

The Chinese Perception of the Jewish People

Prof. Dan Ben-Canaan. Harbin, P.R. China. February 18, 2022

I am reminded of Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. It is the notion that the laws of physics are the same everywhere. The interesting part is that I am already in your future while you are in my past. The Jewish question is already in the future and is very well connected to its past.

Antisemitism starts with the question of race. A racist is not just one who sees the Other as different or having inferior qualities.

A race is defined as any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry. It is how another is identifying one. It generally reflects either social, biological, anthropological, or genetic differences. Race categories include racial, national origins, and socio-cultural groups. The term race is defined also as a group of people sharing a common cultural, geographical, linguistic, or religious origin or background, and the descendants of a common ancestor: a group sharing a common lineage.

The question of race bears two sides. As said, a racist is not just one who sees the Other as different or having inferior qualities. It is, at the same time, how a person sees himself in comparison to others. This is where antisemitism starts.

A stereotype is a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

A stereotype is something conforming to a fixed or general pattern, especially: a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment.

The word stereotype comes from French, originally printers' terms, but have come to take on somewhat negative meanings in modern use. A stereotype is most frequently now employed to refer to an often unfair and untrue belief that many people have about all people or things with a particular characteristic.

Stereotyping is a way to group races or individuals together and make a judgment about them, without even knowing them. It is a belief about a certain social group or type of individuals. Stereotypes are most often associated with negativity.

Prejudice comes from Stereotyping people. It is an opinion made without adequate basis to discriminate people against others from first impression. The term prejudice includes racial discrimination, political views, or general appearance.

Some may argue that they see a group of people with "positive" stereotypes. But these are no more valid than negative ones, despite how they may sound. The practice of grouping people with similar traits together leaves little or no room for interpersonal differences. Positive stereotypes can generate expectations and standards that are essentially false and unrealistic. In this sense, stereotype comes with negative meaning.

Thus, stereotyping comes from prejudice, which then leads to racial beliefs.

In his book *Der Judenstaat* Theodor Herzl writes: "The Jewish question persists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers. Wherever it does not exist, it is brought in together with Jewish immigrants. We are naturally drawn into those places where we are not persecuted, and our appearance there gives rise to persecution. This is the case, and will inevitably be so, everywhere, even in highly civilized countries..."

It seems that our Jewish future is being determined by a past created by others to justify and maintain their own future.

The Jewish People are vulnerable anywhere they are. Diplomacy and other means, can only smooth corners but not eradicate hatred and stereotypical notions about them.

When a fertile ground has been conditioned and cultivated, love and hate may define new agenda. It can happen anywhere when stereotypical seeds have been planted. And when the times are right, and an agenda is being replaced with another to suit a certain policy, things can get ugly.

This happens in China as well.

On August 13, 2021, the *Algemeiner*¹ reported that "a caricature of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken published by the Chinese mouthpiece state-owned Xinhua news agency, has been slammed for its explicit use of antisemitic stereotypes."²

It depicted Blinken, a Jew, towering over the Director-General of the World Health Organization and wearing a long cape decorated with a US flag, his face distinguished by the outsized "Jewish" nose favored by generations of antisemites. Two large horns were sticking out of his head, invoking an anti-Jewish stereotype from the medieval period. This linked the Jews as originators of the Coronavirus epidemic



In May 2021, the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo posted a cartoon that showed the United States as the Grim Reaper, dressed in a "Stars and Stripes" outfit, and leaving behind a trail of blood as it walks from one door to

another. On top of the doors are names of Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt, Syria, Libya, and Iraq. The reaper's machete is dripping blood and has the Israeli flag on it, complete with a Star of David. The image's caption said, "If the United States brought 'democracy,' it would be like this."

"It is crystal clear that there is a growing population that adopts ideas of antisemitism in China in the last 5 years. These are not organized, but can be more dangerous than those in Europe and the US because once it reaches a certain level, it can influence the decision-making of our Chinese policymakers who consider the views of the populists."³ The writer, a Chinese head of a business group that aims at deepening relations with Israel, goes on to describe the reasons for the current overt antisemitic trend in China.

The Chinese think now, that the Jews are responsible for the deteriorated China-US relationship, and especially those biased sanctions against Chinese companies and government. Some Chinese think Israel is like the little brother or son of the US.

The Chinese are greatly influenced by social media, and some are looking for negative narratives of Jewish history in Europe and the Zionist movement for what they call poor Palestine. They justify the persecution of Jews, because they were annoying and greedy, and committed much money manipulation and inciting of wars.

Young Chinese are getting more nationalistic, and foreign ideology and foreigners are unpopular these days in China, so are Jews and Israel. Some irresponsible Jewish leaders, they say, are inciting conflicts by saying things about Xinjiang. And, many Business people had bad experiences working with Israelis, they spread negative stereotypical words about Israelis and Jews among the business circle.

When one types the term Jew - on **Bai-du**, the Chinese search engine, among the results, will be: Why the Jews are not welcome? Why Jews are clever and so rich? Why did the Germans expel Jews? And, why do Jews face genocide?

One 11-year-old student wrote: "Jews are dirty and should be totally dissolved, Hitler is a Hero". He is an example of an online antisemitism victim.

