

T. KAUFMAN

The President of ICFS

## *On the friendship path with China*

On December 7th, at our traditional annual meeting for the former residents of China, the Israel-China Friendship Society will be awarding, in Tel Aviv, 15 academic scholarships to Chinese students attending higher education institutions in Israel.

This fine tradition began 15 years ago, three years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and China and the founding of the Israel-China Friendship Society. It has been going strong ever since.

These scholarships are awarded in recognition of the friendship and affiliation with China and the Chinese people, for those years during which they welcomed us and Jewish communities existed in that faraway land.

### ***Economic relations between the Heilongjiang province and the Kheffer Valley***

The Heilongjiang province, whose capital is Harbin, is tightening economic relations with Israel. A delegation from Harbin visited Israel in preparation for agricultural technology cooperation with the Kheffer valley local council. Heilongjiang province plays a central role in Chinese economy. The accord signed between Harbin and the Kheffer valley widens the possible scope of further cooperation in agricultural production and development.

### ***A new book about the history of the Jews in Harbin***

The Sino-Israel Research and Study Center in Harbin at the Academy of Social Sciences of the Heilongjiang province has published a new book about the history of the Jews of Harbin by Han Tianyan (Galya). For many years Galya has been researching the history of Harbin Jews. She has dedicated ten years to collecting the material for the book, has visited Israel twice and worked using the archives of IGUD YOTZEI SIN as well as interviewing many of the China expats residing in Israel.

The Sino-Israel Research and Study Center under the direction of Professor Qu Wei who has dedicated many years of his life to the reconstruction of the Harbin Jewish past, has conducted three seminars on that subject and shown great concern regarding the Jewish cemetery, has established a permanent display in the museum dedicated to the Jews of Harbin and has published two anthologies and a number of books on the subject.

This work is in emphatic recognition of this precious undertaking and we, the former residents of Harbin, thank him wholeheartedly.

## *From the Diary of the Friendship Society*

### ***83 years since the founding of the People's Liberation Army of China***

On the 29th of July, at the Sharon hotel in Herzlia, a reception was held to celebrate 83 years since the establishment of the People's Liberation Army of China.

The reception hosted by the military attaché of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Mu Chenlin, was attended by representatives of the IDF, the Israeli Foreign Ministry and members of the Government of Israel, as well as military attachés of other foreign embassies and representatives from across Israeli society.

IGUD YOTZEI SIN was represented by Mr. Abraham Fradkin.

### ***61 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China***

On the 28th of September, in Beit She'an a reception was held to celebrate the 61st anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China

Present at the reception which was hosted by the Chinese ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Zhao Jun, was the President of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, who addressed the guests, members of the diplomatic corps and members of the wider Israeli communities.

IGUD YOTZEI SIN was represented at the event by R. Veinerman, M. and D. Fridman, A. Fradkin, A. Podolsky, Priver-Zusman, A. and R. Rashinsky, Y. and J. Sandel, M. Lichomanov and G. Katz.

# *The Evolution of Sino-Israeli Relations*

**Peter Berton**

Peter Berton is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations at the University of Southern California. He is an authority on the interaction between and rivalry among major players in the Asia-Pacific region (China, Japan, the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States), international negotiation behavior, territorial and maritime disputes in East Asia, and geopolitics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Prof. Berton lived in Harbin from 1928 to 1941. His memoir, "Growing Up Jewish in Manchuria in the 1930s," was published in Vol. 2 of Jonathan Goldstein (ed.), *The Jews of China*, under a pseudonym, Alexander Menquez. He is also the author of over 150 books, chapters, articles, and book reviews.

## ***Relations between the Israeli and Chinese Communist Parties***

According to Professor Aron Shai of Tel Aviv University, beginning in the late 1940s, a curious relationship between the Communist parties of China and Israel evolved. Shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the Israeli Communist party held its first party congress since the country became independent. Invitations were sent to Communist parties all over the world—including China's. That gathering took place at the height of the Chinese Civil War, and therefore no Chinese delegates came to Israel to participate. Nevertheless, there were some interactions between the two parties. Israeli Communist party leader Meir Vilner and two of his associates visited China in September 1956 and several Israeli Communist women's delegations attended international meetings in China. However, after the celebrated Bandung conference in 1955, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had already decided that maintaining ties with the Arab world was more important than any contact with Israel, and the relationship with the Israeli Communists lapsed.

