

CHINA

AND THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM,
1840–1949

Power, Presence, and Perceptions in a Century of Humiliation



DAVID SCOTT

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DAVID SCOTT

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS

Published by
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS, ALBANY

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For information, contact State University of New York Press, Albany, NY
www.sunypress.edu

Production, Laurie Searl
Marketing, Anne M. Valentine

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Scott, David, 1952–

China and the international system, 1840–1949 : power, presence, and perceptions in a century of humiliation / David Scott.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-7914-7627-7 (hardcover : alk. paper) 1. China—Foreign relations—1644–1912.
2. China—Foreign relations—1912–1949. I. Title.

DS754.18.S4 2009
327.51009'034—dc22

2007052938

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*China is a sleeping giant.
Let her lie and sleep,
for when she awakens,
she will shake the world.*

Napoleon Bonaparte,
(apocryphal)

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PREFACE

The “Century of Humiliation” as a Retrospective Icon

In 1994 the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League published its Patriotic Education Poster Set, to commemorate “victory” over Japan in World War II. However, the Sino-Japanese conflict of 1937–1945 was deliberately put into a much wider context in the poster *Women zen neng wangdiao* (How Can We Forget), indeed a good example of “the Chinese ‘victimization narrative’” (Landsberger 2007) generated during the “Century of Humiliation” (*Bainian guochi*). In this poster, China’s preceding Century of Humiliation—from 1842 to 1949—emerged as a powerful iconic theme. The poster’s central image was a ruined column from the Imperial Yuanming Yuan Summer Palace near Beijing, which was deliberately sacked by British troops in 1860, complete with a general aerial view of a section of the palace complex. In turn smaller pictures in the four corners encapsulated the Century of Humiliation. From top left going clockwise, the “Opium War” of 1840–1842 was shown through a picture of vessels on fire; the varied “Unequal Treaties” imposed during the nineteenth century were shown through some fifteen volumes on a shelf; the multinational outside intervention to crush the Boxer Revolt of 1900 was shown through photographs of marching troops; and the Nanjing Massacre carried out by Japan in 1938 was shown through graphic close-up photography. The images’ common characteristics were summed up by the accompanying text: “Why the descendants of the dragon [were] reduced to the ‘Sick Man of the East’ and subjected to endless bullying and humiliation.” The lesson, stated there, was “the hundred years of humiliation have told us that when you are backwards, you come under attack.”

This study follows that Century of Humiliation. It considers the power, presence, and perceptions at play during that period with regard to China’s

relations with the world, and with regard to the world's relations with China. The study is neither a study of China per se, nor a study of her internal history and politics during that time period. It is, though, a study of how, on the one hand, the outside world and the Western-dominated "international system" considered and so responded to China, and, on the other hand, a study of how China operated and tried to operate within that international system. It thus deals with what Charles Fisher once called "the great problem of China's place in the world" (1970: 534), a problem for China and a problem for the world. An initial overview of insights and approaches from IR International Relations and from History disciplines brings out the roles of culture, identity, race, and images. A chronological approach is then taken. Here, images and realities collided in a tangled relationship between China and the international system, leaving a substantial post-1949 legacy. China's national humiliation was played out on the international stage. To this period of national and international humiliation for China we now turn.

Transliteration and Word Order

Romanization of Chinese “Mandarin” presents some challenges, given the existence of the Wades-Giles system, first introduced by Thomas Wades in 1859 and modified by Herbert Giles in 1912. Both these figures were scholars, but also British diplomats in China. Their Wades-Giles system is still quite widespread in Formosa “Taiwan,” but generally this is gradually being superseded by the Pinyin system. The Pinyin system was first developed in the Soviet Union in 1931 for use by Chinese immigrants living there, with a slightly revised version then being adopted in the People’s Republic of China, where it was officially adopted by the government in 1979. Here, Pinyin transliteration is on the whole followed in the text for names; for example, Li Hongzhang rather than Li Hung-chang, Beijing rather than Peking. However, quotes are kept with whatever transliteration format they used—often Wades-Giles. A few names still remain more familiar under their older Wades-Giles form, and are so retained for pragmatic reasons (for example, Sun Yat-sen rather than Sun Yixian, Chiang Kai-shek rather than Jiang Jieshi, Canton rather than Guangzhou, Hong Kong rather than Xianggang).

In terms of word order in the main body of the text, Chinese names generally follow traditional Chinese rules of family name followed by personal name, such as Mao Zedong rather than Zedong Mao. However, in the case of Western Christian names, the text follows the Western system of personal name coming before family name—for example, Samuel Lin rather than Lin Samuel. Japanese names follow the Western order. Quotes retain the name format and transliteration system used in the original.

Such language matters reflect some of China’s shifting role within Western-dominated academic circles, and indeed within the wider international system.

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ONE

International Relations, History, and “Images”

*China is a giant screen
upon which outsiders project their hopes and fears . . .
where it might be going,
and what consequences that direction will hold
for the rest of the world.*

—David M. Lampton, 2004

*How China relates to the international system
has been a perennial issue
besetting both the Chinese nation and the world
since China was forcibly drawn
into the European-centred international system
in the mid-nineteenth century.*

—Deng Yong and Wang Fei Lang, 1999

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AND CHINA: A CHALLENGE OF TOPIC AND DISCIPLINARITY

FUTURE, PRESENT, PAST—China and the world matter for each other. From 1842 to 1949, images, attitudes, and structures were forged that shape much of the present debate about China’s place in the world after 1949, as the People’s Republic of China then stood up to, and in, the world (Scott 2007). China’s preceding Century of Humiliation involved both “perception” and “power” in the international system, by the world about China, and by China about the world. Talk of China’s “awakening” was interwoven with talk of China’s “death” (Fitzgerald 1994).

In the story of the West's expansion during the nineteenth century, China had an unusual fate. It did not become a direct Western colony, as did India and most parts of Southeast Asia and Africa. Yet it did not adapt and modernize enough, as did Japan, to enable it to survive intact. Instead, for about one hundred years, China limped along in the international system, neither one thing nor the other. It was the most populous state on the globe, accounting for one-quarter of the world's population, yet it also conceded territory and sovereignty rights to a plethora of outside countries, including even small European countries like Belgium and Portugal with a fraction of its population and size. China was neither a colony nor sovereignly independent. It was in the "Community of Nations," yet humiliatingly seen as the "Ward of [Western] Civilization." Part of the "international system" and its power distributions, it was not necessarily part of "international society" and its shared norms.

China's Century of Humiliation lasted from the First Opium War of 1840–1842 through to the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The changes in China's international fortunes were dramatic. As "a dominant majority civilization that rather suddenly found itself in a minority position in the world . . . in retrospect, China's nineteenth-century experience therefore became a stark tragedy, an unforeseen and certainly enormous decline and fall almost without equal in history" (Fairbank 1978: 3). It brought an extended period of pressure, dismissal, and "disrespect" from the West and later Japan toward China's territorial integrity, legal sovereignty, and civilizational value. As Wang Jingwei summed up in 1928, China became a "pariah among the nations" (1928: v). This situation was unusual for its length of time, in terms of an ongoing ambiguous semidependency.