One of the most horrifying videos on Chinese social media carried over 26,000 comments against Jews in just one day.⁴

And, the most notorious demagogue in the Chinese media, a 39-year-old person named Lu Kewen who is the founder of a Beijing online news channel, amassed a



following of 15 million subscribers across several mainland social media platforms. In May 2021, Lu posted an 8,000-character screed in five parts titled “What Should We Make of the Jews?” His manifesto combined antisemitic tropes from medieval Europe with more recent libels from Iran and the Middle East.⁵

A recent publication titled “The Relationship Between Chinese Civilization and Jewish Capital has Changed Qualitatively” by **Zhang Jie** who poses as a Senior Research Fellow at the Chinese Academy of Science, the highest governmental institution in China, drew 1,753,958 visitors in just a few days.⁶ The man comes from a prominent family, and his father and grandfathers are well-known figures in China.

The vicious publication, that carries no references or sources, can be described as the Chinese Manifesto of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. The article presents innuendos camouflaged as facts. Among them are “Jewish capital has behaved more like a scumbag”, or “the Jewish law of the jungle prevails”.

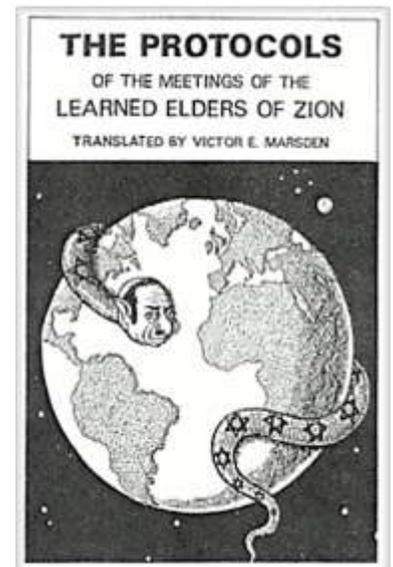
Things, then, have changed in China.

The opening-up policy and the drive to capture world leadership, as well as the elevation of nationalism with Chinese racial characteristics, have served as a catalyst to an adaptation of stereotypes and elevating these into overt antisemitism.

Ng Weng Hoong, a journalist from Vancouver Canada, suggests that “China represents the reactionary response to others. Thus, he says, China has the potential to create a monster - a Sinofascist state. There is an invention of a fascist future for China, an ethnic-based ideology. The concept of Chinese modernity is a version of the Aryanism that Hitler and the Nazis were trying to promote with the pure German.”⁷

Chinese Engagement with Hitler and the Nazis

It is not a surprise that there was a time when the Chinese partnered with the German Nazis, as they do today with Iran.



China was the ‘first to fight’ Imperial Japan, first in 1931, when Manchuria was annexed to form Japan’s Manchukuo puppet, only to be followed by a full-scale invasion in 1937. China sought foreign military assistance from any willing partners. Ironically, one of these partners was Nazi Germany.⁸



Chinese pilots training in Germany. 1935

Nazi support was motivated by the economic need for China’s raw materials, and the anti-communism of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Party.

Even after the 1937 outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, a significant Chinese lobby remained in Berlin, calling for a resumption of full Nazi-China ties.⁹

Who and What is a Jew According to the Chinese?

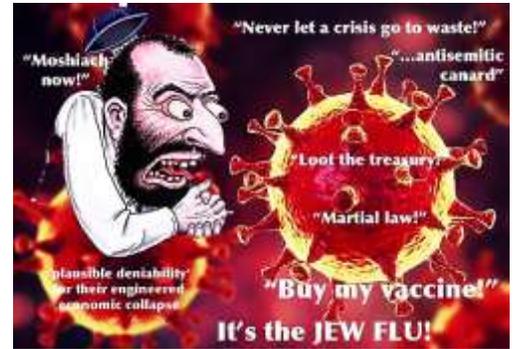
Liang Qichao, leader of the 1898 Reform at the end of the Qing Dynasty, considered the Jews as a striking contrast to the backward Chinese. After his visit to the United States in 1902, he wrote that Jewish people were the most powerful and influential immigrants in America.¹⁰

His book, “Travel to the New Land” was an explanation of who and what the Jews are:

“In the U.S. banking industry, the Jews accounted for up to 40%; and in terms of



bank employees, Jews accounted for close to 60%. Seventh Avenue, New York's largest street, along which there are thousands of big stores, Jewish businessmen occupied up to 70% of the total. The governing of New York City is dominated by the Jews and there are no other competitors. So are the cases in most other cities. There were more than 20 million Jews in New York City, most were all big entrepreneurs.”



Liang Qichao wrote that when he first came to New York he happened to hear about Russian pogroms. At that time, New York's major newspapers covered condemnations for the Russians' cruelty over the Jews. However, he wrote, there were only less than 400 killings. If you look back at the humiliation history of civilization, you would find that Russian soldiers killed over 7000 Chinese in one day along the Heilong River, in the northeast of China.

The Jews suffered light compared to the poor Chinese. But how many global newspapers were willing to report for the Chinese? Why do they only have pity for the Jews? Because New York was founded by the Jews. New York is equivalent of affecting the entire United States, thereafter, touching the whole world.