## ***Covert Non-Official Relations***

In 1950, Israel was one of the first countries to recognize the regime of Mao Zedong, but the Chinese did not reciprocate that recognition until 1992.

Relations between Communist China and the Soviet Union deteriorated in the late 1950s, leading up to the border skirmishes of 1969. This presented an opportunity for the United States to establish relations with China. After Vietnam moved into the Soviet camp and invaded Cambodia, Beijing's ally, the Chinese decided to teach Vietnam a lesson. This incursion ended disastrously for

the Chinese and exposed the obsolescence of Chinese military equipment. It was then that they decided to modernize their armed forces, and here Israel came into the picture.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the Israelis found themselves holding vast stockpiles of Soviet-made weaponry, which they had captured from defeated Arab armies. Chinese military equipment was also Soviet made, and secret talks began between the Chinese and the Israelis. In the end, the Israelis modernized and retrofitted thousands of Chinese tanks. To balance this covert relationship with the Israelis, the Chinese gave \$1 million to Yasir Arafat and raised the status of the PLO office in Beijing to that of an embassy. When the revamped new tanks were paraded on China's National Day in October 1984, no mention was made of their origin. Beijing was still not ready to recognize Jerusalem. Nonetheless, unofficial ties between the two countries continued to develop. By 1990, both countries had unofficial missions in Beijing and Tel Aviv. Around the same time, the vice president of Beijing University sought American help to establish Hebrew-language instruction at the university; in the meantime, a number of Chinese students were sent to study Hebrew in Jerusalem.

## ***Full Diplomatic Ties***

The dissolution of the Soviet empire and the opening of the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 convinced China that the time was ripe to finally recognize the Jewish state. Thus, in 1992, forty-two years after Israel had recognized China, it granted full diplomatic recognition to Israel. This was heralded as answering "the need to bring together the world's two oldest civilizations." In the aftermath, three Israeli prime ministers and two presidents visited China. The association of former residents of China in Israel, Igud Yotzei Sin, took the initiative in creating the Israel-China Friendship Society, which puts out a bi-monthly bulletin called *Israel-China Voice of Friendship*. Sino-Israeli ties continue to develop, especially in the agriculture, military, and high-tech fields. Chinese students are currently studying agricultural technology in Israel, while the Israeli Training Center at the Beijing Agricultural University holds seminars led by Israeli experts for Chinese students from across the country. Israel's Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with its Chinese counterpart, has established three experimental farms in China.

These provide an opportunity for Israeli research and development in genetic manipulation and the formation of new seed varieties. The farms also teach the Chinese about advanced irrigation and cultivation technology in an attempt to create a sustainable agricultural industry. This is particularly important in arid areas.

Military cooperation continued after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jerusalem and Beijing. However, the plan to develop an AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) reconnaissance plane never came to fruition. The project was based on Israeli high-tech avionics, which were to be installed in a Soviet-built transport plane. The Pentagon objected to this transaction, even though it did not involve the transmission of any US technology, fearing that it would endanger the security of Taiwan. The Israeli scholar Yitzhak Shichor also claims that the US attempted to keep Israel away from the Chinese. Israel had to pay a heavy fine for breaking the contract, and relations with China soured for a number of years. However, military cooperation was given a boost after September 11, 2001, and especially after several incidents of terrorist acts by Chinese Muslim extremists, which led Beijing to approach Jerusalem for state-of-the-art surveillance and anti-terrorist equipment. The cooperation became even closer in preparation for the Beijing Olympics of 2008.

In 2004, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert led a delegation of over 100 Israeli businessmen on a visit to China. This trip included Harbin, where Olmert's parents lived in the 1920s and '30s before settling in Palestine. Bilateral trade continues to develop, especially in the high-tech fields of information technology, telecommunications, electronics, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, solar energy, life sciences, and environmental protection. There are currently almost 1,000 Israeli firms operating in China. Another aspect of the Sino-Jewish connection is the manufacture of kosher foods for the over-\$10 billion kosher food market in the United States and also for the market in Israel. A small "army" of bearded, awkwardly dressed Orthodox kashruth inspectors is spreading all over China, as 500 Chinese factories are currently engaged in producing kosher foodstuffs. Many non-Jews consider kosher as a gold standard for quality. This is especially important when a number of products of Chinese origin turn out to have caused health problems. A kosher restaurant opened in Beijing to cater to the local Jewish community, but also in anticipation of the large number of Jewish tourists who came to watch the 2008 Olympics. Yet another link between China and the Jews is the brisk adoption of Chinese girls by Jewish couples in the US.