China's presence in the international system, then and now, has been flush with uncertainties. As Deng Yong and Wang Fei Lang put it, "How China relates to the international system has been a perennial issue besetting both the Chinese nation and the world since China was forcibly drawn into the European-centred international system in the mid-nineteenth century" (1999: 11). Indeed, for Deng Yong, "the experience of China's interaction with the international system clearly shows there exists a fundamental uneasiness in how China relates to the world . . . a highly problematic relationship between China *and* the world" (2000: 42). China has been an ambiguous and unsettling, to adapt Kroestler, ghost in the international machine. China's very presence, in the abstract and in the flesh, was a challenge to the international system. In turn, the presence of the international system in and on China was often an extremely emotive and explosive issue. In part this was because China's weakness enabled outside pressures and humiliating conditions to be placed on it and consequent rivalries to spring up among those outside Powers. For China, an extra demeaning element lay in the Century of Humiliation having replaced and overturned the country's previous preeminence and prestige as the "Middle Kingdom."

That gave rise to a paradox throughout China’s period of humiliation, where its “actual” weakness was juxtaposed with perceptions in China and in the West of its latent “potential” strength. Alongside China’s ongoing Century of Humiliation as the decrepit Sick Man of Asia lay frequent talk of its awakening and, for some in the West, a lurking Yellow Peril threat. China was seen as a sleeping giant, a double-sided image. On the one hand, it was asleep and inert. On the other hand, if or when it awakened, it was perceived as having the ability to throw its weight around as a giant on the move. Behind these direct images have been the indirect images—for Lampton unwitting testimony now but also then, as to how “China is a giant screen upon which outsiders project their hopes and fears . . . where it might be going, and what consequences that direction will hold for the rest of the world” (2004: 163).

Meanwhile, the emotive ideational sense of “humiliation” had a longer effect across the Chinese political landscape. That period of humiliation and unfulfilled potential cast a long shadow that continues to affect Chinese foreign policy, strategic culture, and *weltanschauung* worldview. Collective memory is an acknowledged feature of national identity and national projection (Halbwachs 1992; Confino 1997). Certainly, the Century of Humiliation entered China’s collective memory in a clear and central way. As Hevia put it, “the traumatic events of the last century live on, refracted and distorted through nightmarish dreamscapes about Oriental menaces and obsessions with national humiliation . . . Fu-Manchu phobias in the West and fixations on national humiliation in the People’s Republic” (2003: 349, 350).

To deal with this large topic, various integrative analytical tools, approaches, and considerations can be followed from History and International Relations disciplines (Elman and Elman 2001). From their integration, certain overlapping themes become of noticeable significance for the presence and role of China in the international system during its Century of Humiliation—namely culture and identity, race, and images.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Culture is, of course, difficult to define, though still recognizable in effect. Issues of culture and international power are important issues in History and IR discussions. Among historians, Iriye’s paradigm of “International Relations as Intercultural Relations” (1979) is one in which a “cultural approach to diplomatic history can start with the recognition that nations like individuals . . . develop visions, dreams, and prejudices about themselves and the world that shape their intentions . . . the mind-sets of leaders and peoples” (1990: 100, 101; also Stephanson 1998). Lilley and Hunt’s “cosmopolitan connection” (1987) deliberately considered social history, the state, and foreign relations together. Equally deliberately, Jespersen’s *American Images of*

China from 1931–1949 saw him “bringing together cultural and diplomatic histories” (1996: xv). Strahan’s analysis of the evolution of foreign policy in Australia’s relationship with China also noted the danger of “ignoring or downplaying wider questions of national culture . . . It is necessary to read between and beyond the lines of official records,” for “decision makers did not act in a vacuum or in detached isolation, but in the context of a culture infused with conceptions of . . . place in . . . the world” (1996: 2). China’s normative sense of its own place in the world was diametrically opposed to the place allocated to it in the international system. Westad has argued, in relation to Sino-Soviet relations after 1949 that “the tricky concept of *culture* in international relations does have the advantage that it slips past *ideology* to form general patterns of behaviour, texts, myths, and symbols with an intrinsic value [and thus effects] to a social or ethnic group” (1998: 3). This is also true for various external relations that China was involved in before 1949.

IR scholars have also considered culture. Geoculture has emerged alongside geoeconomics and geopolitics. Dore argued that “cultural differences matter to the student of international order” (1984: 407). Questions of *strategic culture* at the general level (Lantis 2005) and with regard to China (A. Johnston 1995, Scobell 2002) point to China’s past, and to Chinese attitudes and worldview on war and peace generated from its culture. Meanwhile, Kratochwil and Lapid recorded *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (1996), and Tamamoto asserted that “culture and identity have been salient and obvious factors in shaping the history of international relations” (2003: 193). Here, Krause and Renwick have pursued *Identities in International Relations* (1996). Certainly national and international identity issues were prominent in China during its Century of Humiliation, as one-quarter of the world’s population grappled with dealing with the international system, and indeed the international system grappled with dealing with China. For Zhou there was the question of “the shift in the balance of power from East to West” impacting on “Qing ideals, sense of identity . . . and the conflicting systems of these two quite different civilizations” (2007: 447; also Zhang and Xu 2007). Certainly, *China’s Quest for National Identity* (Dittmer and Kim 1993) within the international system is considered in this study.

Moreover, China’s role and impact in the international system during its Century of Humiliation has also affected the national identity of other actors. To China’s north, Lukin argues, “for centuries the image of China has played an important role in Russian thought . . . has played a more general role as a reference point for Russian thinking about Russia itself, its place in the world, its future and the essence of ‘Russianness’” (2002: 86). To China’s south, Strahan argues, “the impact of China on Australia was to become profound, even if often negatively,” where “the encounter with China, an old, highly developed and apparently alien nation brought cultural differences and similarities into sharper focus, encouraging Australians to define themselves”

(1996: 6). Consequently, "Australian national identity gained definition and coherence in juxtaposition to China. Australianness was revealed through the articulation of opinions concerning Chinese, and the question 'What is China' also partly answered the question 'What is Australia'" (6). Similar national identity formations can be seen in the American encounter with China and the Chinese, on both sides of the Pacific.

China interacted with the international system both within its own borders and outside them as Chinese emigrants went out across the Asia-Pacific and became the Other in Australia, Canada, and, above all, the United States. Consequently, identity issues have also been in play across the Asia-Pacific, with Chinese "trans-Pacific . . . borderless family networks" (Liu 2002: 16) creating positive and negative images of the Other. San Francisco's Chinese community was, indeed, "trans-Pacific" (Y. Chen 2000). Ong's *The Cultural Logic of Transnationality* saw the Chinese diaspora as generating "tensions with imagined transnational collectivities . . . racial imaginaries that cut across state borders" (1999: 56, 59), something of relevance for the nineteenth century as well as more recent times. Perceptions were evident around "the potential of widely and dangerously innovative powers associated with Chinese diasporic mobility" (20), then as well as now.