Being the foremost thinker in China of at least the first two decades of the 20th century, **Liang Qichao** has influenced many of the Chinese intellectuals, and social magnets who helped spread such beliefs and attitudes. His writings were enthusiastically read by students and intellectuals.¹¹

But **Liang Qichao** was not alone. Many others followed suit.

In *Turn Around Abruptly* **Chen Tianhua** wrote that to be a man who was just like the homeless Jew would be the greatest and severest fear.¹²

Kang Youwei's long poem said that the Chinese should learn from the suppression of the Jews and be aware of the importance of protecting China, and not make the Chinese be like the homeless Jews.¹³

These comments about the Jews based on Chinese own reality had an appeal, especially to the common people who looked, as others did, for salvation from their miseries.

China can be a model for racism because it believes in the purity of its blood and does not accept the 'Other' into her midst.

An article in a Jewish quarterly written by **Fu Xiaowei**, a Chinese professor at Sichuan International Studies University in Chongqing, attempts to explain the Jewish phenomenon in China by claiming that the Jew is being confused with Christian by the Chinese.¹⁴

Fu maintains that what does influence the Chinese is their belief that Jews and the Christians belong to the same religion because they share the same Bible.”¹⁵ For the Chinese, this is manifested in the nature of the Jew as traitor and greedy, a notion that goes well with the term Jew coined by the Christian missionaries who, among other things, translated the New Testament into Chinese and gave the Jew the appearance of a “mad dog”.

Many translators use a note where they explain something that is related to the Bible. The translators, according to **Fu**, always refer to the Christian Bible.

Here is a translation of both text and a note in a Chinese version of Issac Bashevis Singer’s *The Son from America*.

Singer’s original text reads:

“He kissed her again and asked, ‘Mother, didn’t you receive a cable?’

“What? If I lived to see this, I am happy to die,’ Bracha said, amazed by her own words.”¹⁶

But the translator turns this into:

“If I lived to see the camel, I am happy to die... Bracha does not know what a cable is and mistakes it as camel and it reminds her of the New Testament, Matthew 19:24 when Jesus said to his disciples: ‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’ Now Bracha feels happy.”¹⁷

What a way to twist a text into the notion that the Jew is rich as well as a traitor.

According to **Fu Xiaowei** “books about Jewish thinkers, scientists, politicians and especially businessmen are in great demand. Of the seven books in Chinese containing “Talmud” in their titles, three of them take Talmud to mean the Jewish business bible.”¹⁸

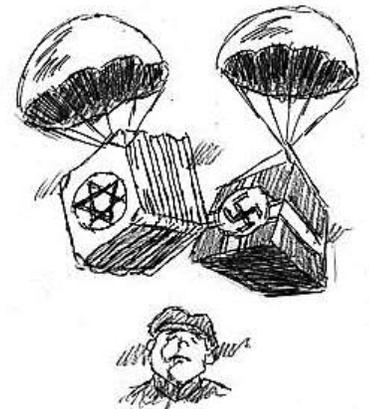
Over a long period of time, the Chinese had no other channel to gain knowledge of Judaism but through Christian missionaries, books about Christianity or the Christian Bible. There is still no Bible, the Old Testament, in China that has been translated directly and through from Hebrew. The result is that the Chinese get their view of Judaism via Christianity.

Christian missionaries influenced greatly the Chinese in their teachings, writings, and translations of the New Testament. They did also introduce a new meaning to the term Jew - “mad dog”.

The New Testament – allowed the spread of biblical Juda syndrome – of deceit, deception, and betrayal of Christ by the Jews.

Youtai: The mythical Jew: On stereotypes of Jewishness in China

“In modern China, the term '**Jew**' or '**You-tai**', can be a symbol for money, deviousness, and meanness; it can also represent poverty, trustworthiness, and warm-heartedness. It has religious as well as secular meanings. One day the 'Jew' is a stateless slave, another day he is the dominant power in the world. The 'Jew' is nationalist and at the same time cosmopolitan. He can be a filthy capitalist or an ardent communist, a committed revolutionary or a spineless loser. In other words, anything which the Chinese aspire to is Jewish, and, at the same time, anything which they despise is also Jewish.”¹⁹



Zhou Yun, another Chinese influential writer, wrote “you love the Jew for he possesses everything you want and hates him because you do not have it.”

The Jews as Business Mad Men²⁰

For millions of young Chinese who are desperately seeking success and money in a rapidly-changing society, images of 'successful and rich Jews' have become a living scripture. A popular book series, entitled *Revelations on the Jews' Superior Intelligence*, was launched in 1995. It is divided into four books with subtitles such as: 'The romantic and legendary political and business maniacs', and 'The extraordinary and unconventional **art-ists** and men of letters'. Each back cover is printed with the same statement that “**this is a good book which will probably change your life**”:

The Jews are the smartest, the most mysterious, and the richest nation/race in the world. If one does not know anything about the Jews, he will not understand the world. “When a Jew sneezes at home, every bank in the world will catch a cold.” When three Jews are together, they can influence the global currency market.”²¹

Clearly, to the Chinese readers, the term 'Jew' represents money, meanness, power, and success.

The term **You-tai** is a relatively new one. It was coined by two German

missionaries who translated the Christian bible into Chinese in the 1800s, and while doing so were looking for a derogatory term that will describe the Jews. What they came up with was **You-tai – mad dog**. Over the generations since, the term lost its original meaning and now indicates money, power, wisdom, and success.

