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AMERICAN IMAGES OF THE CHINESE: SOME NOTES

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These notes have to do with the climates in which various American images of the Chinese have grown. They are in part a response to stimuli in the 60-odd interviews I have so far conducted in the course of my present inquiry into American images of China and India. They are also, to a substantial degree, a re-examination and a refocusing of many things long familiarly known but never brought together in this particular framework.

This is a draft of notes intended to be absorbed later in analysis of the completed interview material. In the writing, however, it acquired a form and content which seemed to suggest the value of a limited distribution and a request for comments. One additional section, on the images connected with the Chinese population in the U.S., and a separate but corollary paper analyzing the body of U.S. opinion poll data on relevant matters are still in preparation.

A study, in similar terms, of the development of American images relating to India lies on the further work agenda. I would be especially grateful for any suggestions any reader of this paper might have also to offer in this connection.

H. R. I.

AMERICAN IMAGES OF THE CHINESE: SOME NOTES**I. Scratches on Our Minds**

In 1940 an opinion poll found that about half the people interviewed could not locate Singapore or the then Dutch East Indies except to agree that they were "in the same part of the world as China and India." In 1942, four months after Pearl Harbor, another poll found that 60% of a national sample could not locate either China or India on an outline map of the world. By the war's end, more Americans had discovered the approximate whereabouts of such places as Chungking, Manila, and Vladivostok, at least to the extent of being able to name the countries in which they were situated. A smaller number could identify Okinawa, Osaka, Kyushu, and Java, although not even a majority of college-educated people could still put their finger on Singapore and it had not as yet occurred to the pollsters, in 1945, even to ask people about place names in India.

There is of course a generalized American vagueness about geography of which these findings are a part, but the vagueness about Asian geography is certainly greater than it is about European. This would reflect a central fact about the emergent American in world affairs in our time: there has been little in his total cultural setting

to give him any serious body of knowledge or information-- much less affinities--relating to Asia or things Asian. There is surely nothing to compare with the intricate web of bonds that tie him in so many different ways to Europe and things European, his origins near or remote, his cultural roots, his language, his religion, his history, his picture of the world. Indeed, America was born and grew up in the generations of Europe's world paramountcy and relatively few have seemed to realize even now that this age has ended, that the center of gravity in world affairs has shifted eastward, that Western Europe--for all its continuing great weight and importance--has reverted to being but a smallish peninsula dangling from one end of the great Eurasian continent.

On the other hand, consider a paradox: the history of America's emergence as a major world power is really also the history of the decline of Europe and the rise of Asia as the principal setting for decisive world events. The first foreign war fought by this country in its maturing period made it a Pacific power. The first really major stroke of American diplomacy with a prime impact on world affairs was the Open Door initiative of 1900 relating to China. America's primary contest for world power in the first half of this century was at the core a contest with Japan for supremacy in the Pacific. It was an American

initiative that "opened" Japan to the world a hundred years ago, initiating the history that moved from Portsmouth in 1905 to Washington in 1921-22 to Pearl Harbor in 1941. It was the explosion of the struggle for Pacific mastery, rather than any culminating event in Europe which finally pushed this country into the Second World War. In the new and greater power conflict ushered in by the end of the Second World War, Asia quickly became the primary theater, the scene of some of the most fateful decisions and fateful defeats of our current history.

Now, in a manner unthinkable even to most thoughtful Americans a bare dozen years ago, China has become a major factor in domestic American politics, seating and unseating men in high office, building or wrecking public reputations, filling our public prints for months and years on end with concern, alarms, controversy, hand-wringing, recrimination and contumely. More, China--and by definition the rest of Asia--has become a central and even a dominating factor in the host of decisions forced on the United States by its new place in world affairs, affecting in one degree or another our relations with every other nation, friend or foe, on the globe.

Despite this, through almost all of this time, Americans, even thoughtful Americans in high places, have continued to view the world across the Atlantic, keeping

their eyes focused on the closer, more recognizable landscapes of Europe and seeing the East as "Far" when, just behind them, much nearer than they realized, the countries and peoples of whom Americans knew so little were shaping so much of the American destiny.

Yet this lack of knowledge by no means infers a lack of awareness. There are all sorts of scratches on American minds about Asia, associations, images, notions, ideas, information, attitudes, gleaned in fragments over time from childhood or under the more recent pressures of contemporary events. These are still the principal ingredient in American thinking about Asia, even in the thinking of that very small group of Americans who out of need, desire, or duty, have had considerably more contact and experience and knowledge relating to Asia than most of their countrymen. Almost all these deposits left in American minds have in common a quality of remoteness, of the exotic, the bizarre, the unfamiliar, and--before 1941--a lack of connection with the more visible important affairs of life. Hence in differing circumstances to different people, they have seemed vaguely exciting or beautiful or attractive, or vaguely dangerous, ugly, and repellent, and sometimes all these things jumbled together.

The whole is dominated not merely by a sense of incomprehension but of incomprehensibility. Indeed, the

first figure to appear in an Asian setting in many American minds is still very likely to be that well-established creature of the Western imagination, the "inscrutable Oriental," a character who remains very inscrutable indeed so long as he remains unscrutinized.* With the aid of free association, however, he is quickly joined in many American minds by a host of other figures who come to people the scene, figures, images, and ideas, the wispy products of the classroom, Sunday school and church, of dimly-recalled storybooks and magazines, cartoons and photographs, motion pictures, and newspaper columns, semi-ectoplasmic notions so sparse in substance yet so capable of long life and prodigious multiplication. These, like a set of hieroglyphics or cave drawings, are the starting points of our inquiry. There is, of course, no logic or consistency or order in the way these images inhabit corners of our thinking. They recur in different individuals spasmodically and in dismembered pieces. It is only in this form that they have emerged in a lifetime of encounters, in many of these interviews or appeared in

* The formula of inscrutability as a special "Eastern" characteristic remains firmly imbedded. Thus a book advertisement opens: "The Orient has always fascinated us. Wisdom and mystery and subtlety dwell in the East and in its books..." In the same issue of the New York Times Book Review (October 24, 1954), Robert Payne, a prolific writer on Asian themes, starts a book review with this inscrutable sentence: "There are mysteries in the Indian mind which we shall never be able to solve, but there are also implications."

scattered bits in the literature and the public prints over time. The attempt to arrange them in some significant pattern can be made only through speculative and largely intuitive analysis.

II. The Chinese Motifs

Two contrasting associations with Asia are planted early in the mind of almost every American school child: the Mongol hordes and Marco Polo. The first is the ancestor of the threatening image of the "Yellow Peril" and its present-day counterpart. The second is a main source of the sense of glamor, wisdom, and superiority attached to our picture of ancient China. If only from his study of the explorations that led to the discovery of America, the school child has also heard and remembered something about the silk, tea, spices, and riches of Asia for which men ventured so boldly and so far. The sheen and touch and aroma of Cathay or the vaguer "Indies" for which Columbus set sail are mingled in this history with the clank and bravura of the adventurers, the first sallying forth of the churchmen and the great navigators, and the Asian glitter they and their successors brought back to the courts and palaces of Europe.