Among IR analysts, cultural forces are highly charged. Pre-1949 China can be taken as a classical case to be examined in the studies of cultural and civilizational conflicts in the international system-cum-society, a theme that evokes Samuel Huntington's subsequent thesis *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996). Huntington's subtitle *The Remaking of the World Order* referred to the post-Cold War period of the 1990s, but an equally profound reordering of the world order in geopolitical and geocultural terms was in play between China and the international system during China's Century of Humiliation, and with equally potent fracture lines, "cultural conflicts . . . along the fault lines between civilizations" (1996: 28). Huntington's consideration of "the shifting balance of civilizations" (79) in the 1990s was also at stake in the nineteenth century with the Western impact on China and the shift in the international balance of power from a China-dominated East to a Europe-dominated West. Certainly "the conflict of civilisations" was discerned by Tang Liangli (1928: 218–34) in his portrayal of the West's relations with China.

Generally, Gaddis wonders if "international relations, in its preoccupation with measuring and quantifying military and economic power, did not leave out certain other forms of power" at play in the modern world—"namely the power of ideas . . . human rivalries . . . arguments about religion, ethnicity, language, culture, and race" (1996: 40–42). In IR terms, there may have been a multipolar international system during China's Century of Humiliation, and with it potential *balancing* opportunities for China. However, Western geocultural solidarity, shown most clearly in 1860 and 1900, hampered China's attempts to use geopolitical divisions among the Western

powers. Of relevance is Hoffmann's sense that "states' foreign policies are shaped not only by realist geopolitical factors such as economics and military power but [also] by forces such as xenophobic passions . . . and transnational ethnic solidarity" (2002: 107; also Crawford 2000). Talk of xenophobic passions and transnational ethnic solidarity leads to consideration of the presence and images of race at play in China's Century of Humiliation.

RACE

Talk of race and of racism as an operative factor in international relations can be uncomfortable. Motosada Zumoto, for one, rejected the role of race in IR dynamics, considering in 1927 that "racial affinity counts for little as a deciding factor in the alignment of nations for political purposes" (1927: 9) in the Asia-Pacific. There may, though, have been an element of the wishful thinking of IR liberalism-functionalism in his dismissal of race as a factor, given that his comments came from a speech at the Third Annual Congress of the International University League of Nations Federation at Geneva. In contrast, Tang Liangli was denouncing the operation of racism in the international system, arguing that "the time has now come for the white races to accept the Chinese as their equals" (1928: 229). Certainly racial stereotyping and dismissals abounded during China's Century of Humiliation, as, for example, in American foreign policy (Weston 1972; Krenn 1998a: 1998b; Horne 1999). Arthur De Gobineau, "the father of racist ideology" (Biddiss 1970), provided a running commentary on China's impact on the international system during the second half of the nineteenth century. Banton's "international politics of race" (2002; also Vincent 1984) was not just something to discern after 1945; it was embedded in the IR setting of previous decades.

China has been seen as a particularly significant nonwestern, nonwhite, race-associated presence in the international system. In part this arose from the size of its population, and with the cliché that "demography is destiny." China's population was a fact but it was also an image, a highly emotive image—a "spectre" (Connelly 2006: 302–04). It existed in a more emotive perceptual sense, Lyman's "longer history" of Yellow Peril "racial group positioning . . . a foundational, essentialist discourse on an entire geocultural area and its inhabitants" which was "composed out of a collage of fear-inspiring stereotypes" (2000: 686, 690, 687). For Dower, "The vision of the menace from the East was always more racial rather than national. It derived not from concern with any one country or people in particular, but from a vague and ominous sense of the vast, faceless, nameless yellow horde, the rising tide, indeed, of color" (1986: 156).

Rational perceptions of China's presence were entwined with an irrational counterpart, encapsulated in what the *Atlantic Monthly* once described as "that strange recurrent nightmare known as the Yellow Peril" (1899: 276). In such geocultural settings, "China as a land becomes tradi-

tionally the image of the ultimate Other . . . the unfamiliar and alien space of China as the image of the Other threatening to break up ordered surfaces" (L. Zhang 1988: 110) and international order. For Seel, the Yellow Peril was a "fantasy that projects Euroamerican desires and dread on the alien other. Consequently, as Western nations began to carve up Asia into colonies, their own imperialist expansion was in part rationalized by the notion that a militarily powerful Asia posed a threat" (1993: 10) in both racial and cultural terms. Similarly, for Marchetti, "The yellow peril combines racist terror of alien cultures, sexual anxieties, and the belief that the West will be overpowered and enveloped by the irresistible, dark, occult forces of the East" (1993: 2). For Lyman, "The idea of America or the entire Occident, for that matter, being in peril from the 'yellow' people has something of a 'geological' character. It is deeply embedded in the Occidental consciousness of itself . . . an all-too-neglected element in the 'American dilemma' . . . the lair of the yellow peril's firebreathing dragon is to be found in the winding labyrinth of the American psyche" (2000: 727). At the time, Robert Park saw it "as an abstraction, a symbol, and a symbol not merely of his own race but of the Orient and of that vague, ill-defined menace we sometimes refer to as the 'Yellow Peril'" (1914: 611).

Talk of the Orient brings up Said's *Orientalism*; "a western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient . . . a discourse . . . by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically . . . militarily, ideologically," and "imaginatively" (1995: 3; also 1993). In short, Said saw this as an attempt "to rub culture's nose in the mud of politics" (1995: 13). Yet China evaded total control by the West. It always remained too large, not only geopolitically but also geoculturally. Nevertheless, Said still remains relevant, through his view of Western literature as reflecting and affecting, reinforcing and legitimating, political colonial-imperial power structures through such embedded imagery. This entwining of language, images, and power was well illustrated in Hevia's *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (2003). All this points to consideration of "images" at play in the consideration of culture and power at the international level, and with specific regard to the relationship between China and the international system.

IMAGES

Questions of image have attracted some attention among international relations scholars—what Jervis called *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (1970; also 1976). Geopsychology joins geopolitics? In IR theory terms, the recent emergence of *constructivism* and its focus on the roles of constructed images and perceptions is particularly useful. Like culture and identity, image also matters in International Relations; even if only in Isaacs' sense that

“images, feelings, prejudices . . . get somehow cranked into the process of policymaking” (1972: xxviii). Consequently, for Buszynski, “all too often images and symbols rather than cold logic and analysis are the [actual] currency of international relations” (2004: 7). Indeed, Sanders has judged that “it almost goes without saying that perceptions of the participants in international relations are often as important, often more important, than ‘objective reality,’ whatever that may be” (2001: v; also Jervis 1976: 28). Of course the perceptions can be very different. As Callahan argues, the IR English School treatment of Western intervention in China as showing “the ‘benefits’ of International Society” (2004a: 312) to China can be contrasted with Chinese views of the same period as one of national humiliation and international inequalities, as the imposition *on* one part of the international system (China) *by* another part of the international system (the West).