### ***The Einstein Exhibit Fiasco***

When Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited Israel in

2000, he toured the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As an engineer, he was particularly fascinated with the archives of Albert Einstein. Einstein, who was one of the founders of the Hebrew University, along with Sigmund Freud, Chaim Weizmann, Martin Buber, and the university's first president, Judah Magnes, bequeathed his archives to the university. Jiang mentioned to his host that along with other world-famous scientists, Einstein's picture adorns all Chinese schools; there would be great interest in China in an exhibit from Einstein's archives. His host, then-university president Hanoach Gutfreund, happened to be a physicist and the head of the Einstein archive. The Israelis agreed to send an exhibit from the archive to China and to other countries. As the touring Einstein exhibit reached Singapore, the Chinese authorities asked for the display notes, so that they could be translated into Chinese. The Israelis were then flabbergasted when the Chinese demanded that several items be taken out of the exhibit. The first was a caption that noted the fact that Einstein was a Jew. The other items referred to his relationship with Zionism and Israel, his being one of the founders of the Hebrew University, and the fact that upon Chaim Weizmann's death, he was offered the presidency of Israel, which he declined. It is hard to identify the locus of that seemingly incomprehensible Chinese decision, but in a totalitarian system, strange and stupid decisions are often made. The Israeli authorities naturally refused the Chinese demand, and the exhibit went to Taiwan instead of Communist China.

### ***Antisemitism and Philo-Semitism in China***

The word for Jew in China, Youtai, has no pejorative connotations, even though the radical of the character for you denotes an animal. That in itself says something about the way in which Chinese see themselves—as culturally superior to others. The indigenous Jews of Kaifang were well regarded, and there is no record of antisemitism against them. In fact, the first seeds of antisemitism were planted in China at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Christian missionaries, and almost a century later by White Russians and Nazis. After the Opium War, when Jewish merchants arrived along with those of other nationalities, the Chinese made no distinction between Jews and other foreigners.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the first president of the Chinese Republic, was well disposed towards the Jews and in his famous treatise, "The Three People's Principles," he praised Zionism as an inspiration for the Chinese Nationalist movement. In a 1920 letter to the Israel Messenger, organ of the Baghdadi Sephardic community in Shanghai, he repeated his admiration and support for Jewish independence: "Though their country was destroyed, the Jewish nation has existed to this day... [Zionism] is one of

the greatest movements of the present time. All lovers of democracy cannot help but support wholeheartedly and welcome with enthusiasm the movement to restore your wonderful and historic nation, which has contributed so much to the civilization of the world and which rightfully deserve [sic] an honorable place in the family of nations." Dr. Sun also saw a parallel between the persecution of the Jews and the humiliation of the Chinese people during the era of Imperialism.

Similar sentiments comparing Zionism and the Chinese Nationalist movement can be found in the journal *Dongfang zazhi* [Eastern Miscellany], an influential intellectual journal published in Shanghai in the pre-Communist era. More specifically, an article in 1928 cited five reasons why the Jews would be successful in their nationalist aspirations:

- the cohesive force provided by both nationalism and religion;
- the tenacity that was built up in 2,000 years outside their homeland and was more recently displayed in their pioneering recolonization;
- their 2,000 years of literacy;
- their technical expertise; and, most important,
- their nationalist movement, which conformed to the general trend of the contemporary world.

Some virulent antisemitic articles also appeared in the Chinese press, most of them translations from English, White Russian, Japanese, and German sources. In contrast, Dr. Ho Fengshan, the Chinese consul in Vienna, although not as well known as the Japanese consul in Lithuania, Sempo Sugihara, saved hundreds of Jews from the Holocaust by issuing visas between 1938 and 1940. In March 2001, Fengshan was honored by Yad Vashem (Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority). Further proof of the absence of native Chinese antisemitism was later demonstrated by the welcome given by the general public and local Chinese publications to the Jewish refugees.