Here it seems possible to discern a beginning of an important distinction in the sorting of American Asian

associations. The images of splendor and wealth and fabulousness connected with the vague and unsituated "Indies" would seem to have become attached subsequently to India, whose jewel-laden potentates became and have long remained a dominant feature of American thought-patterns about that country. To this later was added the concept of India as a land of religion, of many gods, holy men, and obscure philosophies. In fact, the whole notion of the "mysticism of the East" which remains so firmly imbedded to this day is much more associated in American minds with India than with China or any of the Moslem parts of Asia. The ideas accumulated about China are from the beginning of a quite different order: in some degree we learn early that the Chinese originated gunpowder, made paper and devised printing methods, knew astronomy and mathematics while the Western world still lay largely in savagery, that they had sages, one of whom was named Confucius, built the Great Wall which was one of the wonders of the world, and possessed an ancient wisdom that had to be regarded respectfully. This is the beginning of the critically important fact that of all the countries and peoples of Asia, China and the Chinese have made by far the deepest impression on the American consciousness, that American contacts with China have been more substantial, more particularized, and have created a

far more complex pattern of ideas and images and varieties of actual experience.

Chinese motifs have long been woven into parts of the American fabric. The tea that was dumped into Boston harbor came off a British ship that had just arrived from Amoy, China. The first American clipper ship sailed from New England to the China coast in 1784--bearing the name Empress of China and opening one of the most romantic and glamorized chapters in American maritime history. New England merchant-mariners brought back tea and teak and silk and ideas about China and the Chinese. They gave a Chinese touch to the interior of New England homes and contributed a thin layer of awareness of the Chinese to American minds, a blend of romance, excitement, obscurity, beauty, distance, strangeness, and danger which has continued to exert its influence on American ideas about China down to our own time.

These first contacts are certainly not unrelated to the fact that beginning between 1830 and 1840 first tens then hundreds and eventually thousands of American missionaries went to China to save souls, heal bodies, educate minds. The social and individual roots of this evangelical-benevolent enterprise do not form part of this inquiry. The important fact here is that it did come into being and that it was directed from the beginning

toward the Chinese, spreading to other quarters much later and never on quite the same scale. This enterprise has placed a permanent and even decisive impress on the emotional underpinning of American thinking about China.

While these Americans were beginning to go to China to carry forward there what they regarded as the Lord's work, Chinese emigrants were beginning to come, for quite different reasons, to the United States. Between 1854 and 1882 some 300,000 Chinese laborers entered this country, creating the beginnings of a Chinese segment of American life itself. They became part of the American prejudice pattern, the objects of popular and legal discrimination, and finally of rigid exclusion which lasted until only a few years ago. From among these immigrants and their descendants came figures which are firmly established in American life, literature, and folklore, the pidgin-speaking Chinese cook and laundryman, the slum Chinatowns in the big cities, and the present Chinese population of about 120,000, small but highly visible. Between 1854 and 1949, about 22,000 young Chinese came to this country from China to study at our colleges and universities, establishing still another major current of cultural contact with effects both in the United States and in China over the generations. American trading with China has been more or less continuous since before 1800

and American political relations with China go back, in a formal treaty-making sense, to 1844. American soldiers have fought in big and small wars in China from the time an American adventurer led Manchu forces against the Taiping rebels in the 1860s to the quelling of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, the intervening years of treaty port upheavals and river skirmishes to the great flow of nearly a quarter of a million Americans to China during the Second World War.

Out of all these contacts we have acquired a literature and a certain set of traditions. American scholars, soldiers, journalists, novelists, and artists have produced a great library of works, American books about China, its history, its politics, its society, its art, its poetry, its gardens, and even its cooking. These writers, from S. Wells Williams and H. B. Morse to Pearl Buck, have on the whole created a highly respectful, warmly admiring, and sometimes strongly sentimentalized picture of Chinese life and culture and, despite all its vicissitudes, a very positive picture of the life of the foreigner in China in decades past. From among these writers and students and artists, including many children of missionaries born in China who went into various fields of work in China, including American government service, came a group that was committed in a peculiarly intense way to a special

love for China and almost all its works. Alongside the body of literature produced so largely by this group, another, quite different one came into being, based usually on the Chinese in a foreign setting rather than in China. This was mainly a literature of the bizarre, of crime and adventure: the school of Fu Manchu which for so many Americans is the only school in which they have ever heard anything at all about the Chinese, or, on the side of virtue, the school of Charlie Chan, whose Chinese willness was put at the disposal of law and order and whose pseudo-Confucian maxims became for some years part of the currency of the American language.

These Chinese pieces in the American mosaic are not large when viewed against our culture as a whole; but neither are they small. They are certainly visible to the naked eye. They have established a set of ideas, images, notions, attitudes, and real or vicarious experiences shared in some degree and to some extent by millions of Americans for many generations. As might be expected of a people who have made so much of the duality of the human spirit and experience, these images tend often to come in jostling pairs: the good heathen and the ungrateful wretch, the wise sage and the sadistic executioner, the famine victim and the eater of wondrously good food, the opera bouffe warrior and the heroic or dangerous

fighter, the traditional friend and the contemporary foe, the thrifty and honorable man and the sly and treacherous criminal. These, and many others, occur in American minds with stresses varying widely in time and place. As many of our interviews have shown, they are also often jumbled all together, with particular facets coming more clearly into view when struck by the moving lights of changing circumstances. In recent years these lights have moved with a brightness and a rapidity which, indeed, has often seemed to bewilder and even to blind us all.

III. The Ungrateful Wretches

For more than a hundred years a great many Americans saw the Chinese as good heathen whom they were called upon to help save from damnation. The mission enterprise came out of one of the major growths in American life, evangelical Christianity, with its deepest roots in rural America. Since by far the greater part of this missionary effort was concentrated in China, it created a special and even unique place for that country in the minds of millions of Americans for whom, classically and traditionally, the rest of the world was something to be ignored at almost all cost. This is at least part of the explanation for the remarkable phenomenon in recent American politics in which a great many super-isolationists in

relation to Europe have become super-interventionists where China was concerned. Less spectacularly, but no less significantly, this sense of a special obligation and a special compulsion in relation to China is felt in wide sections of the American population. For this odd fact, the influence and impact of the American missionary experience provides at least one key.