Some historians also advocate incorporating wider, “unofficial,” cultural-image approaches to international history alongside a narrower, “official,” political-diplomatic Rankean paradigm. Amid his analysis of foreign policy in Republican China, Kirby argues that “diplomatic history,” with its focus on formal state-to-state relations, was limited, for “foreign policy is but one part of foreign relations, and may in any event be a cultural construct. Hence the importance . . . of ‘images,’ ‘perceptions,’ ‘belief system,’ and ‘cognitive maps’” (1997: 434), so that “as important as the interests and actions of other nation states is the ‘set of lenses,’ through which information about them is viewed” (435). “Power” is itself affected by perceptions, as quantitative military and economic *hard power* is supplemented by consideration of cultural-ideational *soft power*. This brings in the extent to which a country—a civilization, its values, and norms—is estimated and found attractive by others, a matter of image and perceptions, and thereby of influence.

Specific applications have been made to bilateral aspects of China’s relationships. Iriye considers that Sino-American relations contained a mutual “storehouse of images” that could be given “privileged status” in times of “war, peace, or situations in-between” (1988: 39). Garver holds “the history of Sino-American relations is replete with [Jervis-wise] misperceptions and misunderstandings” (1999: ix–x). Hunt similarly argues, “Americans held to the reassuring myth of a golden age of friendship engendered by altruistic American aid and rewarded by ample Chinese gratitude” (1983: 299) during the pre-1914 period; but “what was ‘special’ was the degree to which two distinctly different people became locked in conflict, the victims in some measure of their own misperceptions and myths” (301) about each other. Jespersen’s study *American Images of China 1931–1949* closely followed the “images, conceptions and cultural constructions” at play during that period: “the beliefs, motions, stereotypes, opinions, mental pictures, and perhaps most importantly the hopes that were all a part of the intracultural dynamics of the popular thinking about China” (1996: xix). Such elements of public

opinion and public images affected public policy-making. All these elements in play from Jespersen can be used here, but also extended to bring in fears as well as hopes, to bring in pre-1931 as well as post-1931 developments, and to bring in Chinese images of America as well as American images of China. Lukin has noticed how "mutual perceptions play an especially important role in bilateral relations between neighbours with long and complicated histories, and Russia and China surely belong to this category" (2002: 86) and with it "the psychological problems plaguing their relationships" (10). For Strahan, in understanding Australian reactions to China, the "crucial point here is to note how various aspects of Chinese 'reality' were construed. Facts are not inert and neutral; perception transforms them into different shapes . . . truth was frequently so encrusted with myth as to bear little relation to China's 'actuality'" (1996: 8).

If one stands back, there were various images, hopes, and fears in play: the West's image of China, the West's images of itself revealed through its images of China, China's images of the West, and China's images of itself as revealed through its image of the West. The paired oppositional nature of these images is noticeable. China as threat or China the sick man; the West as evil or the West as savior? Said's *Orientalism* (Said 1995; also H. Hung 2003) can be juxtaposed with Buruma and Margalit's *Occidentalism* (2005: 38–39). In many ways China can be compared to the Ottoman Empire, China as the Sick Man of Asia and Turkey as the sick man of Europe, in which both posed Eastern Questions to international stability. Both had humiliating treaties and restrictions imposed on them during the nineteenth century, both had Saidian *Orientalism* images associated with them. Yet China remained territorially much more intact and with greater latent strength than the visibly fragmented Ottoman realm. China's image remained more enigmatic, as did her power position. Given the myriad levels of images of China, it is not surprising that sources for reconstructing them are likewise varied.

SOURCES

The final point to make here is that there exists a wide range of sources able to be fruitfully used for reconstructing these cognitive images at play between China and the international system during China's Century of Humiliation. This reflects the wider forces shaping international relations among states, where Johnson has noted how "foreign policy is not a neat, relatively technical activity [just] performed by the government"; it "also involves the sometimes uncontrollable elements of public emotion, invidious national comparisons . . . mass media of communications" (1986: 402). The rise of the press in the West affected perceptions and policies. In the United States, Randolph Hearst's Yellow Press was strident in its projections

about the Yellow Peril posed by China, and was capable of swaying both the public and politicians. The Shanghai press was a vibrant outlet for both Western “Shanghaianders” and Chinese commentators. “Media discourse” affected wider cultural and political trends.

Meanwhile, in any consideration of images held at large, the role of literature as shaping, mediating, and reflecting collective memory can feed in, recalling the old Chinese adage that “literature and history are subjects not to be separated” (wen shi bufen jia). Said’s analysis in *Orientalism* linked “a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts . . . scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description” entwined with the “power political . . . power intellectual . . . power cultural,” which “does not exist in some archival vacuum” (1995: 12–13). One can apply Rotter’s focus on nonofficial yet relevant “novels, films, plays, and travellers’ accounts to describe those ideas that shaped or influenced U.S. foreign policy,” in which diplomatic historians “increasingly recognize that realms of culture and politics, attitudes and behaviour, are related in important ways and are at least mutually constitutive” (2000: 1214). Novels, plays, poetry, and travel narratives are also used in this study.

Such high-brow literature operates and needs to be considered at the low populist level as well. Thus, for example, “the Yellow Peril was naturally the stuff of fantasy and cheap thrills, a fit subject for pulp literature . . . and there were many [media figures, analysts, politicians] who addressed the alleged threat from the East in a manner that made a significant impact” (Dower 1986: 156) in society and politics. Finally comes Hunt’s point that “the most influential work in the history of China’s foreign relations has always incorporated the private with the public, the official with the nonofficial, on a stage where ‘nonstate actors’ can steal the show” (1983: 434). Ranke’s “diplomatic archives” will be supplemented in this volume with Said’s “cultural archives.” Language itself matters, in that it reflects and affects images at play. Lydia Liu’s recent work on “the semiotics of international relations” (2004: 5–30) in her *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* comes to mind, as does Hevia’s *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (2003). Meanwhile, whereas earlier studies by Isaacs and others have tended to focus on literary images of China, this study embeds such material more directly into and alongside associated political images—the actions and policies of the day.

Since the international system was shaped and dominated by the West, many sources reflect Western response and projection toward China. In turn, China responded to this Western-dominated international system. Such Chinese responses became a further spark for Western reactions in turn. This use of Western sources is not intended to fall into Said’s constricts and constructs in *Orientalism*, their use is not to say that China was inert and passive, nor to

say that China was faced with an inherently dynamic West. Rather it is a matter of power distribution in the international system. China's autonomy, let alone projection, became circumscribed; it had much less room for action than did the West. Conversely, the West had more autonomy; indeed, it came to dominate the international system. It could and did project its power within the international system onto China in a way that China never was able to do onto the West. China was in the so-called family of nations, but it was also put in a straightjacket for much of the time—hence its humiliation. Yet paradoxically the West often feared China. This story of mutual but asymmetrical encounter now unfolds.