Racism and Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism comes to a large degree out of racism.

Japanese army officers who studied in Moscow and St. Petersburg were among the first to import anti-Semitism into Japan. But Japan's actual contact with Jews, in real and not imaginary terms, took place in northeastern China, in Manchuria, over which Japan and Russia had contested.

After the Russian October Revolution in 1917, merged with the anti-Bolshevik sentiment, anti-Semitism posed a threat to the Jewish community of Harbin.

Multiple fascist groups assembled in Harbin to form the International Russian Fascist Party in May 1931.²²

It was in Harbin that overt anti-Semitism by a local Chinese organization raised its nasty claws. The journal *Vestnik Azii* (Herald of Asia) quoted the **Chinese Harbin Chamber of Commerce** in a 1911 report to Beijing's Ministry of Industry, Agriculture and Trade that "...The approaching review of the trade treaty is the most convenient to raise the Jewish question. In each article providing the Russians with privileges, we must include a note that that article does not apply to Jews. Only in this way, we will succeed in limiting the rights of the Jews..."²³

In 1922, the Harbin government passed an ordinance prohibiting the use of Yiddish in public places.²⁴

In 1926, the Chinese authorities refused to ratify the status of the Jewish community and ordered it to cease functioning. The authorities also refused to legalize the Zionist Society for Jewish Resettlement in Palestine, insisting it was a political rather than a philanthropic body. By mid-1927 the Jewish Communal Board of Harbin was limited to religious and charitable activities, and issuing vital records.²⁵

Chinese antisemitic articles appeared daily in Shanghai and other large cities, blaming the Jews for manipulating the Chinese population.

The flood of books about Jewish success, hot reads in China for the past 25 years, has prompted responses about the phenomenon.

"The Chinese Believe That the Jews Control America. Is That a Good Thing?" wrote **Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore**²⁶ in a leading American Jewish magazine. "Do the

Jews Really Control America?” asked one Chinese newsweekly headline in 2009. Such articles and books about Jews in China became popular—for example: “The world’s wealth is in Americans’ pockets; Americans are in Jews’ pockets”. This “would rightly be seen to be alarming in other contexts,” wrote **Sebag-Montefiore**. “But in China, where Jews are widely perceived as clever and accomplished, they are meant as compliments. Scan the shelves in any bookstore in China and you are likely to find best-selling self-help books with most focus on how to make cash.”²⁷

Prof. Xu Xin, director of the Glazer Institute of Jewish and Israel Studies at Nanjing University concedes that many Chinese believe the Jews to be “smart, rich, and very cunning.”

China’s Search for the Secrets of Jewish Success

In their quest to understand Jews better, popular Chinese authors and bloggers offer facts and myths about everything from the Talmud to anti-Semitism. In an essay published by Tablet magazine in 2016, **James Ross** writes that “we found the books were filled with misunderstandings and stereotypes. And books claiming to be based on the Talmud were mostly about wealth with little or no connection to actual Talmudic passages.”²⁸

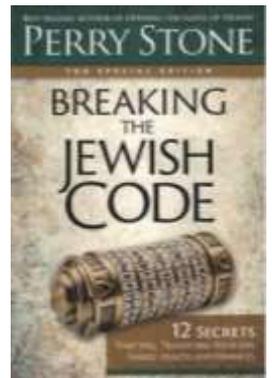
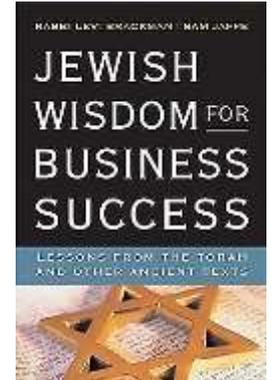
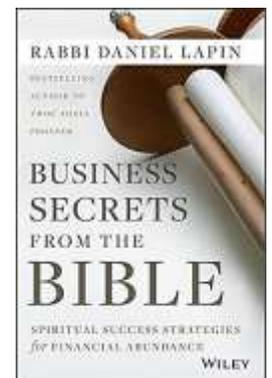
“One of the best-selling books is What’s Behind Jewish Success by **Tian Zai-wei** and **Sha Wen**. “It is said that Jews are distinguished by their noses. All Jews have hooknoses,” and Jews control the diamond market because diamonds are “valuable and easy to carry which is ideal for Jews who are always drifting.”²⁹

Liu Nan-yang of Nanjing University wrote “In the Chinese minds, Jewish people control the banks in America. It means for them that Jewish people control the world, controls the governments...”³⁰

Prof. Xu joins the chorus. Stereotypes in China, this is positive, **after all, had the Jews achieved nothing, no Chinese would be interested in them.**³¹

This is a most interesting solution to antisemitism. Never achieve anything and you will be left alone.

Stereotypes can lead to blind hate when conditions change. In an age where communication boundaries are blurred, accessible, and open to all, and when there is no safeguard that warns against what is factual and what is a myth, or altered reality, articles and gossip can be perceived as being the



gospel, the truth.

In this context, the Chinese construed the Jewish people as a valuable, almost natural cash resource.

As the evidence showed a clear Chinese delusion about the Jewish character, and as we read more Chinese writings about the Jews, one should wonder when it all has started and who were the catalysts that brought these to the present manifestation.