There must be relatively few people of mature age in this country who, if they belonged to one of the great Protestant denominations and went to church at all, have not in some way been touched by this experience. Family connections, friends, or fellow-townsmen went to China as missionaries. Visiting missionaries who had been to China came to the churches of America Sunday after Sunday to tell about their work and to spur their flocks to help. Pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters, great heaps of cherished coins were dropped in the collection plates by children and adults alike for this cause week in and week out, year after year. This procedure and the feelings associated with it have been spontaneously remembered, I might add, by a substantial number of those interviewed so far for the purposes of this study.

This pattern of charity and benevolence, with its accompanying sense of mentorship or even guardianship over the heathen Chinese, became a major theme in American

feeling and behavior toward China over the years. It was coupled--as befitted a conscientious parent of the time--with the judicious display or exercise of force whenever occasion demanded. The clearest early example of this combination of emotions and motivations occurred in 1900 when American troops participated in putting down the Boxer Rebellion; the United States joined with other nations in exacting a heavy indemnity from the feeble Chinese government in Peking, and then used its share of the money as a fund to finance the education of Chinese, mostly in this country. At the same time the United States proclaimed its famous "Open Door Policy"--designed to checkmate the free-for-all encroachments on China that followed the Boxer episode. This policy was a product of many factors and circumstances having almost nothing to do with benevolence. It has nevertheless become the symbolic example at the highest possible level of America's disinterested guardianship over China's best interests.

The missionary movement never succeeded in Christianizing China. The Catholic Church, whose mission enterprise in China was much more European in origin and personnel than American, and which started at least two centuries before the first American Protestant missionaries arrived, eventually claimed about 3,000,000 Chinese Catholics. The total number of Chinese Protestants is put at between

one and two million, a grand total of less than one per cent of the Chinese population. A considerable though indeterminable number of these would often be called "rice-bowl Christians," i.e., Chinese who characteristically accepted church membership for some of its practical advantages. The Chinese acceptance of Western superiority in certain spheres never to any important degree included acceptance of the Western claim of superiority in the sphere of religion. China's own systems were too deeply imbedded and these implied an acceptance of an accumulation of truths rather than the acceptance of a single truth about man's place in the universe.

In any case, the conduct of most Western men and the Western nations in China in this period did not suggest to the Chinese that the particular truth claimed by these foreigners was potent enough to control their actual behavior. Even among missionaries, Christians who acted like Christians were not remarkably common. The Lord's work was unfortunately mixed up too visibly with political and economic pressure, invading warships and armies, and the regime of special privileges established for foreigners symbolized by the foreign gunboats that patrolled China's rivers and foreign forces that occupied strategic treaty ports. The fact that in the first of the West's wars against China (in 1842, 1858, and 1860), the rights of missionaries,

the rights of the opium trade, the forced opening of the treaty ports and the system of special privilege known as extraterritoriality were all negotiated together was not calculated to win a sympathetic Chinese hearing for Christian doctrines of peace, humility, or salvation. Through the decades right up until the 1930s, Chinese resistance to Western encroachment often centered on the missionary as the nearest and prime symbol of the rule of the "foreign devils" and when missionaries were attacked, as they often were, nobody turned the other cheek. More often a gunboat turned up to retaliate. There is really no mystery at all about the Christian failure in China.

Nevertheless, the Christian impact in Chinese affairs has been considerable, if only through the schools in which so many Chinese received their first exposure to Western influences, and from which came so many of the leaders on all sides of China's turbulent politics in the last fifty years. Sun Yat-sen, the father of the Chinese Republic, was a Christian, although in his later years he lost faith in the mentors who failed him. His sister-in-law, Mei-ling Soong, married Chiang Kai-shek, whose rise to power, in 1928, was signalized by his very formal and very public conversion to Christianity. Many missionaries came to invest much of their hope and their commit-

ment in the Chiangs and the regime they symbolized for twenty-one years. Missionaries were prominent among those who first urged the United States to support Chiang in the days when he had barely shed the alliance with Russia and the Communists through which he came to power. In the heavily-charged controversies over China in more recent years, a prominent role has been played by Americans with roots in the mission movement: Congressman Walter Judd, a former China missionary himself, Henry Luce, the son of China missionary parents, John Leighton Stuart, our last ambassador to Nanking, John P. Davies, until recently of the State Department, and others. For these individuals, this involvement with China was never casual or incidental. It was profoundly emotional, even messianic, touching some of the deepest springs of their lives and, often, their own and their parents' lifetimes of work and commitment. In much lesser degree yet still with peculiar force, greater masses of Americans touched by the mission effort identify themselves in a special way with affairs that affect China.

From the pennies in the collection plates through the Boxer Indemnity Fund, the millions of dollars given for churches, schools, hospitals, and for the people to man them, to the hundreds of millions and billions poured out in more direct aid in more recent years, these threads

lead us straight to the fact that Americans had come to expect the emotion of gratitude, not to say affection, from China and the Chinese in a way unique in all American relations with other countries and peoples up to the most recent times. All the difficult and ambivalent psychological pressures attached to the role of benefactor have become part of the American state of mind relating to China. This expresses itself in many ways, but the most important one is that when the Chinese began to "fail" us and, more, came to assume a posture of hostility toward us, they were not merely wretches; they were ungrateful wretches. They were biting the hand that has fed and nourished them these many years; they were repaying good with evil.

This feeling has been more obvious since the Communists won power in China in 1949. But it was an emotion aroused quite clearly before then by the unfortunate failures of the Nationalist regime in which such great hopes had been placed and about which such powerful myths had been propagated. It is not often realized that Chiang Kai-shek and the group around him were, in their own way, also "anti-Western" on historical, political, and cultural grounds, as a reading of Chiang Kai-shek's book, China's Destiny, will readily show. The Kuomintang Nationalists, as well as the Communists, were the products of a nationalist

movement directed against Western power and influence. Both were formed in the same political currents that began to sweep China some 30 years ago. Both share a considerable number of basic notions as well as a great many political-organizational forms and methods.

The American sense that the Chinese have somehow failed us was one of the dominant emotions with which many Americans reacted to the revelations--which began to gain wide currency in 1944 and continued until the Communist takeover in 1949--of the depths of the Kuomintang failure in China: the numerous accounts of corruption, lack of effective leadership, the seeming total incapacity to use American help effectively to meet either the demands of the war against Japan, the needs of the nation and its people after that war was over, or the threat of the Communist onset. It was through this period that many Americans tried in various ways to see the Communists as a hopeful or more tolerable alternative. Many American liberals accepted and clung doggedly to the notion that the Communists were merely "agrarian reformers" and more truly democratic than their Kuomintang opponents. Not a few American military men, often of the most conservative cast of mind both politically and socially, speculatively viewed the Communists in the war years as a more effective military instrument against the Japanese. Later, in 1948 and 1949, the evidence is that American businessmen in

Shanghai--traditionally neither liberal nor wide-eyed-- felt the Communist advent might end the chaos in which it was impossible to do any business and redound to their advantage. In the event, of course, all these expectations were somewhat severely disappointed.