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TWO

Humiliations Established in the First and Second Opium Wars

*The fact of the matter
is that our China must be regarded
as the root of all other countries.*

—Li Ruzhen, 1827

*Imagined attractions of China disappear . . .
a nation so palsied, so corrupt,
so wretchedly degraded, and so enfeebled,
as to be already more than half sunk in decay.*

—*Atlantic Monthly*, June 1860

COLLIDING IMAGES

IN 1839 CHINA STUMBLED into war with Britain and with it the start of China's Century of Humiliation. What is striking is that the Century of Humiliation was all the more humiliating because it represented such a dramatic fall in international power from China's preeminence as the Middle Kingdom of old. The country's role abroad under the Han, Tang, Sung, Ming, and Qing dynasties had given China recurring preeminence, allowing it to dominate East Asia in a relatively self-enclosed international system. The United States was unknown, Europe but a distant semimythical land of little consequence. Within a restrained hierarchical system, Chinese power was preeminent and normative (D. Kang 2001; also Y. Zhang 2001), but her ritualized tributary system served as "controlled apartness between China and other communities participating in the Chinese world order" (Y. Zhang 1991: 8). Issues of respect, "face," and proprieties were central to such a

Sinocentric system (Zhou 2007; Zhang and Xu 2007: 412–15). In IR *hard power* terms, China's military and economic power dwarfed that of its neighbors, in what Frank has called a "Sinocentric world economy" (1998: 126). China's *soft power* cultural prestige was also high, as the font of civilized Confucian-based norms and standards.

This Chinese preeminence was clear enough. In Japan, Asami Keisai's *Treatise on the Concept of the Middle Kingdom* (c. 1700) acknowledged that "the nine provinces of China are a land where ritual propriety flourishes and morals are highly developed to an extent that other countries cannot achieve," so "for that reason it is natural for China to be regarded as the master (*shu*) and for barbarian countries to look up to China" (De Bary et al. 2005: 93), though Japan's ambiguous reservations over accepting such a hierarchy were already noticeable (Norihito 2003). In China, the neo-Confucian thinker Wang Fuzhi took it for granted in the late seventeenth century, following the fall of the Ming Dynasty, that "there are in the world . . . great lines of demarcation to be drawn between the Chinese and the barbarians . . . the people of China will suffer from the encroachments of the barbarians and will be distressed," though "the barbarians are separated from the Chinese by frontiers. One cannot but be strict in drawing the lines of demarcation" (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 32–34). An irony was that Wang's Sinocentric nationalistic views were written in exile, and were only discovered in the latter part of the nineteenth century, in the middle of China's Century of Humiliation. He was then to be cited with admiration by nationalists and revolutionaries like Zeng Guofan, Tan Sitong, Liang Qichao, Zhang Binglin, and Mao Zedong! While Wang lamented the Ming's fall to a traditional nomad-originating "barbarian" group like the Manchus, who had crossed the Ming frontiers, in fact the Manchu "Qing" dynasty rapidly wrapped itself in Chinese cultural clothing. Chinese civilizational soft power absorbed much of the Manchu military hard power.

In its initial encounters with the West, China had been able to determine political, economic, and cultural issues on its own terms (D. Martin 2001; Mungello 2005). The Qing Empire blocked Russian attempts to occupy the Amur basin in the seventeenth century, reestablished its own sway across Central Asia (Perdue 2005), and expelled Christian missionaries in 1725. Chinese prestige, its soft power, in the West was also high, with Enlightenment Sinophiles like Voltaire and Leibniz extolling Chinese virtues and state efficacy (Ching and Oxtoby 1992; L. Zhang 1988: 116–21). As late as 1827 the novelist Li Ruzhen, in *Flowers in the Mirror*, wrote, "The fact of the matter is that our China must be regarded as the root of all other countries" (Mitter 2004: 26). As Mitter put it, "when the novel was written, China did not just believe that her own civilization was superior to that of any other country, she knew it for indisputable fact" (26). It was through such confidence and strength that China was able to block the British trade missions by

Macartney in 1794 and Amherst in 1816. In Japan Nobuhiro Sato agreed, in 1823, that “among the nations of the world today, no country compares with China in immensity of territorial domain, in richness of products, and in military prestige” (De Bary et al. 2005: 615).

Three caveats apply here though. First, Japan was still in its own shogunate isolation and so knew little of the West. Second, Sato was ready to argue in his *Kondo hisaku* (Confidential Plan of World Unification) that “we [Japan] would inflict great damage on China . . . if our nation attempted to conquer China . . . with proper spirit and discipline on our part China would crumble and fall like a house of sand within five to seven years” (615). Consequently, “after China is brought within our domain, the Central Asian countries, as well as Thailand, India, and other lands, will come to us with bowed heads, and on hands and knees to serve us” (615). The end of the century would see Japan starting to do just that, at the expense of China. Third, with regard to China and the international system, China’s strength within East Asia did not impinge on wider international politics outside that region. According to Gelber, “For the great powers, therefore, the most important thing about China was its relative unimportance; for balance-of-power politics, China was barely a sideshow” (2007: 176). China had the power to make a difference but did not project such power outside East Asia. Thus, “seen from London, Paris, St. Petersburg, or even Washington, China was a far away . . . empire exhibiting an odd mixture of splendour and barbarism; huge but militarily insignificant; proud, but . . . quaint” (176).

Yet in little more than a decade Britain and China were at war. On April 7, 1840, Sir George Thomas Staunton stood up and told the British House of Commons that a clash of principles was at stake, a “breach of international law,” in which “if we submitted to the degrading insults of China the time would not be far distant when our political ascendancy in India would be at an end” (UK 1840: 739). Consequently, “this war is absolutely just and necessary under existing conditions” (745). The First Opium War was about to start. The reason why Staunton was listened to with some respect was because of his own connections with China, or, more precisely, his presence in earlier encounters between China and the West. In 1792, as a young twelve-year-old he accompanied his father, who had been appointed secretary to Lord Macartney’s mission, to China. Staunton had acquired a good knowledge of Chinese language, and in 1798 was appointed a writer in the British East India Company’s factory at Canton, and subsequently became its chief. In 1805 he translated a work of Dr. George Pearson into Chinese, thereby introducing the concept of vaccination into China. In 1816 he appeared as the second commissioner, in effect the deputy, on the Amherst mission to China. Two years later he had entered the British Parliament, where he was also a member of the East India Committee. His academic interest in the East was maintained. In conjunction with Henry Thomas Colebrook, Staunton

founded the Royal Asiatic Society in 1823. He translated into English many China-related materials. The *Fundamental Laws of China* was a translation in 1810 of the Qing Legal Code. This was followed by his *Narrative of the Chinese Embassy to the Khan of the Tourgouth Tartars* in 1821; his *Miscellaneous Notices Relating to China and our Commercial Intercourse with that Country* in 1822; and his *Notes of Proceedings and Occurrences during the British Embassy to Peking* in 1824. It is to that first abortive British Embassy to China, the Macartney Mission of 1792–1794, and a young Staunton, that we now turn.