The 1917 Balfour Declaration, which promised Jews a homeland in Palestine, was generally lauded by the Nationalist Chinese government; however, when the vote for the partition of Palestine came up in the United Nations in 1947, the Chinese Nationalist representative abstained. The reason for the abstention and for China's not having voted against partition, as did almost all Asian countries, was probably its desire to please the United States and also possibly because of the presence of millions of Muslims in China. When the Chinese Communists came to power, they followed the lead taken by Chinese Nationalists in dealing with Israel in the context of official sympathy for the Arabs. When a market economy emerged in China after years of repression and atrocities

by the Red Guards and the Gang of Four, the Chinese began to encounter Jews among the thousands of foreign businessmen, journalists, diplomats, and academics—but without paying any particular attention to their ethnic or religious origin. In spite of the pro-Arab stance of the government, the Chinese continue to view the Jews with admiration and try to emulate certain Jewish traits, which they believe will lead to economic success.

The three most recognizable Jews in China are Karl Marx, Albert Einstein, and Sigmund Freud. *China Jewish Culture*, a Chinese-language magazine claiming to be the Sino-Jewish [sic] Cultural Research Magazine, published, on its inside front cover, pictures of what it claimed to be the twenty-five most prominent Jews in history—some of them clearly not Jewish, and a few others with tenuous, if any, Jewish connections. The first three mentioned above are followed by Pablo Picasso, Christopher Columbus, Henry Kissinger, Franz Kafka, Steven Spielberg, Itzhak Perlman, Paul Samuelson, Andy Groves (co-founder of Intel), Isaac Asimov, Ariel Sharon, Larry Ellison (co-founder and CEO of Oracle), Isaac Levitan (Russian-Jewish landscape painter), Marcel Dassault (founder of Dassault Aviation and Dassault Industries in France), Michael Bloomberg, Marc Aurel Stein (Central Asia explorer), Steve Ballmer (CEO of Microsoft), Yitzhak Rabin, Imre Kertesz, Alan Greenspan, George Soros, Jacques Offenbach, and Dale Carnegie. (The intention was probably to include Andrew Carnegie, though neither Carnegie was Jewish).

It has been reported that when a Chinese finds out that someone is a Jew, he is likely to mention the word Einstein. This pro-Jewish attitude on the part of the urban Chinese may be partially attributed to the Chinese fear of home-grown Islamic terrorists. Whatever the cause, pro-Jewish and pro-Israel sentiments are abundant when we look at the internet in China, despite the persistent pro-Arab stance of the government.

Research in the Jewish Field and Restoration of Jewish Historical Sites

Dr. Pan Guang, Dean of the Jewish Research Center in Shanghai, declared that Jews in China are a "hot topic" for academic research, mass media, television, and movies. Dr. Pan, who is also a professor at the Shanghai Center of International Studies and Institute of European and Asian Studies at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, is the most important person in China in promoting the study of Jews in China, Judaism, and Israeli history. He was the first Chinese academic to recognize the importance of Sino-Jewish and Sino-Israeli relations, and he was the organizer of the first Jewish research center in China, and serves as its dean. A man of multiple interests, he is also the vice-chairman of the Chinese Association of Middle East Studies, director of the Shanghai Cooperation



Organization research center in Shanghai, and a senior adviser on terrorism to the mayor of his native city. In addition, he is an adviser to many organizations outside China. He is responsible for organizing numerous conferences, and is the author of many publications, including the latest in 2008, "Jewish Studies in China" (in Chinese).

After the establishment of relations with Israel, the Chinese authorities decided that Jewish heritage in China should be preserved. Moreover, they encouraged former Jewish residents of China in Israel, the US, Canada, Australia, and other countries to visit their one-time homeland in order to help in the economic development of China through investment and joint ventures. Research centers for the study of Jewish history and culture were established within the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Shanghai and Harbin. Synagogues, Jewish community centers, and cemeteries were restored (at a time when Jewish cemeteries continued to be desecrated in Europe). Because of the rapid expansion of Harbin, the foreign cemeteries (including the Jewish ones) were relocated in the 1960s to a rural area. (The city's population also grew exponentially from several hundred thousand Europeans and Chinese before the revolution to almost ten million in 2010). The "New Synagogue" in Harbin was converted into a dance hall after the Jews left Harbin in the 1950s, but was later refurbished to serve as the museum of Jewish life and culture.

Plans are presently underway to restore the synagogue on Nanjing Road in the center of Tianjin along the lines of the synagogues in Shanghai and Harbin. It is noteworthy that the synagogue is the only extant structure among the other buildings that housed Jewish communal activities. The Chinese municipal authorities hope that this restoration will increase tourist traffic to Tianjin, one of the largest cities in northeastern China, and help in the development of economic relations between China and Israel.