Thus whether by Kuomintang Nationalists or by Communists, Americans have felt betrayed by the Chinese. In the end it turned out that the proffered salvation had been scorned, generations of devoted help nullified, all the schooling and healing and ministering brought to nought, all the advice ignored, all the hundreds of millions of dollars frittered uselessly away. It was possible sometimes to find solace in the belief that the Chinese people as a whole too have been betrayed by successive leaderships. In this continued emotional identification with the Chinese "people" the faith can persist that all was not really in vain, all hope not really gone. But this is an abstraction that is never easy to sustain. The "people" in the mass were little reached by our benefactions. It was the leadership that came within our purview, that we touched with our schools, our gifts, our loans, our ideas. These were the most hopeful of yesterday's heathen, these are the ungrateful wretches of today.

Worst and perhaps most unseating of all, the sense of Chinese betrayal is edged by the accompanying sense of our guilt. Guardianship implies a responsibility: the ward's failure can never be his alone. There was the failure to reach more of the people more adequately; there was the failure to produce effective identification among those we did reach. The mad scramble to pin this guilt on some particular individuals who treasonably or otherwise "lost" China has been more than unscrupulous politics. It has been the desperate search for scapegoats by people who profoundly believed that they "had" China to "lose" and could not or would not accept any share of the blame for failing to hold on to it. From this flows much of the unique intensity and unreasoning quality of American feeling about China and the conflicts over China policy which have dominated American political life for the last five years.

IV. The Subhumans

The picture Americans have had of the Chinese as spiritual and political wards of the American nation casts the Chinese in an essentially inferior role. There is another whole range of images in which the Chinese are seen as something much less than inferior, in which they

are seen in fact as something less than human. These are made up of many ingredients, partly rooted in certain real aspects of Chinese life as viewed or known by Americans, partly in psychological adjustments in American minds to facts which are incomprehensible or intolerable or both.

To begin with, there is the conception of the faceless mass. The one thing that almost all Americans know about the Chinese is that there is a fantastically large number of them. The recurring phrases are "teeming masses" and "swarms" and--especially in military situations--"hordes." In these masses, the individual is indistinguishable. Almost everyone will recognize this in the nearly-universal cliché: "you can't tell one Chinese (or one "Oriental") from another." This faceless mass has produced many different reactions at different times in different Americans. But I am interested here in two attributes that stand out in the cluster attached to it: inhuman cruelty and inhuman powers of endurance.

The association of cruelty with the Chinese is very literal and specific and not at all imaginary in origin. The term "Chinese torture" has a place in our language, signifying devilishly ingenious methods of inflicting pain and death. While the tortures associated with China probably do not exceed in devilishness those even more familiarly associated with medieval Europe, they have had attached to them a quality of terrifying exquisiteness

never quite achieved by the racks of the Inquisition. The survival of these practices into modern times has no doubt had much to do with sharpening and specializing this image. At least until the more recent advent of the totalitarians in Russia and Germany, European or Western peoples liked to think they had advanced beyond the practice of deliberate physical cruelty, at least among themselves. This was certainly the climate among well-meaning and well-intentioned Americans at the turn of this century when, I suspect, the image of the Chinese torturer-executioner made its most vivid impact on a wide public. This occurred when broad currency was given to pictures and accounts of acts committed by Chinese against foreigners and other Chinese during the Boxer uprising in 1900, including most spectacularly the celebrated "torture of a thousand cuts." This was in part a journalistic enterprise, but the same accounts moved even more directly along the channels of the missionary network, since missionaries had been among the victims of Boxer attacks. Images of consummate and fearful evil were set down alongside those of the "good" heathen, pictures of evil not merely ungodly but inhuman. I have had some suggestion from my interviews that these accounts left a lasting mark on many American minds, impressions mitigated only over

long periods of time under the influence of more benign experience.*

For some Americans who in these decades made China their second home, the streak of cruelty in Chinese life could be absorbed for long periods into an acceptance of the fact that humanitarianism, as we understand it (i.e., Good Samaritanism), is largely absent from Chinese social relations outside the boundaries of the family. The indifference--and to American eyes, callousness--of Chinese to the fate of non-relatives in any kind of difficulty had to be understood, and rationalized, as a social product of the grim struggle for survival that characterized Chinese life as a whole. This rationalization could never quite cover the more direct evidences of sadistic violence: indisputable stories of torture have been the common fare

* I am indebted to one interviewee--a man who devoted his whole career to China and rose to prominent place in his field--for a specific reference to a long fictionalized account of missionary travails at the hands of the Boxers in China which appeared in the Youth's Companion which he had read in his boyhood. He remembered neither the title (which turned out to be "The Cross and the Dragon") nor the date (which turned out to be 1911) but he did remember vividly the sensations of terror it aroused. The impression was so sharp and so lasting that fifteen years later, when he unexpectedly received word that he was to be sent to China, the pictures based on this story rose to haunt him in a veritable nightmare, and rose again clearly in the course of our interview, thirty years after that. A typical passage from the story: "...His captors proceeded to extract information by means of such ingenious threats of torture that Jack begged: 'Don't say anything more, Wang Chou! You don't mean a word of it, but this talk of slicing him to death by inches gives me the cold shivers.'"

of all who have run afoul of power in China, whether under the Communist regime or its Kuomintang predecessor. The only new ingredient now would be the special forms of mental torture which are the unique contribution of the Communist totalitarians to the science of sadism. But here, again, the facets shine only when the lights hit them. In 1942 for most Americans the image of "Oriental" cruelty had assumed an identity almost exclusively Japanese. At that time the dominant Chinese figure in the American mind was the heroic, long-suffering ally, while the Japanese was the brutal soldier prodding dying Americans on the march from Bataan. Thus that year in a poll examining American notions of various national characteristics, only 9% chose the adjective "cruel" to describe the Chinese, compared to 52% "honest" and 48% "brave."* It seems fair to assume that had such a poll been taken of an American sample at the height of the Korean war, or at the time of the liberation of American war prisoners after the Korean truce, these figures would have been sharply different. The onset of Communist terror and "persuasion" in China has undoubtedly revived in full measure the deeply latent images of cruelty associated with the Chinese in many American minds, suggesting a

* Unless otherwise indicated, all polls cited in these notes, when dated prior to 1946, are quoted from the Hadley Cantril compilation, Public Opinion, 1935-1946, Princeton, 1951.

power of evil that is not merely inhumane but bestial, not human at all but subhuman.