The Macartney Mission of 1794 is an important prism through which to view the First Opium War of almost half a century later. The Macartney Mission operated “amidst a complex web of words, images, prejudices, and positing . . . the matrix in which ‘China’ as a world presence and as a historical figment was formed” (Crossley 1997: 597–98), with its entwining of diplomacy, power, and rituals. Qing rulers insisted on *kowtow* (submission) ceremonies because such “ritual techniques established cosmo-spatial dominion, whilst extending Qing rulership spatially and temporally” (Hevia 1995: 55). At the time, Lord George Macartney had been instructed to open trade and diplomatic avenues in China and, particularly, Beijing. The directives given to Macartney by Henry Dundas, president of the East India Company, were clear enough to open contacts between “one great sovereign and another” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 93), with, ideally, “a treaty of friendship and alliance” (97) to be shaped, “our naval force, being the only assistance of which they may foresee the occasional importance to them” (97). Moreover, Dundas instructed Macartney to make it clear that “our views are purely commercial, having not even a wish for territory” (97). Legal jurisdiction, extraterritoriality, over British subjects on Chinese soil was to be sought. Opium imports from British India “must be handled with the greatest circumspection” and “if it should be made a positive requisition or any article of any proposed commercial treaty, that none of the drug should be sent by us to China, you must accede to it” (97). In contrast, the First Opium War saw territorial annexation and forcible access to opium from British India.

The Macartney Mission indeed represented *The Collision of Two Civilisations* (Peyrefitte 1993). Hevia’s insights are important. Geopolitics was involved as well as geoculture; control over spheres of influence and peripheries was at stake. Etiquette over different forms of prostration (*kowtow*) (McCutcheon 1971), kneeling, and bowing rituals pointed to wider grounds of contestation between “two expansive colonial empires . . . each with universalistic pretensions and complex metaphysical systems to buttress such claims” (Hevia 1995: 25). At stake were “competing and ultimately incompatible views of the meaning of sovereignty and the ways in which the relations of power were constructed” (28). The Qing authorities viewed Macartney’s group as a subordinate trade tribute mission, while Britain considered it a meeting of politically equal states. With neither refusing to concede, the

Qing court had the upper hand, since it needed Britain less than Britain needed China. Ultimately, China could reject British terms, which it did, and could enforce such a rebuff from a position of strength. Young Staunton recognized this power situation: “this great Empire” was “too well assured of the competency of its own natural and artificial resources to be induced to seek . . . too distant and compactly united, to be liable to be compelled to enter into alliances and close connections with the Powers of Europe” (George Thomas Staunton 1810: iii).

The upshot of the Macartney Mission was rejection of British economic and political claims, with the famous edict issued by the powerful ruler Qianlong: “We possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country’s manufacturers” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 105). This was from a ruler at the height of power; Qianlong’s armies were projecting Qing strength far afield in Central Asia, Burma, Vietnam, and Nepal. As to any missionary presence, Qianlong asserted that “the distinction between Chinese and barbarians is most strict, and your ambassador’s request that barbarians shall be given full liberty to disseminate their religion is utterly unreasonable” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 109). As to the future, “the ordinances of my Celestial Empire are strict in the extreme . . . Should your vessels touch shore [outside of Canton], your merchants will assuredly never be permitted to land or to reside there, but will be subject to instant expulsion” (109). China was able to virtually throw the Macartney Mission out of China, with Qianlong’s dismissive document telling the British authorities to “tremblingly obey” (109). A half century later, the geopolitical and geo-economic balance had shifted dramatically away from China and toward Britain.

One revealing voice in 1794 was that of George Leonard Staunton, the Secretary of the Embassy, second in command to Macartney, and the plenipotentiary minister. He was responsible for bringing his young son George Thomas along on the expedition. He also noticed the “avowed or affected notions entertained by the Chinese government, of the superiority or independence of the empire” (George Leonard Staunton 1798: 2.106–07). He recognized China’s influence in East Asia. In terms of regional relations, he profiled a functioning Middle Kingdom preeminence, which “induced the sovereigns of those states to send persons frequently to represent them at the court of Peking. Their dominions . . . vastly inferior to China in extent and population . . . were little able to cope with that great empire” (2.151). Coalition building advanced by international relations theories of *balance of power* and shifts among European states had become well established by the end of the eighteenth century; yet in China’s sphere different dynamics operated. In a soft, hierarchical, unipolar-leaning system, other Asian states could not “rely, for their support, upon the assistance of other princes, actuated by the jealousy of maintaining the balance of Asiatic power” (2.151). Consequently, “it was therefore, become generally a maxim of political prudence with them,

to acknowledge a sort of vassalage to China . . . in order to avoid a more direct interference and the danger, if they resisted, of entire subjugation in a contest so unequal” (2.151).

Macartney’s own comments on the encounter were thoughtful. He could not ignore the current strength of the empire: “The Empire of China is an old, crazy, first rate man-of-war, which a fortunate succession of able and vigilant officers has contrived to keep afloat . . . and to overawe their neighbours merely by her bulk and appearance” (Macartney 1962: 212). He also reckoned that “the project of a territory on the continent of China (which I have heard imputed to the late Lord Clive) is too wild to be seriously mentioned” (213). A century later, and China was in the throes of the actual carve-up of her territory by Japan and the Western powers. Macartney did wonder, though, if China’s very rise was about to bring its fall. In part it was a matter of internal politics: “The Chinese are now recovering from the blast that had stunned them; they are awakening from the political stupor they had been thrown into by the Tatar impression, and begin to feel their natural energies revive” (239). This was to bear fruit a hundred years later, in Sun Yat-sen’s nationalist upsurge on behalf of the Chinese race against its internal Manchu Qing overlords and also against the external fetters posed by the West. In addition, China’s very success seemed to be pointing to its eventual failure—the “imperial overstretch” syndrome later coined by Paul Kennedy in his *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (1988). For Macartney, “In fact the volume of the empire is grown too ponderous and disproportionate to be easily grasped by a single man” (239). In a landscape setting, China’s look was comparable to “the ground to be hollow under a vast superstructure, and in trees of the most stately and flourishing appearance, discovered symptoms of speedy decay” (239). All this lay in the future, but that future was to come in less than half a century.

Twenty-two years later, George Thomas Staunton had risen in the world of diplomacy and politics, appearing as the Second Commissioner—in effect, the deputy—on the 1816 Amherst mission to China. The mission itself came to an abrupt halt when Amherst refused to meet Chinese demands on *kowtow* prostration rituals. The Amherst group was immediately ejected from China, but on its return trip to England in March 1817 Amherst visited Napoleon in St. Helena. The recollection by Napoleon’s surgeon, Barry O’Meara, was one of Napoleon advising against any British attempt to forcibly open up China: “It would be the worst thing you have done for a number of years, to go to war with an immense empire like China, and possessing so many resources” (O’Meara 1822: 1.472). Any initial British naval incursions would be counterproductive; “they would get artificers, and ship builders, from France, and America, and even from London; they would build a fleet, and in the course of time, defeat you” (1.472). As to the issue at stake, Napoleon took the Chinese side: “An ambassador is for the *affaires*, and not

for the *ceremonies* of the country he belongs to. He becomes the same as one of the first nobles of the country, and should conform to the same ceremonies” (O’Meara 1822: 1.475).