After all, China should have been free of stereotypical beliefs about Jews because it did not have historical experience in meeting with many of them.

The term **You-tai** – for Jew, was first introduced in the *Eastern-Western Monthly Magazine* edited by **Karl Gützlaff**, a German missionary, in 1833.³² The magazine used the terms “**Youtai guo** (A country of Jewish people)”. Later, the terms “**Youtai min**” (Jewish people) were used in *Christ Jesus Came into the World* published in 1836, and then “**Youtai ren**” (Jewish people) in the *Bible* published in 1840. Afterward, Youtai was adopted in *Brief Introduction of the World*³³ and the official document of **Taiping Tianguo**³⁴.

But the meaning of the term **You-tai** had a negative connotation. In the 1830s, missionaries **Walter Henry Medhurst** and **Karl Gutzlaff** started to translate the New Bible for a new Chinese version. In order to ease translation complications, they invented the term **You-tai** to replace “路得亚” – **lu-de-ya - Judah**, the former translation for Jewish people. **Medhurst** thought that the term “**lu de ya**” did not present what he believed was the negative character of the Jews, whom he regarded as “**unjust, unbelievable and trustless**”.³⁵

Because China used to animalize foreign nations and foreign people in Chinese characters, Medhurst chose “**犹**” (**you – a mad dog**)—the one with the character “**犴**” for his purpose. In 1837 in his edited Chinese-English dictionary, Medhurst defined “**犹**” (**you**) as “**people who are unreliable and suspicious**”.³⁶

犹 – you: a mad dog

犴 - dog, a derogatory meaning in Chinese

The missionaries knew that Chinese feudalistic dominators despised the foreign and the ethnic and racial minorities, and they would always name these minorities in terms with a derogatory character component “**犴**” **you**.³⁷

The Medhurst-Gutzlaff Bible was very easy to read and understand and became popular throughout China. Soon the term **Youtai – a mad dog**, was accepted widely.³⁸

It was many years later that the term went through transformation and a change in its original characters.³⁹ Gradually, it was used to describe high Jewish intellect, very good in business, and money power dominated.

The Business of Stereotyping People

Economic measures were the foremost driver of the Chinese foreign policymaking since her “Opening Up” initiatives shortly after Mao’s death in 1976.

Israel and the Jewish People were perceived as those who can help China overcome her handicap in providing knowledge, finance, and advanced technology, essential for her economic, technological, and political growth. These were a catalyst for the formation of diplomatic relations between China and Israel.

Yet, with her growing international involvement, China feels comfortable with her global strength, and would not hesitate to retaliate in a time of crisis if it deems necessary. With changing sentiments, the stereotypical view of the Chinese about the Jews may bring overt antisemitism.

Although individuals in China proclaim that their view of the Jewish people as money moguls, clever, and cunning, comes out of admiration and respect, such notions are extremely dangerous, especially in a nation that has extreme nationalism and racial sentiments.

An article in the American-based Washington Post investigated the "Sold on a Stereotype" phenomenon. **Ariana Eun-jung Cha**, a Chinese-American correspondent for the Post, asserted that "in China, a popular genre of self-help books tell the secrets of making money the Jewish way."⁴⁰

In bookstores, there are stacks of books built on a stereotype: "The Eight Most Valuable Business Secrets of the Jewish Business", "The Legend of Jewish Wealth," "Jewish People and Business: The Bible of How to Live Their Lives," and "Jewish Entrepreneurial Experience and Business Wisdom," are among the most popular ones.

Cha asserts that “throughout history and around the world, even outwardly innocuous and broadly accepted characterizations of Jews have sometimes formed the basis for eventual campaigns of violent anti-Semitism.”

The books focus on the basic business genius that has little to do with religion or culture, and every book features one or more “case studies” of the success of the Lehman brothers, the Rothschilds, and other Jewish "titans of industry and captains of finance," as one author put it. Some books refer to **J.P. Morgan**, an influential Episcopalian leader, and **John D. Rockefeller**, a devout Baptist, as Jewish businessmen.⁴¹

These kinds of books contribute stereotypes about Jews and their supposed cleverness and business and most Chinese people believe that all Jews own most of the world's riches.

These books are available in all of China's libraries, including those in the universities.

Dr. **Perti Sulevi Nikkila** and his wife Dr. **Aune Kaisa Maria Nikkila** from the missionary Institute of Sino-Christian Studies in Hong Kong gave a lecture to a very large group of innocent Chinese students, where they spoke about the position of man before "the lord" and about good and evil. "Bad and good are not for us to judge. Hitler and Mother Teresa or Gandhi are equal before the Lord Jesus Christ and only he can judge them for being good or evil," Hitler's actions were justified because he was the Lord's creation. Add this to the preaching that the "Lord" was betrayed by Judas, the soul of the "innocent" Chinese has been poisoned.

The Talmud and the understanding of Jewish laws is one of the subjects written about by several Chinese scholars. The Talmud describes the relationship between people on many matters. However, books written in China misinterpret and misguide the ignorant reader.

