Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Rena Krasno Collection
Dates: 1922-2009
Identification: OCH/RKC
Creator: Krasno, Rena, 1923-2009
Physical Description: 9.04 linear feet
Language of Materials:
German
English
Hebrew
Japanese
Polish
Russian
Repository: Old China Hands Archives

Abstract: Rena Krasno was born in Shanghai in 1923. Her parents, two stateless Russian Jews, fled Russia two years before her birth. Krasno grew up in a Jewish community in Shanghai, but fled to Israel in 1949 just before communist forces took control of Shanghai. She held a prestigious position as translator for the United Nations, and was a published author. Krasno wrote several books about World War II in Shanghai, her life in Japan, and her Jewish heritage, as well as essays regarding Jewish and Chinese history. The collection consists of documents, correspondence, presentation notes, and research papers regarding Rena's life in Shanghai, Japan, and in the United States, and documents her research, involvement with various Jewish organizations, and experiences living in wartime Shanghai.

Biographical Information:
Rena Krasno was born in Shanghai, China in 1923. Her parents, two stateless Russian Jews, fled Russia two years before her birth. Krasno grew up in a Jewish community in Shanghai and attended the French Municipal College where she earned her Brevet Superieur and Baccalaureate (Philosophy Section). She later entered the Faculty of Medicine at the Jesuit Aurora University (now called Shanghai School of Medicine #2), where she studied for two years during World War II. She left Shanghai for Israel in April of 1949, just one month before communist forces took over the city.

Due to Krasno's language skills in English, French, Russian, Hebrew, Spanish, and German, she was able to obtain a prestigious position as translator for the United Nations. She also worked as a freelance interpreter for international organizations (Unesco, ILO, FAO, the Olympic Committee at the Winter Games in Sapporo, etc.) in Europe and Asia. In Japan, Krasno was a frequent interpreter for the National Institute of Educational Research (Tokyo) and worked for Simul International and I.S.S., and also served as Honorary Chancellor of Austria in Seoul, Korea.

Krasno was also a published author. She wrote several books about wartime in Shanghai, her life in Japan, and her Jewish heritage as well as essays regarding Jewish and Chinese history. One book in particular entitled, That Last Glorious Summer, 1939: Shanghai-Japan , is based on Krasno's diary as a young teenager on a summer vacation in Japan on the eve of war. Additionally, Krasno shared her life experience and historical knowledge as a guest speaker for numerous organizations such as the Jewish Working Women's Network of the Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region. Krasno died in 2009.

Access Terms
This Collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Genre/Form of Material:
Maps
Paper records
Photographic material
Publications
Video recordings

Processing Information:
Tim Kaufler, 2012
Jessica Geiser, 2013

Conditions Governing Use:
The Rena Krasno Collection is divided into three series: Personal Materials (1928-2009), Professional Works and Presentations (1948-2009), and Research Materials (1922-2009).

Series I, Personal Materials, includes correspondence, photographs, biographical information on Krasno, documents related to her family, including her father D.B. Rabinovich, and articles about Krasno.


Series III, Research Materials, is divided into two subseries: Articles and Publications (1927-2009) and General Research (1922-2005). The Articles and Publications subseries consists of publications, including both newspaper and scholarly articles, related to Krasno's research. The General Research subseries consists of articles, correspondence, programs, narratives, and other documents collected by Krasno on Shanghai, Jewish refugees, and other Old China Hands.

**Series I: Personal Materials, 1928-2009**

- Box 1, Folder 1: Articles on Rena Krasno, 1993-2007
- Box 1, Folder 2: Biographical Information
- Box 1, Folder 3: Rabinovich Family Documents, 1916-1949
- Box 1, Folder 4: Building Plans for Jewish Prayer House Designed by Gabriel Rabinovich, 1928
- Box 1, Folder 5: Correspondence from D.B. Rabinovich regarding Japanese Officials that Helped Jews During World War II, 1968
- Box 1, Folder 6: Shanghai Oral History Project, 1994
- Box 1, Folder 7: Correspondence with Sheila, 1943-1946
- Box 1, Folder 8: General Correspondence, 1949-1979
- Box 1, Folder 9: General Correspondence, 1992-1999
- Box 1, Folder 10: General Correspondence, 2003-2009
- Box 1, Folder 11: Correspondence with Christopher Choa and Tess Johnston regarding Jewish Memorial in Shanghai, 2004-2005
- Box 7, Folder 1: Photographs, circa 1915-circa 1945
Series I: Personal Materials, 1928-2009

