No. 599. The lane consists of a longer, broad main street and many narrower side streets.

Like all lanes, this one will be locked up at night with an iron gate. We are now prisoners.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** They needed permission to leave. They needed to be back there at night. It was not only the place where they had to live, but their movements were restricted. It was a disaster, and it was one that they attributed to a cooperation between the Nazis and the Japanese.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Uprooted once again, the Jacobys try to make another home.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Our room is approximately eight feet wide and four feet long. It contains an iron bed, but it only has three legs. There's a straw mattress on the bed - ninety centimetres wide. This tripod will be our common bed for the rest of the war, if we survive it.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** They brought all their stuff. They found a way to squeeze it into the room that they had.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** It took us so much time to bring order to the chaos.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** In the evening, they used Emma's operating table for dining. Jacoby also used it to pen his diary.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Every visitor is amazed at what can be done with such a small space. Of course, you also have to have a bit of humour and a dash of bohemianism to face the situation with dignity and equanimity.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** With new restrictions on their movements, survival became even harder. With limited access to the city, many refugees had to figure out another way to make money.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** And then for so many people, who had small stores or even jobs working for Chinese or Western companies in Greater Shanghai, suddenly have to move to the designated area where they could no longer do that work. This was all a great economic blow to refugee life.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I sold my black silk evening suit to a Japanese man on the street. When I told Emmy, she was horrified. "But Emmy, the most important thing is that we live and get out of this mess alive!"

Emmy, who seemed only just beginning to realize the full gravity of the situation, pulled off a ring with a large ruby, handed it to me, and said: "Go and sell the ring." I took the ring with a heavy heart, sold it.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** Remarkably, under grim conditions, the Jewish community in Shanghai sets out to rebuild...again.

Traces of that effort survive to this very day, including some buildings in the Hongkou neighbourhood.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** Why were these saved? Because they have signs painted on them from when these were shops run by Jewish refugees.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** Now that the entire Jewish emigration to Shanghai has come together in a small space, a completely new city has emerged in a short time.

Stores are moving in and the ones that just a few days ago had to close down, are being reopened by their owners who are trying to rebuild what they had under the most primitive circumstances.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** And some of the enterprising refugees started shops like this one. So it's hard to read, but it says Wurstel und Sandwich Stube, which is German for sausage and sandwich shop.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** An elderly couple opened a delicatessen in our lane. I visited the shop and bought a piece of sausage. A customer came in and ordered:

"Half an ounce of Polish sausage, please weigh carefully!"

**MANDY PATINKIN:** In addition to opening shops, they organized schools and ignited a cultural renaissance.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** A theatre, cabaret, appeared out of nowhere and there are also two cinemas in the district. These cinemas are used as temples during the high holidays.

Painters joined to form an association and exhibit together. Economic success is not to be expected - the maintenance of our culture is the desired goal.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** It was as if the rebuilding was some sort of remedy to all of the uncertainty.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I deeply admire the fearless Jewish spirit in this difficult situation. All the more admirable since they don't know whether other war events will destroy everything they build today - tomorrow.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** This is the story of many refugees - especially the Jewish refugees of Shanghai...a loop of destruction and rebuilding, destruction and rebuilding.

Because much of what they built again did get destroyed...again. This time it was by the Americans. They bombed Shanghai after Japan refused to surrender.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** July 17th, 1945. We heard above us - not very high - the heavy, muffled rumbling from the motors of the American planes. Then the bombs were falling, all around our lane, nine bombs in total. The cement walls around us bent like rubber, the plaster fell off the ceilings and we believed that this is the end.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** At this point, refugees were also cut off from funds they previously received from Jewish organizations in America. Bombs continue to fall sporadically for almost a week but eventually the skies are quiet.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** When the refugees heard the news that the Japanese were close to surrender, they came out in the streets and danced and sang and celebrated.

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** I immediately woke up everyone in the house and now a thousand people are awake in the lane, Chinese and emigrants, the jubilation and joy cannot be described.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** We're here in the courtyard of the Shanghai Jewish Refugees museum, which has got one of the most moving exhibits and that is the wall of names. So on these metal plaques along the walls here in the courtyard are the names of most of the Jews who came through Shanghai during the refugee period.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** For all of the destruction they faced, the Jewish presence in Shanghai was never entirely erased. It remains to this day. Invisible to most, except for those who know to look.

**PATRICK CRANLEY:** So if we're lucky, we'll be able to find the names of Hans and Emma Jacoby. We've made our way around the wall. I see Jacobsen. I see Jacobus. Here we go. Look. There's Emma Jacoby. And here's Hans Jacoby. So both of them are on the wall and lots of other Jacobys as well.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** I think it's a common feeling among former refugees that they were saved in Shanghai, however difficult their lives might have been there. Shanghai provided the opportunity for survival. The refugees themselves deserve enormous credit for keeping themselves alive, for creating conditions which allowed a community to be formed. But it's certainly better to remember Shanghai, not as a place where all they did was survive, but a place where they had a life

**MANDY PATINKIN:** The Jacobys would immigrate to the US, where they lived out their lives quietly. It wasn't until decades later that Jacoby would even share his journals.

**STEVE HOCHSTADT:** There was no way to compare what they had suffered with what had happened to Jews in Europe. And that delayed many Shanghai refugees from writing memoirs or talking about their experiences until they realized that they too had something to say. Even though it was certainly not as inhuman as what other people had experienced, it still was worthy to talk about.

**MANDY PATINKIN:** But how do you measure suffering? What makes a survivor? By picking up his pen, Jacoby understood that this was a story that mattered...and one to be told...

**VOICE ACTOR - HANS JACOBY:** June 1977. It's true, all this happened quite some time ago. And for sure, it wasn't as bad as Auschwitz. However, it doesn't matter that the injustice wasn't as extensive, whether only one single person was affected, or the uncounted millions who fell victims to Fascism. No injustice of this kind must ever be forgotten. It is our duty to tell our story, so our contemporaries may feel remorse, and future generations will always remember.

**ARCHIVE THROW:** Hans Jacoby brought his handwritten diaries from Shanghai to the US, where they found their way into the LBI Archives along with some of his artworks, photographs, and other mementos of his time in China. The Archives also include the

personal papers, artworks, and even newspapers published by dozens of other Jewish refugees in Shanghai, that provide vivid insights into the struggles of this community. Learn more at [www.lbi.org/jacoby](http://www.lbi.org/jacoby).

**TEASER:** On the next episode of Exile...

A powerful German Jewish family becomes an early target of the Nazis.

*MATT SHAER: you sign over everything that you own, all your real estate, all your art. You sign it all over to us. And in exchange, implicitly. You'll leave with your lives*

Almost 90 years later, their heirs are still fighting to get back what was stolen from them.

The Mosse family's lost legacy... on Exile.

**CREDITS:** Exile is a production of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York and Antica Productions.

It's narrated by Mandy Patinkin.

Executive Producers include Katrina Onstad, Stuart Coxe and Bernie Blum. Senior Producer is Debbie Pacheco. Produced by Ed Hatton. Associate Producers are Hailey Choi and Emily Morantz. Research and translation by Isabella Kempf. Sound design and audio mix by Philip Wilson, with help from Cameron McIver. Additional sound by Michael Hough. Theme music by Oliver Wickham. Voice acting by Alexander Crowther

Special thanks to Patrick Cranley of Historic Shanghai, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, and Soundtrack New York.