A book by Professor **Zhang Qian-hong** and titled 犹太人-犹太精神 **Jews • Jewish Spirit**⁴² presents her understanding of the Talmud as a source of laws and rules regarding the Jewish dealings with matters of money for one's own "**selfish and sole benefits**" as she puts it. **Zhang Qian-hong** is one of the few Chinese who study Judaism and an important member of a newly created Chinese 'Jewish Studies Council'. In the chapter titled "**The Famous Spirit of Financing**"⁴³ the first quotation as a subtitle reads as follows:

“金钱叮当作响，坏话便戛然而止。《圣经》放射光明，金钱散发温暖。”

“**Jin qian ding dang xiang, huai hua bian jia ran er zhi. <sheng jing> fang she guang ming, jin qian san fa wen nuan.**”

“**Money stops those who put a knife in your back, and the Bible shines like the sun and money sends out warmth.**” Or in another translation, “**When money jingles, bad words come to a screeching halt. The Bible radiates light and money radiates warmth.**”

The author continues and says that “**the Talmud teaches people to cherish money as well as cherish oneself**”:

“身体依靠心而生存，心则依靠钱包而生存。”

“One cannot live without the heart, while the heart stops beating without the purse.” “The body depends on the mind for survival, and the mind depends on the wallet for survival.”

“钱不是罪恶，也不是诅咒，它在祝福着人们。”

“Money is a blessing, not a vice or a curse.” Or, “Money is not a sin, nor is it a curse; it blesses people.”

“拥有很多财产，忧愁可能相对增加，但完全没有财产的人，忧愁更多。”

“Those who have money live with worries, but those who have not, carry greater worries.” Or, “Those who have a lot of property may have relatively more sorrow, but those who have no property at all have much more sorrow.”⁴⁴

There is no one on the Chinese Jewish Studies Council, which is made of acclaimed academicians, who can help her understand the fallacies in her writing. Furthermore, her students carry these everywhere they go.

Case Studies

In 1999 **Zhang Tie-jiang**, a Research Fellow at the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences wrote an essay titled “Suggestions for the Study of Harbin Jews to Quicken Heilongjiang Economic Development”.

In December of that year, Prime Minister Li Peng went on a visit to Israel for the first time. Soon after the Xinhua News Agency published **Zhang’s** essay. On April 7, 2000, the essay was sent to the related departments of the Central government in Beijing, and then to the Provincial government. **Song Fatang**, the Party Secretary of Heilongjiang province at that time, sent a document to the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, saying “please intensify the study of the history of Harbin Jews, in order to help expand our cooperative economic services.”⁴⁵

An investigation conducted by the influential Chinese Southern Metropolitan Magazine found that the reports of the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences to the government, always advised of integrating, packaging, and promoting Jewish culture and history in Harbin only for the sake of bringing in money.

The Academy’s Jewish Studies central promotion website described it like this: **“...attracting [Jewish] business investments as the tenet of our existence and purpose...”⁴⁶**

The **“International Forum on Economic Cooperation with World Jews”⁴⁷** held in Harbin in June 2007 is a good case study. It was organized by the

Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences to coincide with the Harbin International Trade Expo between June 14 - 17, 2007. All hotel accommodation, meals, and local trips, including some flights, were paid in full by the Chinese government.

Of the 83 official participants, 16 were Israelis, among them the Israeli ambassador and his wife, a delegation of five local politicians from the Givataim municipality, a twin city to Harbin, the mayor and deputy mayor of Amikam village, three persons representing the Israel-China Friendship Association, two businessmen, one of Ehud Olmert's brothers who read a congratulatory letter of the Israeli Premier, and one professor from Heilongjiang University (me). There were nine guests representing the Jewish community Center in Birobidzhan, the "Jewish autonomous region of Russia". Three Americans, among them 2 consular officials and a history professor. Six guests from Hungary, all dentists, representing the Hungarian and Austrian Jewish Federations. The rest were Chinese, among them 15 from the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, a former ambassador of China to Israel, academicians from several universities in China, and officials representing the Heilongjiang and Harbin governments. There was one Chinese businessman who came from Beijing to promote his travel agency. In all, out of the 83 participants, only 3 were businessmen. But according to the official printed program, the foreign guests, including the Israelis, were all entrepreneurs.⁴⁸

In his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Forum, Harbin Mayor, Mr. **Zhang Xiao-lian**, explained the important task of bringing Jewish money to the city and the province:

"The most memorable outstanding Jewish figures, for instance, **Carl Marx, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Edmund Husserl, J.P. Morgan, John Rockefeller**... the admirable entrepreneurial spirit and extraordinary wisdom of the industrious... The Jewish nation has won them the reputation of the 'world's No. 1 merchant' with their unique business skills and a large number of successful entrepreneurs all over the world... In today's world there is a classic appraisal of the Jewish wealth, '**the world's money is in the pockets of Americans, and the Americans' money is in the pockets of the Jews**'. This is the highest acclaim and praise to the Jewish wisdom... We will be more supportive, more open-minded, and more pragmatic, and work together with you, for a brighter tomorrow..."⁴⁹

The Israeli Ambassador to China, Yehoyada Haim, could not find a way to answer this honor without creating a diplomatic crisis.