As late as 1836, George Thomas Staunton had disparaged British proposals for the use of aggression against China to force trade concessions. In his *Remarks on the British Relations with China and the Proposed Plans for Improving Them*, he advocated treating China on a footing of equality with the other powers (1836: 20). However, he felt extraterritoriality was something to push for: “The Chinese laws, as specially applied, and endeavored to be enforced, in cases of homicide, committed by foreigners, are not only *unjust*, but absolutely *intolerable* . . . undoubtedly an intolerable grievance” (18).

Extraterritoriality had become a rising political demand in Britain. George Thomas Staunton introduced resolutions to the House of Commons in June 1833 calling for blocking the “operation of Chinese laws in respect to homicide committed by foreigners in that country . . . those laws being so unjust and intolerable” (UK 1833: 700). This resulted in an Act of Parliament in August 1833 authorizing the creation of a British court of justice with criminal and admiralty jurisdiction for the trial of offenses committed by British subjects in China. A still wider civil extraterritorial jurisdiction was mooted in a new bill introduced by Lord Palmerston in 1838. Palmerston admitted, on July 28, 1838, that “there was no consent on the part of the Chinese authorities, nor could they [the British government] obtain it without that intercourse with China which it was impossible in the present state of affairs” (UK 1838: 747). The logic was to change the state of affairs in the future. Palmerston may have argued “though the authorities of China had not given their consent, whether they would resent such an interference on the part of the country . . . he [Palmerston] thought it clear it appeared they would not, and that there was every probability of their being reconciled to that proposed exercise of power” (747). Though withdrawn, the matter was postponed rather than shelved, and it soon returned. Amid such debates, China had rejected any such claims from Britain. Such British extraterritorial claims remained abstract theory; they had not been implemented, and any implementation and “exercise of power” would need to overcome adamant Chinese rejection.

In terms of *power*, a crucial factor was that Britain’s Industrial Revolution was underway by the 1830s. As described by Pomeranz in *The Great Divergence* (2001; also B. Wong 1997), an economic and technological gap was opening up between China and the West. There was an increasing thrust to gain markets in China—in the case of Britain, its growing opium exports from British India. Political-territorial imperialism raised its head in the West, which in China and elsewhere went hand in hand with cultural imperialism. China was under threat, within an international system that was becoming global in extent and Western in direction. As a Great Power, to

evoke Paul Kennedy (1988), China was in a “fall” at a time when Britain was on a “rise.” Qianlong’s days of military might had gone.

Hugh Lindsay’s mission on the *Lord Amherst* was already showing these dynamics. He and Charles Gutzlaff were sent, in secret, to survey the Chinese coast during 1832. His instructions were to “to ascertain how far the northern Ports of the Empire may be gradually opened to British commerce,” but that he should allow opium neither on his ship nor allow it to “penetrate into the interior of the Country” (Lindsay 1833: 232). Close inspection was made of Hong Kong, Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, and Xiamen “Amoy.” Although Chinese officials told Beijing that Lindsay had been driven away, in truth he had come and gone as he had wanted, with court officials unwilling “to learn a lesson from the power and speed of the Lord Amherst which had proved time and again far superior to all the Chinese junks put together” (243). Faced with the Chinese use of the term *barbarian* (*yi*), Lindsay had protested, “The affront is intolerable, for by such conduct the respectability of my country would suffer. The great British nation has never been a barbarian nation, but a foreign nation. Its power, dignity, and extent of dominions is surpassed by none in the whole world” (I. Hsu 1954: 245). China had of course long been used to thinking of itself as the largest state, which in many ways it had been, certainly within its traditional Middle Kingdom horizons. However, in a world of global empire building, British imperialism was indeed spanning the world, and as such was unsurpassed by no other state in 1832. Certainly not by a now inward-looking China. Lindsay reckoned that a war to establish open commerce with China would be won in a short time and at short cost (1833: 86), as did his companion Gutzlaff (1834b: 410; also 1834a). China was seen as a paper tiger. Similarly, at Canton, Elijah Bridgman reckoned, “The discipline and the energies of the Chinese soldiery have been on the wane . . . land and naval forces have become so exceedingly enervated . . . they are in fact, for all purposes of defense, little better than dead men” (1834: 35–36).

Confrontation between Britain and China soon erupted when the Qing emperor decided in 1838 to ban the import of opium from British India. Lin Zexu was appointed to implement this Chinese exercise of power at Canton, with or without Western cooperation. Lin’s perception of China’s power in the international system was a confident one. His letter to Queen Victoria reiterated traditional Middle Kingdom assumptions of prestige and centrality: “Our Celestial Dynasty rules over and supervises the myriad states, and surely possesses unfathomable spiritual dignity” (CRW 1979: 25). Any Western exemptions were to be rejected: “The legal code of the Celestial Court must be absolutely obeyed with awe . . . show further the sincerity of your politeness and submissiveness” (25, 27). Trade with the West was not that necessary or desirable for the Empire: “The wealth of China is used to profit the barbarians . . . the great profit is all taken from the rightful share of China,”

so “by what right do they then in return us the poisonous drug [opium] to injure the Chinese people . . . the outside articles coming from the outside to China can only be used as toys. We can take them or leave them” (25, 26). Stocks were seized, traders threatened, and European factories blockaded in the spring of 1839. Lin’s *Proclamation to Foreigners* (March 18, 1839) was a confident one, “with the majesty of our troops, and the abundance of our forces by land and water . . . we may sweep you off” (*Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* 1840a: 370). There was a basic imbalance between “the power of the few and the power of the many” (372), a balance Lin saw as being in the favor of Qing China.

Colliding images were leading to a collision between states. For the novelist and thinker Thomas de Quincey, it was clear “we must have some sort of military expeditions against China” (1840: 733), in “a land open to no light” (730) and with “monstrous laws” (731), amid “horrible Chinese degeneration of moral distinctions” (730) and a people “incapable of a true civilisation” (732). A “demonstration of our power” (737) was the means, given “the condition of China—full of insolence, full of error, needing to be enlightened, and open to our attacks on every side” (738). Two ironies were involved here. De Quincey had already achieved notoriety with his own autobiographical *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, which had appeared in 1821. His son was to be killed in 1842, in the First Opium War with China.