### ***The Study of Hebrew, Judaism, and Israel***

Beginning in the 1990s, Chinese scholars came to the United States and Great Britain for graduate studies in Judaism, as well as Jewish history and culture. Upon their return, they began to teach courses in Jewish studies at several Chinese universities. Their interest in Judaica, however, was largely accidental.

Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing University, for example, became interested in Jews when he stumbled on the work of Saul Bellow after the latter received the Nobel Prize for Literature. His interest was further stimulated by a visiting Jewish American professor of literature, who invited him to come to America to start graduate work in Jewish studies. Upon his return via Israel, Xu began to teach a few courses on Judaism which led to the establishment

of a Jewish studies center in Nanjing in 1992. Thanks to financial assistance from a Jewish philanthropist and other Jewish foundations, that institution was transformed into the Glazer Institute for Judaic Studies in 2006. Some 200 students are presently taking courses at the institute, and its library today boasts the largest Judaica collection in China. In 1989, Professor Xu took a leading role in establishing the China Judaic Studies Association. One of his major scholarly works was the translation into Chinese of the abridged Encyclopedia Judaica. For his efforts to promote Judaic studies in China, he was awarded an honorary doctorate at Bar-Ilan University in 2003.

Another influential figure in Judaic studies is Professor Fu Youde. A specialist on the philosopher George Berkeley, he also accidentally discovered Jewish studies when he was invited to work on a project to translate the works of Baruch Spinoza into Chinese. In 1992, he took up the study of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at Oxford, and later at Leo Baeck College in London, one of the foremost centers for Jewish learning. Fu Youde first established a small center of Judaic studies at Shandong University, in Jinan, fittingly, the birthplace of Confucius. In 2003, this grew into the Center for Interreligious Studies, which has a staff of over twenty professors and researchers. Appropriately, he began the comparative study of Confucianism and Judaism, which he developed in numerous lectures in the US and Britain. Both Xu Xin and Fu Youde have found the study of Judaism, besides its intrinsic value, to be of importance for contemporary China for other reasons. Xu says that "without an understanding of the Jews, you cannot understand the Western world." Fu admires the fact that "the Jews have modernized themselves materially...while maintaining their cultural identity." However, he laments the fact that because of their pursuit of materialism, the Chinese have lost their identity or "Chineseness." He even indicts Chinese youth for being inhumane or "soulless."

Besides Nanjing and Shandong, Hebrew and Judaic courses are also taught at Beijing University and several other Chinese institutions of higher learning. There are still relatively few Chinese professors in the field, but their numbers are augmented by visiting professors or language instructors from Israel and the US. Chinese specialists on Judaism and Israel, though small in number, have substantial outreach through teaching, translations of Yiddish and Hebrew literature, organizing workshops, conferences, exhibitions, cultural exchanges, and the publication of hundreds of books and articles. Some of them, alongside analysts specializing in Middle Eastern (including Israeli) affairs, who may not have training in Jewish studies, may also be called upon to advise the party leadership. The wider Chinese audience learns about

Jews and Israel from newspapers, television, movies, and increasingly, the internet.

Although several unauthorized translations of Anne Frank's diary circulated in China in the 1980s and '90s, an official exhibition opened in Hong Kong at the end of 2007 and was visited by no fewer than 6,000 people. More importantly, there were special sessions for teachers, who incorporated this material, and information about the Holocaust in general, into their curricula. The exhibition then proceeded to the National Library in Beijing, where it ran for several months.

### ***The Emphasis on Making Money “the Jewish Way”***

Deng Xiao Ping's exhortation that “to be rich is glorious” has sent the Chinese in search of books on how to achieve that aim. About a third of all books published in China today deal with business and entrepreneurship, and a good portion of those identify the Jews as holding the key to success in business. For a generation of Chinese who toiled in obsolete state enterprises under the slogans of Mao Zedong, it is understandable that they would now want to find a shortcut to becoming capitalists.

Some of the representative titles of Chinese-language books promoting the Jewish connection to success are: “The Legend of Jewish Wealth,” “The Eight Most Valuable Business Secrets of the Jews,” “The Jewish Road to Wealth,” “The Secrets of the Jews,” “How to Be a Jewish Millionaire,” “Jewish People's Bible for Business and Managing the World,” “The Ancient and Great Jewish Writings for Getting Rich,” “Jewish People and Business: The Bible of How to Live Their Lives,” and “The Jews' Business Wisdom and the Art of Proper Behavior According to the Talmud.” The headline on one of the covers of the “Shanghai and Hong Kong Economy” magazine read: “Where Does Jewish People's Wisdom Come From?”