| Box 7, Folder 2 | Photographs, 1930-1939 |
| Box 7, Folder 3 | Photographs, 1940-1949 |
| Box 7, Folder 4 | Photographs, 1994-1997 |
| Box 7, Folder 5 | Photographs, 2007 |
| Box 7, Folder 6 | Photographs, 2009 |
| Box 11, Item 1 | McTyeirean Yearbook, 1941 |
| Box 11, Item 2 | Krasno, Rena; Berlin Identification card, 1997 |
| Box 11, Item 3 | Krasno, Rena; KMVT interview DVD, 2005 |
| Box 11, Item 4 | Legendary Sin Cities Shanghai DVD |
| Box 11, Item 5 | Shanghai Cloth |

Series II: Professional Works and Presentations, 1948-2009


| Box 1, Folder 12 | Exile Shanghai Documentary, 1997 |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | "Flucht Nach Shanghai" Conference - Salzburg, Austria, 1995 |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | "From Kaifeng to Shanghai - Jews in China" Colloquium - Sankt Augustin, Germany, 1997 |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Miscellaneous Presentations Given by Krasno |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | "Paris et l'émigration russe" Colloquium - Paris, France, 2000-2001 |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Shanghai Speaking Events, 2007 |

Subseries B: Authored Works, 1948-2009

| Box 2, Folder 1 | Honor Scroll - Shanghai Askenazi Jewish Community by Leo Hanin and Rena Krasno, 1994 |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | Miscellaneous Essays and Articles by Rena Krasno, 1948-1980 |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | Once Upon a Time in Shanghai - Manuscript |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | Once Upon a Time in Shanghai - Supporting Documents and Photographs |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | Stranger Always - Corrections, 1992 |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | Stranger Always - Event at St. Ignatius College Preparatory, San Francisco, 1997 |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | Stranger Always - Press and Related Events, 1992-1999 |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | Struggle in Shanghai by Audrey Friedman Marcus and Rena Krasno - Draft Copy, 2007 |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | Struggle in Shanghai - Events and Publicity Documents, 2009 |
| Box 2, Folder 10 | Struggle in Shanghai - Fred Marcus Memorial Program, 2002 |

Series III: Research Materials, 1922-2009

Subseries A: Articles and Publications, 1927-2009

| Box 3, Folder 1 | Articles on the Jewish Population of Shanghai, 1927-2007 |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Articles on Jewish Populations Worldwide, 1976-1992 |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Articles on Kaifeng Jews, 1984-1987 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Articles from Magen David, 1939 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Articles on Other China Hands in Shanghai |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | Articles on Shanghai's History, 1945-circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 7 | Articles on Various Individuals, 1988-2006 |
| Box 3, Folder 8 | "A Brief History of McTyeire School for Girls" by Jean F. Craig, 1982 |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | "Le Calendrier Chinois" by Rachel Casey, 2007 |
| Box 3, Folder 10 | "The Censorship of Hebrew Books" by William Popper, 1969 |
| Box 3, Folder 11 | "The Centenary Book of Dr. Louis Hugo Frank", 1993 |
| Box 3, Folder 12 | "The Centenary Book of Dr. Louis Hugo Frank", 1993 |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | "The Centenary Book of Dr. Louis Hugo Frank", 1993 |