While prejudice against Jews is a real and ongoing category in Western culture, little attention has been paid to the myths of the Jews and their impact in countries outside the West, especially in the Far East. In a 1997 article, **Zhou Xun**, one of China's premier contemporary social philosophers, states that Chinese intellectuals writing in the twentieth century have tended to construct Jews as a racial group with various positive and negative racial characteristics, which they borrowed from Western sources, including at times the language of antisemitism.⁵⁰

Chinese perceptions of Jews were of several kinds, often the result of an indiscriminating reading of limited source materials. These portrayals, reinforced by the fictional images, gave way to antisemitic descriptions, especially in the Shanghai press after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937.⁵¹

The missionary journal, **Wan-guo Gong-bao** (Review of the times), published occasional articles about Jews—who they were and what their present condition was. A dominant theme in these early notices about Jews was that they were always perceived as different. Jews were people who did not belong, and therefore, in many countries, Jews were discriminated against.⁵²

These texts were written for Chinese readers in Chinese language. There were different degrees of boldness in them, depending on the writer and his point of view.

After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937, Shanghai's Chinese newspaper readers were able to find the Jew whose financial power was proving dangerous to China. Articles in **Xin Shen-bao**⁵³ were distinctly anti-Semitic and were a reaction to the influx of Central European Jewish refugees into Shanghai. "The Jewish problem had also become an East Asian problem. Within twenty-five years, the wealth of China's economy might very well gravitate toward Jewish hands, and Jews would then control China."⁵⁴

This "high regard to the Jewish people" is provocative and extremely dangerous, especially in a society that develops and promotes nationalism and race to its utmost.

The seeds have been planted.

What it takes now is the cultivation of stereotypes into action. Place a ruthless leader, a demagogue who knows how to provoke innocent minds, an extreme nationalistic belief or judgment, a notion that the Chinese race is superior to all others, then mix these with a needed agenda – political, economic, or social, that blames the Other for all the ills of the society, thus what you get is a blend of dangerous actions that are aimed to eradicate you.

China did not open to the world yet. It did open several windows through which she collects her gains. As the past 40 or so years have shown, China is good at choosing which window to open, which to close, and at what particular time.

The Jewish and Israeli window is open, but not in full. There are severe conditions and restrictions attached.

And when a strong regime aligns itself with terror nations such as Iran, North Korea, Putin's Russia, and other authoritarian rulers, it does so in order to gain a global stage as well as supplement its resources and sphere of influence.

Think then of what could happen to the Jew.

Notes

¹ The Algemeiner Journal, known informally as The Algemeiner, is a newspaper based in New York City which covers American and international Jewish and Israel-related news.

² Chinese Regime's Mouthpiece Slammed for 'Despicable' Antisemitic Caricature of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken by Algemeiner Staff. August 13, 2021

³ Peng Xiangmo, Managing Director and Head of China Region Cukierman & Co. Investment House, and the founder of The Israel Plan Organization, in a letter to the author dated January 29, 2022.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Tuvia Gering. Antisemitism With Chinese Characteristics. Tablet Magazine. February 16, 2022

⁶ Zhang Jie. The Relationship Between Chinese Civilization and Jewish Capital has Changed Qualitatively". www.cinfoshare.org (Community Info Share) – December 21, 2021. Zhang is a Senior Research Fellow at the Chinese Academy of Science (CAS). The editor displayed Zhang's achievements: He has been engaged in a variety of industries and has made many achievements, is now a part-time professor of the capital finance research institute of China University of Political Science and Law, a legal person of Beijing Liangyue capital management co., director of Beijing Jinzhang science and technology development co., deputy editor-in-chief of global finance, visiting researcher of international institute of technology and economics, development research center of the state council, commentator on CCTV and China radio international, China economic network special commentator, lawyer, and financial real estate investor. since 2006, he has published many influential books and articles, involving politics, economics, law, history, and other aspects, which have aroused great repercussions because of their unique perspective, quick thinking and meticulous logic.

⁷ Ng Weng Hoong in a letter to the author, Monday, August 16, 2021.

⁸ Norton Yeung. *An Unexpected Partnership in WW2: Nazi Germany and the Republic of China*. September 26, 2017. War History Online:

https://www.warhistoryonline.com/guest-bloggers/unexpected-partnership-nazi-germany-republic_china-mx.html

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Liang Qichao, *The Orient* (东方杂志), periodical 4, 1904, p. 10.

¹¹ Orville Schell, *Discos & Democracy: China in the Throes of Reform*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988; Paperback: Anchor Doubleday, 1989

¹² Liu Qingbo, *Collection of Chen Tianhua's Work* (陈天华集), Hunan People Press (湖南人民出版社), 1958. *Turn Around Abruptly* was published in 1903.

¹³ Kang Youwei, *Poetry Anthology of Wanmucaotang and Nanlanshi* (万木草堂诗集·南兰诗集), Shanghai People Press (上海人民出版社), 1996.

¹⁴ Fu Xiaowei. *Confusing Judaism and Christianity in Contemporary Chinese Letters*. *Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought*. Vol. 55, No. 1-2, Summer-Fall 2006.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Singer, *The Son from America* 1973, p. 97.

¹⁷ Zhenguo Hong, translator. Isaac Bashevis Singer, "Youzi Gui Lai/ The Son from America," *Waiguo Wenxue Xinshang/Foreign Literature Appreciation* 4 (1985), 25–28, at 28.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 21.