Linked to this idea of the inhuman power of cruelty in the Chinese is the idea of inhuman powers of endurance. In its crudest form, this has cropped up among American stereotypes in the shape of a notion that the Chinese are somehow "nerveless," that they do not feel pain or suffering or stimulation in quite the same manner that Westerners do. In Race Attitudes in Children, published in 1929, Bruno Lasker reported one example of this from a contemporary detective story magazine:

In the case of ^awhite man, such indulgence might have caused sensational results. The midget, though, was Chinese, which meant that his nerves were not highly organized--that he was virtually immune to stimulants. (p. 205)

Lasker also quoted from a popular camping manual for boys, dated 1921, in which the author discusses nature's power to adapt animal life to the environment, and after speaking of "certain vertebrates, such as the mud turtle and the hellbender," goes on:

And there is the Chinaman, who being of a breed that has been crowded and coerced for thousands of years, seems to have done away with nerves. He will stand all day in one place without seeming in the least distressed; he thrives amidst the most unsanitary surroundings; overcrowding and bad air are as nothing to him; he does not demand quiet when he would sleep nor even when he is sick; he can starve to death with supreme complacency. (Ibid., p. 207)

This statement begins to illuminate a much wider area for us: the cruelty from which these stereotypes help us shrink is not the cruelty of the torture chamber--which can never seem quite real--but the cruelty of Chinese existence, the poverty and unremitting privation of so much of Chinese life, and the capacity of the Chinese to adapt himself to incredibly adverse circumstance. This capacity is, indeed, a distinguishing mark of many Chinese and has commanded the admiration of many who have beheld it. To others, however, it has more often seemed to be a capacity kin to that of the dumb animal who knows no better, unrelated to the more comprehending and more comprehensible behavior of human beings. Something like this was needed by some people over the years to exorcise the reality of hardship in China, to make it possible to attach small emotional weight to images of widespread suffering, disaster, and death. Only this made it possible over many decades for American (and other Western) newspapers to report the deaths of thousands and sometimes millions of people in Chinese famines, floods, and droughts in obscure paragraphs seldom exceeding a few lines in length. These brought little reaction or attention: a few million Chinese more or less could not seem materially important, or could

not be allowed to seem so.*

This process took place at a distance. In decades past China and all Asia might have been located on another planet for all most Americans knew, and this distance in itself played a role in the dehumanization of the Chinese in many American minds. But this reporter watched it take place as a live experience in the minds and behavior of a considerable number of young Americans who were abruptly transplanted as soldiers to the Asian scene during the Second World War and met these faceless masses, so to speak, face to face. The young American soldier came upon a massed kind of poverty inconceivable to him, he encountered brutality, indifference to the wounded. Of this soldier I wrote:

It was too much for him to absorb, even supposing he was willing to absorb it. His initial reaction of shock, pity, perhaps even indignation, usually soon dissolved. He got used to it, as you get used to the smell of a stockyard. He had to live with it, adapt himself to it. He found it increasingly difficult to look upon these Asiatics as men and women. Only some subhuman species could live as they did, submit as they did. You could not apply

* A similar point is suggested by the joke, familiar in the '30s, in which a Chinese receives successive battle reports: 5,000 Japanese killed, 20,000 Chinese killed; 10,000 Japanese killed, 100,000 Chinese killed, and so on through mounting figures in the same proportions. The Chinese smiles gleefully at each new tidings. Asked to explain his joy, he replies: "Fine! Pretty soon no more Japanese."

normal standards to your thinking about them. Pity usually gave way to indifference, impatience; contempt, even hatred. (No Peace For Asia, New York: Macmillan, 1947, p. 8)

Two illustrative anecdotes from the same source: On the scene of a small action in which Chinese soldiers had kept on advancing in the face of Japanese fire that was killing them in masses, the remark was made to a watching American officer that this kind of courage deserved better leadership. "Courage?" he snorted in angry disgust. "All right, courage. But do you say a mule has courage because he keeps on going until he drops?" Another snatch of talk about an action in which the Chinese soldiers died in droves, and as almost always, uselessly:

One American was describing with some passion the course of operations across the river. 'They threw away three thousand men,' he said, 'three thousand men!' One of the others looked at him contemptuously. 'So what,' he said, 'since when are you bleeding for three thousand slopeys? They don't bleed about it, do they?' (Ibid., pp. 30-31.)

One clue to this, I believe, is the fact that Western man--and especially American man--is haunted by the largely unheeded injunction that he be his brother's keeper. Confronted with the scope and depth of human hardship of others about which he could or would do nothing, the only tolerable way out of the dilemma was to deny or at least to diminish the human quality of the suffering in

view: to make the victim something less than his brother. This could be done either by distinguishing no individual victim at all in the great faceless mass, or transmuting him into a different kind of being with a different set of nerves, or no nerves at all, a person, in fact who can "starve to death with supreme complacency," a person who places so much lower a value on his life than we do that we cannot--or dare not--equate his life with one of our own. In short, to make him subhuman.

V. The Superior People

As souls to be saved or as wards or as subhumans, the Chinese have appeared in many American minds in images that have reinforced in different ways the American's sense of superiority. But this pattern co-exists with another, often in these same minds, which acknowledges and admires a whole series of superior aspects in Chinese culture and qualities in what is conceived to be the Chinese character itself.

This sense of a superiority of the Chinese tends to be associated, for the most part, with China's ancient greatness and its surviving legacies. We have already mentioned the fact that almost every American school child at some time or another acquires some impression of China's age, of its superior wisdom and arts in a time long prior to the rise of Western civilization as we know it. Because in many visible forms, at least, this "old" China persisted so nearly into modern times and because in any case the Chinese people are the products of such an impressively long history, the feeling of respectful admiration is often aroused and persists without any clear placement in time. This China, at any rate, is the setting occupied by such figures as the venerable sage, the wise and patient philosopher, the scholar-official, the hardy peasant, the respected father, the faithful son, the dedicated widow, the gifted poet, the teller of tales, the sensitive artist, the skilful artisan, and many others.

Of these figures perhaps the most pervasive is the sage. Here we find the whole cluster of knowledge, notions, and associations which has made the very name of Confucius a popular symbol of wisdom. At a broad, popular level this may consist only of the bare knowledge that a sage named Confucius lived a long time ago and represents not only wisdom but piety and common sense. In some cases, this may be no more than a reflection, in people of a certain age, of the impact of Earl Derr Bigger's character, the detective Charlie Chan, who in magazine, film, radio, and comic strips, seen and heard by millions in the 1930s, always punctuated his sleuthing triumphs with some ^{ast} joristic bit beginning "Confucius say---." But we also encounter this awareness at quite another level, where serious scholarship or serious reading, or an interest in philosophy or religion, has led to more substantial contact with the literature of Chinese thought. There is a considerable shelf of books written by Americans on this subject and a fairly steady reprinting of various excerpts and semi-popular interpretations of the works of Chinese philosophers. I find that almost regardless of the extent of actual knowledge the words pragmatic, rationalist, orderly, serene, sophisticated are among those most often evoked in this connection. These all suggest values, both of intellect and of personality, with obvious attractiveness for a great many Americans. Indeed, for American scholars, teachers, and intellectuals, especially there is a certain warming of the cockles associated with the top ranking given to their similars in the formal

code of the old Chinese society. This is an ordering of prestige which often contrasts rather sharply with that of our own society and I suspect it to be at least one source of the generalized attitude of admiration for the Chinese that I find among Americans of this type. In the classrooms of our country - perhaps even in high school but certainly in college - some of this has rubbed off on a great many Americans indeed.