Entrepreneurial Chinese English-speakers compiled many of these books and some of them, such as “Jewish Entrepreneurial Experience and Business Wisdom,” by William Hampton, are actually complete forgeries. That volume, smartly packaged in red and gold, was billed as a bestseller in the US. According to Hampton's biography, he was one of the first graduates of Harvard Business School's PhD program in business administration, an editor at Business Week, and a professor of business and philosophy, with years of experience in Jewish studies. William Hampton does exist and he was a bureau chief for Business Week, but as a specialist on automotive affairs, with no connection to Harvard, no professorship, and no knowledge whatsoever of Jewish affairs. Some of these books cite sound business practices that have little

to do with Jews or Judaism, and some even falsely quote the Talmud. This demonstrates to what extent the Chinese hunger for a possible short-cut to becoming rich.

Having a possibly more deleterious effect on the admiration of all things Jewish in China is the surprise bestseller by Hongbing Song, “Currency Wars.” True to most conspiracy theories, the book covers Waterloo (which does have a connection to the Rothschild banking family), and continues with a hodgepodge of topics, such as the crash of the Japanese bubble economy, the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98, and environmental degradation in the developing world. These topics have precious little to do with the Rothschilds, who, incidentally, are no longer major players in the financial world. The book also attracted attention among Chinese officialdom, and the author was swamped with offers to write other books. What effect this will have on the Chinese perception of the Jews is hard to measure or predict, especially at the time of an economic crisis, or general downturn in the economy.

Another example of an attempt to emulate the Jews is the publication of a series of ten children's books, “The Secret to the Jews' Success,” which stress Jewish morals such as respect for elders, hard work, and quick-witted thinking.

### ***Conclusion***

The relationship between the People's Republic of China and Israel is a thorny one. First, in the era of Maoism, there was an ideological need to side with the Arabs against Israel, which was cast as the “running dog of Imperialism.” Second, in the era of market economy, the Chinese hunger for oil forced the government to continue that policy. In the era before recognition of Israel, the Chinese turned to the Jewish state for the secret transfer of Soviet-made military equipment. After the recognition of Israel in 1992, Chinese leadership was attracted to Israel because of its state-of-the-art military technology, its advances in agriculture in arid areas, and the general high level of its science and technology.

An important characteristic of the Sino-Israeli relationship is the fact that the Chinese, lacking a Christian or Islamic tradition and attitude toward the Jews, were unique in their philo-Semitism, in spite of external sources that tried to plant seeds of antisemitism. The present Chinese attitude toward the Jews as being smart, powerful, and holding the secret to success in business is also one of admiration for having endured two millennia of exile and persecution, and having retained their traditional values. This was the view of Sun Yat-Sen, the first president of China, who saw inspiration for China in the Zionist effort to build a homeland for the Jews in Palestine.

The Chinese view of the Jews as smart and powerful is, of

course, an exaggeration, and even a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it promotes admiration and, on the other, it creates surprise and suspicion, especially when the well-worn canard about Jewish world domination is translated into Chinese and becomes widely circulated. In times of uncertainty and socioeconomic crises, the historical tendency has been to look for outside scapegoats. Throughout history, Jews have been

victimized as a result. Such a scenario is unlikely in twenty-first century China. There is every indication that Jews and the Jewish state will continue to be looked upon as the other ancient and great civilization from whom much can be learned. The Chinese will continue to respect the Jewish people's history of adaptation on the road to modernity.

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## ***Israel Corporation to increase investment in car company***

Israel Corporation controlled by Ofer Holdings Group announced that it would inject another US\$334 million into Shai Agassi's electric car venture Better Place LLC and in Chery Quantum LLC.

Chery Quantum Auto Co. Ltd is a 50-50 joint venture formed in 2008 between China's largest independent carmaker Chery Automobile and Israel Corporation's US unit, Quantum LLC. The joint venture will have the cars built in Anhui and have an output of 150,000 vehicles a year, mostly sedans and SUVs. The intention is to develop western-standard vehicles for China's domestic market, as well as for export.

Car industry sources believe that most of the investment in Better Place will go into the development and marketing of Chery electric cars for Israel and Denmark.