¹⁹ Zhou Yun, *China*. In *Focus Magazine*, Issue No. 4, Spring 1998

²⁰ 狂人, 疯子 – Mad man, lunatic, maniac, crazy

²¹ Zhou Yun, *China In Focus Magazine*, Issue No. 4, Spring 1998.

²² John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925-1945*, London: Hamish Hamilton, pp. 48-59. In Chizuko Takao. *JISMOR* 10. P. 37.

²³ VA, 9 (May 1911): 186. In David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station – The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898-1914*. Stanford University Press, Stanford California 1999. p. 100-101.

²⁴ "Yiddish Prohibited in China," *Hebrew Standard*, March 17, 1922; "Arrested for Speaking Yiddish," *Hebrew Standard*, April 7, 1922; "Chinese Authorities Prohibit Use of Yiddish," *The Sentinel*, January 8, 1926.

²⁵ "Movement to Secure Legal Status for Jewish Language Started," *American Jewish World*, April 24, 1925; "Chinese Authorities in Far East Bar Yiddish," *American Jewish World*, January 8, 1926; "Denied Permission to Function," *The Sentinel*, October 8, 1926.

²⁶ Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore, *Tablet Magazine*. March 27, 2014.

²⁷ VA, 9 (May 1911): 186. In David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station – The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898-1914*. Stanford University Press, Stanford California 1999. p. 100-101.

²⁸ James Ross. *Tablet Magazine*, January 25, 2016. "The Image of Jews in Contemporary China: An Identity Without a People," edited by James Ross & Song Lihong.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore, *Tablet Magazine*. March 27, 2014.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Fei Chengkang *What's the Purpose of Western Missionaries? A study on the Origin of Youtai*, published in *Social Sciences Weekly*, on December 8th, 1994.

³³ *Brief Tour of the Ring* is a book edited by Xu Jiyu. It was finished in 1849; it was the first book that introduced the world in a comprehensive manner about Indian, Arabic and European civilizations, Xu jiyu (1795-1873) was a scholar and official in Qing Dynasty..

³⁴ Taiping Tianguo (1851-1864) was a peasant rebellion in Qing Dynasty, created by Hong Xiuquan, based on the theory of equality in Christianity.

³⁵ Xin Quanming & Tian Wenge, *Study on Translation of Youtai in Chinese*. Nationalities Forum, July 15, 2007.

³⁶ *ibid*

³⁷ Fei Chengkang, *Articles (文汇报)*, Jan. 23, 1994

³⁸ Zhou Xun: *Chinese perception of the "Jews" and Judaism: A History of the Youtai*, Richmond: Curzon, 2001.

³⁹ Pan Guang, *Chinese Perception of Jews in Modern Times*, published by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Quarterly Periodical, 2nd issue, 2001. p. 182.

⁴⁰ Ariana Eunjung Cha, *Washington Post*, February 7, 2007

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² Zhang Qianhong, *Jews • Jewish Spirit*, China Literary Federation Publishing House, October 1999. ISBN 7-5059-3458-9/I.2636. Prof. Zhang Qianhong is the Director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the College of History and Culture, Henan University, Kaifeng, China..

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 99

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 104. Translated into English by Prof. Du, Heilongjiang University, School of Western Studies, English Department.

⁴⁵ Su Ling, *Southern Metropolis Magazine*, Guangzhou April 2007, An investigative article on the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, p. A18

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. A19 to A26.

⁴⁷ The June 2007 Harbin “International Forum on Economic Cooperation with World Jewry” was organized by the Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences and its “Jewish Research Center”, in cooperation with the Heilongjiang Provincial government, the Harbin City government and the government of the city’s Daoli District.

⁴⁸ From the official program of the June 2007 “International Forum on Economic Cooperation with World Jewry”.

⁴⁹ Mr. Zhang Xiaolian, Harbin Mayor, Strengthen Exchange and Collaboration for a Brighter Future – Hand in Hand. Documents Collection of International Forum on Economic Cooperation with World Jews, Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, Harbin, China 2007

⁵⁰ Zhou Xun, “Youtai, the Myth of the Jew in Modern China,” in *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Frank Dikoetter (London: Hurst, 1997), pp. 53–74.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 223.

⁵² “Lun Youtairen sandun buyi benxin” (On the forced and unchanging scattering of the Jews), *Wanguo gongbao* 10 (1878): 305b–306a. And, “Wuguo zhi min zhi zhuangtai” (Attitudes toward a people without a country), *Wanguo gongbao* 17, no. 4 (1905): 21a–22b. In Eber, Irene and Kathryn Hellerstein. *Jews in China: Cultural Conversations, Changing Perceptions*. Penn State University Press, 2019.

⁵³ Daily newspaper that began publication in 1938, started by a Japanese journalist as the Chinese translation of *Shanghai godo*.

⁵⁴ “Zhongguo he Youtai wenti” (China and the Jewish problem), *Xin shenbao*, September 29, 1939, 2. Chen Qian, “Shijie dongluan yu Youtai zhi guoji yinmou” (International turmoil and Jewish conspiracy), *Zhongguo gonglun* [Beijing], February 1940, 14–15. In Eber, Irene and Kathryn Hellerstein. *Jews in China: Cultural Conversations, Changing Perceptions*. Penn State University Press, 2019.