Here too we find other fragments of awareness of features of Chinese ^{life} and character which frequently arouse respect or admiration or aesthetic pleasure. Whether by comparison or by contrast, many of these represent values highly regarded by many Americans, e.g. family responsibility, respect for the aged, filial piety, admiration for learning, and a talent for exquisite art and workmanship. Along with these will also frequently go a set of more stereotyped characteristics widely attributed to the Chinese character as such: honesty, industry, thrift, frugality, serenity.* The notion that the Chinese possess these things in superior measure is widespread and deeply imbedded. It comes in part from images evoked in the classroom, or from reading books like the "Dream of the Red Chamber," the works of Lin Yu-Tang in the years of his American vogue, or, even more popularly, the novels

* --- These attributed characteristics, in both their positive and negative forms will be examined in a later section of this paper on "The Chinese in the U. S. "

of Pearl Buck, and perhaps most of all from the early reading of Chinese folk tales in the many anthologies and story books widely read by American children even now. These have been recalled, almost always with a noticeable glow of pleasure, by a remarkable number of those interviewed so far in this study.

It comes, too, from examples of Chinese art and craftsmanship which have, of course, a long history of impact on the senses of both Europeans and Americans: the vogue for chinoiserie which developed in Europe two centuries ago persists in various forms down to our own day. The characteristic lines of Chinese architecture bring instant recognition in almost any person who has ever held a geography book or a story book in his hand. Western museums and private collections are crowded with Chinese jades and carvings and porcelains, with paintings, scrolls, rich silks and tapestries. Indeed, even though the art of glazing has been firmly naturalized in several European countries, the associations of fragile beauty with fine china occasionally add another fragment to this highly idealized view of Chinese culture and its products. The use of Chinese styles and motifs in interior decoration, quite common in our own day, still is not always the happiest kind of aesthetic borrowing, but it clearly satisfies many people, giving them a sense of the unique, the exotic, the beautiful, in ways that clearly contribute much to this positive and admiring view of things Chinese.

These are, so far, bits and pieces of appreciations, notions, and behavior quite common among Americans who have never been to China or even dreamed of going there. But broadened and deepened to take in all the multiplying and ramifying experiences of the small number of Americans who have gone there, who have lived there for years or decades, and who have made China their careers, this is the stuff of which sinophiles are made. Not only from among missionaries, but from among those who went to China during the last half-century to study or teach or write, to serve as diplomats or in other government posts, or even to do business, there emerged a distinctive group marked by a deeply sentimental attachment to their Chinese environment. This would sometimes be precious, even ridiculous, taking on some of the more transparent attributes of expatriation. Sometimes it might reflect the extraordinary psychological and physical comfort of the foreigner's life in China in the more placid interludes of these years: the deference received, the apartness and uniqueness achieved, the high individual visibility of the foreigner in the swarming sea of Chinese faces, the satisfying ease and inexpensiveness of space and service. In this setting not a few Americans lapsed rather easily into patterns typical of many colonial Europeans. But for many others in China, it could also be the respect commanded by the great past, the impressiveness of the literature, the history, the art, or the visible relics and

legacies of it all - the temples, the walls, the countrysides crusted with the many layers of the millenia. It could often be, too, a response to the living landscape, the cheerful clatter of everyday existence even amid hardship, the beauty beyond the squalor in the scene, in the life, in the people themselves. It could be a sense of the need to expiate guilt for wrongs done, for privations caused or imposed. It could be the friendships and the loyalties and the continuous discovery of the new and the arresting in a culture so old and a setting so different and, in so many ways, admirable. These individuals are relatively few in number. But they are the authors of many books, the writers of much correspondence. They are now in exile from their second home and many are occupying chairs and posts in universities, in publishing, in museums, business, and government. They are the source of one of the deeper currents of special feeling about China, in and of themselves and, more widely, among the many to whom they manage to communicate the quality of their particular emotions on the subject.

The notion of the superiority of Chinese civilization - sometimes identified with the distant past but often attributed in some measure to the present - is widely held. This seems to be true whether the contact has been direct and deeply personal or vagrant and vicarious, the result of conscious study or only a snatch of feeling or idea associated

with something beyond immediate recall. This has shown up quite clearly in almost all the interviews conducted so far in the course of my present inquiry: of those with some personal experience in China all but a few display some facet of this highly positive emotional bias and a majority of those without any such experience show some indication of having been touched somewhere, sometime, by a similar or related feeling. Again, I suspect this to be almost unique among the patterns of American relationships with other peoples and cultures. There is some comparison to be made between this and the special attachment of some Americans to the life and culture of England. More nearly comparable, perhaps, might be the special place occupied in some American minds by the culture, people, history, art, and life of France.*

*---As in the case of France, the matter of food is mixed up somewhere in this picture. Chinese food has won a special place, even in this land of many cuisines. I do not know that any enterprising researcher has looked into the matter, but it is hard not to suspect that the vast numbers of Americans who leave Chinese restaurants every day with a great sense of wellbeing do develop some feeling of admiration for the originators of such delectables, especially if this is the only or principal contact they have all their lives long with anything Chinese. This invites some speculation about the possibilities of the encounter in some American minds between the stereotyped figure of the chronically-starved Chinese and the heaped rich dishes of the typical Chinese dinner. This may occur rarely among eaters at Chinese restaurants in this country. But it is worth mentioning that for Americans who have eaten in restaurants in China, it was a repeated and quite literal experience: the poor would often be clustered there, seeking scraps at the back doors. Americans sensitized to such contrasts -- and few were not -- would on such occasions eat not only good food but, in an eloquent Chinese phrase, bitterness too.

VI- The Warriors

American images of the Chinese as warriors have passed through a remarkable series of transformations within a relatively brief span of historic time. Drawing more or less erratically from both fact and fancy, this set of images describes a wide circle around which we can discern at least the following:

- 0- the Mongol hordes in the time of Genghiz Khan (fearful)
- 0- the low-status warrior in ancient Chinese society (odd)
- 0- the opera bouffe warrior of the warlord period, 1912-37 (comic)
- 0- the heroic fighter resisting Japanese invasion, 1937-41 (admirable)
- 0- the incompetent, graft-ridden, useless ally in the war against Japan, 1941-45 (aggravating)
- 0- the competent, fanatic, well-trained hordes in the time of Mao Tse-tung, current (fearful and dangerous).