The electric car is due to begin production in late 2012 and the companies have already invested US\$300 million

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**Jewish Times Asia July/August 2010**

## ***Israel and Hong Kong sign Cultural co-operation***

Amikam Levy, Israel's Consul General to Hong Kong and Mr Tsang Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs, represented their respective governments during the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Co-operation. The memorandum was signed in Hong Kong on 15 June at the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware.

Mr Tsang welcomed attendees with a big shalom and explained that this co-operation will contribute to furthering mutual understanding and friendship between the two governments. The agreement will promote and strengthen co-operation in the fields of culture, the arts and sports. The governments will continue to encourage information exchanges, cultural presentations, sports-related events and official delegation meetings. Tsang noted that the government is investing HK\$21.6 billion in a West Kowloon cultural district project. "Hong Kong

invested in trade and then industry," he commented. "And now the government believes it should invest in a knowledge economy focused on innovation and creativity."

He would like to see Hong Kong's top nine performing groups performing in Israel, where he believes they would be very well received. Consul General Levy began his speech noting the memorandum took 116 emails, over 130 phone calls, 16 drafts, 10 meetings and 15 months of work.

"Culture is consensus, culture is power and knowledge. Without culture there is no growth. Without culture there is no creativity. This document reflects the deep and strong will of both countries to collaborate in a wide range of fields", said Levy at the signing ceremony.

**Jewish Times Asia July/August 2010**

## *Invest Hong Kong co-organises seminar in Israel*

An investment promotion seminar, "Hong Kong and Guangzhou: Your Business Partners in China" was held in Tel Aviv in June. Over 260 Israeli business executives attended. The seminar was co-organised by Invest Hong Kong and the Guangzhou Bureau of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation (BOFTEC), with a focus on investment opportunities in the innovation and the technology sector.

Gil Haskel, Director of Department for Economic Affairs of the Israeli Government, and China's Ambassador to Israel, Mr Zhao Jun, welcomed attendees to the seminar. Simon Galpin, Director-General of Investment Promotion at Invest Hong Kong, spoke at the event and encouraged Israeli companies to join other multinational companies already established in Hong Kong and Guangzhou to grasp the opportunities available. He said, "As of June 2009, 3,580 multinational companies have set up regional operations in Hong Kong and over 80 Israeli companies are operating in our city. With CEPA (Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement), Hong Kong offers the most direct and cost-effective path for Israeli companies to enter the Pearl River Delta and other parts

of the Mainland market."

Xiao Zhenyu, Director-General of Guangzhou BOFTEC, said, "We are convinced that Israeli companies will find a home for their business in Guangzhou by bringing their advanced technology to the five strategic industries which offer a promising and broad spectrum for Israel-Guangzhou cooperation. The five industries identified are flat panel display, semiconductor, auto-borne electronic products, internet communication and integrated circuits. Israel's talent pool and advanced technology in the biotechnology, water technologies and diamond processing and trading businesses will bring about bilateral cooperation and booming business opportunities in Guangzhou." During the seminar, representatives from Israeli companies shared experiences of how they had successfully expanded their businesses in Hong Kong and in Mainland China. The seminar concluded with one-on-one meetings between representatives from Invest Hong Kong, Guangzhou BOFTEC and individual seminar participants to discuss particular opportunities for their businesses.

**Jewish Times Asia July/August 2010**

## *IDE to expand China's largest desalination plant*

IDE Technologies Ltd will expand a large desalination plant in Tianjin, China, doubling its capacity to 73 million cubic meters of water a year.

The company will supply four more multi-effect distillation desalination units to the Tianjin SDIC power plant. The expansion will make the desalination plant China's largest. The power plant will generate 4,000 megawatts upon completion to meet the growing needs of Tianjin city and alleviate electricity shortages in northern China. The IDE units will provide the desalinated seawater required for use in the power plant's steam boilers, as well as drinking water for local residents.

IDE won the contract in an open international tender by SDIC, which wanted a desalination solution that met strict environmental standards and had optimized, field-proven technology. IDE said that its installation of the first four desalination units at the power plant on time and within budget contributed to its winning the current tender.

IDE CEO Avshalom Felber said, "This ambitious project strengthens our position in the strategic China market and

in the Asia Pacific region as a whole, which has been a focus of our activities for more than two decades." IDE is the desalination joint venture owned in equal shares by Delek Group Ltd. and Israel Chemicals Ltd.

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### ISRAEL-CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY (FOUNDATION OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN)

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