Guide to the Rena Krasno Collection, 1922-2009
Box 4, Folder 3  "The Chinese Jews and the Jewish Diasporas in China from the T'ang Period through the early 1900s - A Classified Bibliography" by Frank Joseph Shulman, 1993
Box 4, Folder 4  "Directory of Individuals Interested in the Jews and the Jewish Communities of East, Southeast, and South Asia" compiled by Frank Joseph Shulman, 1993
Box 4, Folder 5  Excerpts from Various Memoirs
Box 4, Folder 6  "Les Fils de Jacob chez les fiels du ciel Des Juifs sur les rives du Wampoo" by Frederic Viey, 2004
Box 4, Folder 7  "The Fourth Marines in Shanghai, China" by Fred Greguras, 2008
Box 4, Folder 8  French Articles
Box 4, Folder 9  Igud Yotzei Sin Bulletins, 1954
Box 4, Folder 10  Issues from Various Bulletins, 1994-2009
Box 4, Folder 11  "The Quest for Status: Polish-Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, 1941-1949: A Personal Memoir" by Joseph R. Fiszman
Box 4, Folder 12  "Report on the Investigation of the Circumstances of the Death in Prison of Mr. Hugo Carl Frank" by Makoto Honobe, 1989
Box 4, Folder 13  "Shanghai Jewry and the Plight of European Jewish Refugees: Another View" by Henrietta Reifler, 1992
Box 4, Folder 15  "Tubabao Russian Refugee Camp: Philippines 1949-1951" by the Russian Historical Society in Australia, 1999
Box 4, Folder 16  "White Russian and Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, 1920-44 As Recorded in the Shanghai Municipal Police Files" by Marcia R. Ristaino, 1989
Box 4, Folder 17  "A World of Difference" by Jim and Beverly Friend, 1991
Box 4, Folder 18  "Zionism in Shanghai (1903-1949)" by Pan Guang
Box 8, Folder 1  Shanghai Jewish Newspapers - Photocopies, 1942-1946
Box 8, Folder 2  Shanghai Jewish Newspapers, 1942-1986

Subseries B: General Research, 1922-2005

Box 5, Folder 1  Abraham Morris "Two-Gun" Cohen, 1990-2003
Box 5, Folder 2  Cartoon about Shanghai
Box 5, Folder 3  Center of Jewish Studies, Shanghai - Professor Pan Guang, 1992-1993
Box 5, Folder 4  Documents Regarding Japan, 1932-2003
Box 5, Folder 5  First Hand Accounts of Leaving Shanghai
Box 5, Folder 6  First Hand Accounts of Life in Shanghai
Box 5, Folder 7  General Information on Shanghai
Box 5, Folder 8  Kadoorie Family, 1922-1998
Box 5, Folder 9  Kitchen Fund, 1942
Box 5, Folder 10  Miscellaneous Documents about Shanghai
Box 5, Folder 11  Museums and Exhibitions on Jews, 1998-2005
Box 5, Folder 12  Notes and Annotations from Books on China and China Hands: A-M
Box 5, Folder 13  Notes and Annotations from Books on China and China Hands: N-Z
Box 5, Folder 14  Radomishelsky, Boris Lvovich, 1947
Box 5, Folder 15  Shanghai Almanac, 1946-1947
Box 5, Folder 16  Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaborating Relief Association (SACRA), 1944
Box 6, Folder 1  Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association, 1945-1953
Box 6, Folder 2  Shanghai Volunteer Corps, 1933
Box 6, Folder 3  Sun Yat-sen's Views on the Jewish Population in China, 1947-1995
Box 6, Folder 4  World Jewish Congress, China Section, 1946-1995
Box 6, Folder 5  Yearbooks, Programs, and other Documents from Shanghai, 1936-1953
Box 6, Folder 6  Zionism in Shanghai, 1922-1947
Box 9, Folder 1  Internment registry (in Japanese)
Box 9, Folder 2  Internment registry (in Polish)
Box 9, Folder 3  Internment registry (in Polish)
Box 9, Folder 4  Internment registry (in Polish)
Box 10, Folder 1  Internment registry (in Polish)
Box 10, Folder 2  Internment registry (in Polish)
Flat File Cabinet 2, Folder 1  
Shanghai Maps, 1937