Of course, the Mongol hordes of the 13th century were not Chinese, but are generally lumped with the Chinese in a generalized image of Asiatic barbarism. This image, as I have already suggested, is the clear ancestor of many of the notions attached in modern times to the idea of the "Yellow peril," awakened by the events of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, the non-military but still related idea of the "swarms" of immigrating Chinese overwhelming the white population of, say, California, the sense that runs through much political writing about China in the past 50 years that it was a sleeping giant (or, more

typically cartoon style, a sleeping dragon) which, once awakened would breathe fire again across the world. This fear-inspiring image lay dormant through much of this time but it could be and has been intermittently revived by recurring events. One example of this was the lurid prophecy written by the sensationalist Floyd Gibbons in 1929 under the title "The Red Napoleon". Gibbons depicted the rise of a new Genghiz Khan, rising in Asiatic Russia, who would, under the red banner, come close to destroying the world in a war scheduled to take place between 1933 and 1938. This story appeared serially in the Hearst press, the ancestral American home of the Yellow Peril. It was splashed with illustrations which evoked the full nightmare quality of new Mongol hordes over-running the peaceful order of Western civilization. The same Hearst press within a few years was dealing admiringly with the rise of the forces which did, in fact, lead to a new barbarian descent on Europe in 1939, not out of Asia but out of one of the cradles of our own civilization. This brief resurgence of the Hun overlay only for a time, however, the more fearful images and expectations out of Asia which have never been quite extinguished and which have now been revived in much fuller and more substantial form since the Communist conquest of China in 1949.

The cycle has carried us from fearful hordes to fearful hordes in seven centuries, but in between we have experienced a series of

quite contrasting images of the Chinese as warrior. One of these is connected with the moderately well-known fact that in ancient Chinese society the warrior occupied the bottom rung of the social scale. He was no pariah - Chinese history is full of its warrior-heroes - but in a formal sense he was assigned a low rating of social prestige. This was an odd sort of fact, capable of appealing to the impulse toward pacifism in the Christian tradition or even an idealized sweet reasonableness: it contributed in some measure to the image of wise serenity associated with ancient Chinese culture.

There is a related image, associated with much more modern times, which was, by contrast, definitely comic in its impact. This was the image of the opera bouffe soldier of the warlord era of recent Chinese history, the decades roughly between 1912 and 1937. This was the image of the Chinese soldier carrying an umbrella and a seldom-used gun, of battles fought rather across cups of tea than contested terrain, of victory-through-bribery or victory-through-compromise rather than by actual force of arms. The impression left by much of the voluminous literature written by Americans in this period was one of recurring civil wars which managed to disrupt the life of the country but which were fought on the whole more with "silver bullets" than with lead, i.e., the judicious purchase of treason in the camp of the foe. There was some measure of truth in this picture, although large numbers

of impressed soldiers and even larger numbers of innocent bystanders in the countryside were killed just as dead in Chinese civil wars as people are in Western wars. These deaths among the faceless millions seldom registered.

The image of the opera bouffe warrior and his warlord master began to give way somewhat during the great revolutionary upheavals that occurred in China in the 1920s but it persisted well into the period of the Japanese invasion of China, which began in Manchuria in 1931. This invasion marks a great watershed in the course of American relationships with Asian affairs. In the beginning, of course, it stirred only a few Americans in a few high places to a new sense of the growing Japanese threat to the United States. At the outset it made relatively little impact on the minds of Americans, generally, and this is one reason why Henry L. Stimson's attempt to take a "strong" line at the time failed. This, it seems fair to say, was due at least in part to the fact that the Japanese marched rather than fought their way to their large conquests of this period. The official Chinese policy then, and for six years afterward, was "non-resistance," signalized by the ignominious retreat from Manchuria of the "Young Marshal" Chang Hsueh-liang's much-touted armies, and the repeated surrenders, concessions, and compromises by the Nationalists at Nanking under Chiang Kai-shek, copied

to the rigorous repression of those who did want to resist the Japanese encroachments.

The two examples of such resistance which might just possibly be remembered by some Americans - the running fight by the Manchurian general Ma Chan-shan as he retreated northward toward Siberia late in 1931 and the more spectacular 34-day resistance of the 19th Route Army in Shanghai in January - February, 1932 - both occurred in defiance of the official leadership, a fact little appreciated outside of China at the time. Both episodes did, however, through being widely reported - especially the battle at Shanghai which took place before the eyes of an astounded foreign community and a large body of hastily-assembled foreign correspondents - begin the process of effacing the image of the opera bouffe Chinese soldier from the American mind. It began to be replaced with the picture of hardy soldiers capable of great military feats when decently-led and motivated.

This change did not become generally effective until 1937 when the Japanese began their full-scale invasion of China Proper itself, when Chiang Kai-shek finally took the path of resistance, and when, in December of that year the Japanese entry into the city of Nanking was accompanied by rapine and mass slaughter. This last was a particularly well-reported event. It aroused indignation, horror, and to some extent, fear, in large sections of the American public. Chiang Kai-shek's military showing in this initial period of resistance was not spectacular.

All the disabling factors which were to emerge to bedevil American military men a few years later were decisive in large measure in reducing Chinese military effectiveness against the Japanese. But there was ample opportunity for the Chinese soldier to show the world his hitherto unsuspected worth. Mostly in desperate rear guard actions or isolated battles, Chinese units fought hard and helped make many a Chinese defeat look like a moral victory, especially in view of the immense disparity in armaments and war supplies between the contending forces. A new Chinese military figure entered the ~~background~~^{foreground} of the American imagination: the heroic defender facing the well-mounted Japanese invader almost barehanded and doggedly giving up ground only when it had been rendered useless to the invader; It is not now commonly remembered that the phrase scorched earth entered our language from the Chinese at this time.* This impression derived in large measure from the truly remarkable spectacle of long lines of Chinese burden-bearers carrying whole factories in bits and pieces inland from the coast. This was recorded in newsreels and photos which made a tremendous impact at the time and which have been spontaneously recalled by not a few of the respondents in the present inquiry. There was, in short, enough striking reality in these events to provide the basis

*--- The Chinese phrase was chao tu, literally, burned earth. Another Chinese phrase acquired general currency at this same period: yi kung chien hwang shih chien, trade space for time.

for the much more imaginative mythology about the defenders of China which became common currency among millions of Americans between 1937 and 1941, especially as it was personalized in the figures of Chiang Kai-shek and his wife, Mai-ling Soong.

Strong sympathy for China in the war with Japan developed among Americans after 1937. It was partly rooted in half-facts and half-myths, and partly in a slowly - awakening self-interest. This sympathy seemed to be to a considerable extent, a spontaneous reaction to events widely and graphically reported in the American press. It was also fanned by ardent and energetic propaganda efforts by individual missionaries and some missionary groups, and by other pressure groups which took their cue from what we might call the Stimson outlook of that period, i.e., the growing sense that Japan was becoming a dangerous foe, that not only the welfare of the underdog China was involved, but the safety and security and power of the United States itself. This conviction took root and steadily grew, as the opinion poll data to be summarized elsewhere in this study will show. The sense of the need to do something to help China rose in direct proportion to the growth of the awareness that Japan's course was a threat to the United States. In the beginning there was not enough popular feeling, as the polls indicated, to stimulate any boycott of Japanese products by ordinary American consumers and certainly not enough to impede the conduct of profitable

business between this country and Japan in scrap metal, oil, cotton, and other vital materials. While this was going on, the Chinese - feeling strongly betrayed, incidentally, by the United States - got most of their outside help from Russia, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. By 1940, however, American sentiment had established itself to the point where official bans were placed on this trade, and by the end of 1941, as the polls quite clearly showed, a majority of Americans had become ready to go to war with Japan, if necessary, to check its onward march. Pearl Harbor opened a new series of events and experiences in the course of which our image of the Chinese as warrior shifted again to new ground.

The experience of Americans in relation to China during and after the Second World War is, of course, a large and largely controversial subject. This experience culminated in the Communist conquest of China and was followed by the "great debate" over China policy in all the country's forums, big and small. These events brought China to the front and center of the American political scene, where it has remained and will remain for the indefinitely long future. One primary object of our present inquiry is to glimpse, if we can, the reshaping of old and the rise of new images about China in American thinking as a result of this experience. This will involve some detailed examination under

at least two main headings: (1) the impact of their China experience on Americans who were actually in China during some part of this time and (2) the impact of these events on the American public and, most particularly, on the individuals who are the subjects of this investigation. Since, as a participant observer, I have already written some of my impressions of the first of these items (* In No Peace for Asia, Chap.1.) and since discussion of the second might much better await the completion of my present interviewing schedule, this larger subject will not figure directly in the present draft of background notes.

Concerning our images of the Chinese as warriors, however, some observations can pertinently be added here. During the Japanese war, American military men worked with the Chinese armies from the top staff down to the battalion level, in staff planning, in training programs, and in actual combat operations. The result, in general, was frustration. The effort suffered in part from limitations imposed by the wartime strategy which made China a low-priority theater. But far more saliently, these Americans came up against circumstances for which they had hardly been prepared by the propaganda of the "heroic" period in China before Pearl Harbor. These included the stricken weakness of the Chinese nation, its size and backwardness, prevalent corruption and ineptitude in high places, and absence of effective leadership capable of arousing and maintaining popular support and -

because of all these things - an incapacity to marshal and use an effective military force. The result, in the end, was an abandonment of all military plans that called for any major effort on mainland China.

Reactions of the individual Americans involved in this enterprise, of course, varied very widely. It seems fair to say, however, that a predominant impression with which they left China was one of "a hopeless mess." For some, it was the Chinese leadership that was most spectacularly hopeless. A smaller number developed some respect for the ordinary Chinese soldier but in large part he, too, was seen as the hopeless - and helpless - victim of circumstances. It was quite common to hear among American military men in China the remark that "a few American divisions" in China could accomplish more than the whole Chinese army of several million men. This army was seen as an amorphous, buttery mass incapable of functioning effectively, incapable of learning adequately from its American instructors, too backward and lacking in essential education to make good use of modern techniques and weapons of warfare.

How much of this seeped eventually to a wider American public would be difficult to say. The wartime "China problem" blew up in November, 1944, with the recall of General Joseph Stilwell from the China command. This was followed by a rash of "revelations" in

responsible American newspapers and magazines about Chinese corruption and inefficiency. This related to much more than Chinese military capacity alone. It brought into question the ability of the Chinese regime to survive. It was this sense of the danger of total collapse that led the United States Government, between 1946 and 1948, into the vain attempt to find a formula for saving the Chinese Nationalists from total collapse through some kind of coalition arrangement that would avert or postpone the Communist power drive. When this failed, the Nationalists simply crumbled before the advancing Communists. If none of the preceding events had done so, the swift Communist victories in 1949 certainly gave a fairly wide American public a picture of a Chinese leadership no longer heroic but broken and rendered impotent largely by its own internal weakness. These are the matters which became the subject of the "great debate" in the United States which reached its height in 1950-51. This debate was made to center on two main allegations: that the United States could have done more to support the Nationalists and thereby kept us from "losing" China and that its failure to do so was the result not merely of incompetence but of treason on high places in Washington. Later on in our present inquiry, we will have occasion to review the impact and residual effect of this controversy, at least as it shows up in its effect on the individuals interviewed. But what we do wish to note here is the

remarkable transformation that has taken place amid these events in American images of the Chinese as warriors.

Chinese soldiery, a pulpy and ineffectual mass under the Nationalist banner, became, under the Communists, powerful and threatening hordes. The Chinese Communist army had previously impressed American military observers with its superiority over the Nationalists but there was relatively little preparation for the fanatically effective power which was uncovered in Korea when a Chinese army crossed the Yalu at the end of 1950 and all but engulfed the opposing American force. In the picture of a Chinese force described at the time as totalling about a million men driving down upon an American and allied force perhaps a fifth as large, all the imagery deriving from the Mongol hordes concept was sharply and frighteningly revived. Much was made of the sheer business of numbers. But there was more to it than this: the Chinese attackers used artillery and their other weapons in a manner that Americans who had tried to teach these arts in China only a few years earlier would have regarded as impossible. The irony was even more complete, because no small part of the Chinese force that entered Korea consisted precisely of soldiers who had been at least partially-trained by Americans during the war against Japan and the arms they used were, in large measure, arms supplied at that time by the United States.

The new image of the Chinese as warriors is actually dominated by much more than the concept of fanatically murderous masses. These are Mongol hordes with big guns and jet aircraft and men who apparently know how to use our own weapons against us. We have, thus, undergone a transformation in our image not only of the Chinese as warrior, but of the Chinese as military technician. Both in relation to Korea and Indochina, the training of Korean and Indochinese Communists by the Chinese in the technical crafts of war has been cited again and again in official statements and in the public prints as a matter of dangerous concern. This has been paralleled, in these few short years, by acceptance of the picture of the Chinese as technical mentors in the crafts of peace as well: Chinese railroad and communications and industrial assistance is announced as being provided to Communist allies both in Korea and Indochina. And all this from a country which less than a decade ago was viewed both by American specialists and by a wider public as almost hopelessly backward and incapable of marshalling a military power dangerous to anybody but itself. Today China is ranked as a military power in American strategic calculations far above most of the countries of Western Europe. We see the Chinese as military foes second in weight and menace only to the Russians themselves. It would seem rather important to ponder the meaning of this staggering transposition of images or of facts in this brief period of time.