De Quincey’s essay was not the only one to appear concerning China in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*. Earlier that year, the March 1840 issue had seen extended treatment. China was seen by *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* as a target, “an empire, of proportions so unwieldy and almost unmanageable” (1840a: 368). Faced with British power, “the doom of China is staked” (369). British relations and earlier compliance with Qing restrictions were denounced: “We have been willing to crouch to tyranny in its pettiest and most degrading shapes—to invite slavish submission in every conceivable form” (369). There had been “prostration the most abject, to caprice and exactions the most outrageous and despotic” (369). This had been “the sacrifice, too long submitted to, of national honour” (369). Yet amid the blustering on “unheard of violations of international rights” (369) lay wider issues, of Britain’s power in Asia; “the consequences would indeed be disastrous to our Indian Empire” (381) if Britain “shrunk ignominiously from conflict . . . with the Chinese empire” (382). In turn, geopolitical shifts were apparent: “The Chinese have long viewed the progress of British arms and British conquest in Central India, in Burmah, in Nepaul, and in the Eastern Archipelago, with secret alarm” (384). Responsive shifts were already discerned by *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, “as British conquest extended to the frontiers of Nepaul, the astute Chinese overran Thibet, and secured in its mountains, among the most lofty and inaccessible in the globe, a commanding rampart against British aggression” (384). Elsewhere, “as the pride of the

Burmese was humbled before the victorious arms of British India, the observant and stealthy Chinese covered and subdued Cochin-China with their numberless hosts,” and “by this extension secured their natural frontier on the south more strongly against contact or invasion” (384). It was in this geopolitical scale of things that the magazine felt that “China has not remained stationary so far, whilst the world was in motion around her; but has long been arming for the inevitable fight and preparing for the hour of fate” (384).

Several things come to mind here. China’s demographic power—her numberless hosts—was a background feature. Moreover, while doubtful that China was preparing for war, it was true that British power was indeed lapping around the extremities of the Qing Empire. Finally, China may have had relatively secure land ramparts against any invasion from British India. What it did not have protection against was the mobilization of British naval power, and the projection of that into China’s own eastern waters. Certainly, though, China’s “hour of fate” had come. From the *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine’s* point of view, in its profile “The Vote of Confidence in Ministers,” it called for maritime deployment: “What would . . . Nelson, say to such an indignity” (1840b: 422) inflicted on Britain by the Chinese authorities at Canton.

THE FIRST OPIUM WAR (1840–1842)

For Britain, the preceding events at Canton were grounds, or pretext, for war. George Thomas Staunton reckoned (April 7, 1840), “This war was absolutely just and necessary” (UK 1840: 739), though one can wonder necessary for what and for whom. The issue of opium was skirted around: “The question between us and the Chinese government with regard to the opium trade was not a question of morality or policy, but a question of whether there had been breach of international rights or international law” (741). Some voices were raised against this in the Parliamentary debates. James Graham argued that, given China’s “vast importance, the great strength of the Chinese empire,” was it not “better to conciliate them by the arts of peace than to vex them with the threats and cruelties of war” (UK 1840: 669–70). Sidney Herbert thought that “we had proved ourselves to be the less civilized nation of the two” (UK 1840: 748). Charles Buller admitted that he “by no means regarded their fears for themselves as chimerical or absurd” and that China had “great reason to suspect us of aggressive designs” (UK 1840: 786). A young politician, William Ewart Gladstone, thundered that it was a war “unjust in its origins . . . this permanent disgrace . . . to protect an infamous contraband trade . . . this unjust and iniquitous war” (UK 1840: 818).

However, such moves toward war were widely accepted in Britain, its dignity having been attacked at a time when Britain’s position as “the workshop of the world” and sense of preeminence in the international system were on the rise. In this sense there were wider issues at stake, “other issues that

may have been for Palmerston and the London government even more important . . . to do with state equality and sovereignty . . . jurisdiction . . . expansion of trade” (Gelber 2006). In Parliament, Joel Hawes argued that Britain’s “national honour” was at stake, needing “to be vindicated from injury and insult” where “insults to British subjects were not to be slightly committed . . . in a region where the light of Christianity had not as yet dawned, and which could be introduced solely through the medium of commercial agency” (UK 1840: 756). Lord Macaulay, as Secretary of State for War, may have told Parliament that “what does anybody here know of China? Even those Europeans who have been in that Empire are almost as ignorant of it as the rest of us,” for “everything is covered by a veil through which a glimpse of what is within may occasionally be caught, a glimpse just sufficient to set the imagination at work and more likely to mislead than to inform” (UK 1840: 707). Foreign Secretary Palmerston was ready enough to quietly prepare a British fleet for dispatch to Chinese waters—gunboat diplomacy in and on China.

In the United States, John Quincy Adams’s widely followed speech on the “Opium War,” delivered to the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston in December 1841, was immediately reprinted at Canton in Elijah Bridgman’s *Chinese Repository* the following year. Adams argued that opium was not the ultimate issue: “The [underlying] cause of the war is the kotow [prostration],” the “arrogant and insupportable pretensions of China that she will hold commercial intercourse with the rest of mankind not upon terms of equal reciprocity, but upon the insulting and degrading forms of the relation between lord and vassal” (1842: 288). Such Chinese attitudes were but “humiliating forms” (281), representing “the insolent and insulting pretension of China” (282). Some American opinion remained ambivalent about British motives. George Lay saw the war as “undoubtedly originating in a wrong on the part of the English nation” and hoped that “the ambition of Britain not lead her to further encroachments” (1843: 20). The *Southern Literary Messenger* still pointed out how “China nourishes within her bosom a population, transcending in number the population of all Europe, and may be justly regarded as a great phenomenon” and decried the sending of the British fleet to Canton, “for the purpose of coercing China, if possible, to grant to Great Britain commercial advantages and immunities which she never yet possessed . . . feeling power, she [Britain] forgets right” (1841: 137). Nevertheless, the *United States Democratic Review* considered that “wrapped in their own notions of peculiar superiority . . . the Chinese have kept apart from the people of the world, have resisted the power of civilization spreading itself so effectually through all other nations, and proved impenetrable even to Christianity” (1840: 516). This was an untenable situation, “in the course of Providence, this solemn seclusion is destined to be broken . . . by the force of foreign arms . . . to rend asunder by violence the veil” hiding China, and for her

to be “thrown open to the world, and incorporated for the first time into the community of nations” (517). Whether China felt it was an open “community” of nations was left unanswered.

Any such veil was ripped apart as a British fleet arrived off Canton in June 1840. Fifteen warships and 4,000 troops moved up from Canton to establish a military presence by the Yangzi and Beijing approaches, in order to enforce the sale of opium from British India and establish full economic and diplomatic relations with the Celestial Empire. The Opium War had started. Christian missions could, and did, exult in this opening up of China. The “end” of religious conversion justified warlike “means” (S. Miller 1974; also Fay 1971). National honor may indeed have been involved for Britain (Melancon 2003), and it was about to be involved for China, as the days of China’s Middle Kingdom power and prestige came to an end. Here it is no coincidence that since “the meeting of China and the West was a cultural conflict in the broadest sense, it is little wonder that the response to this new situation produced much misunderstanding” (Hao and Wang 1978: 153) on both sides.

China’s introduction to the so-called community of nations was to be a dramatic one. The Opium War rapidly demonstrated superior British military technology and ability to project naval forces against China from June 1840 to August 1842, “in military terms . . . the most decisive reversal the Manchus had ever received” (Spence 1990: 157; also Fay 1997). Cantonese posters denounced the British as “plundering wolves” and asked “except your ships being solid, your gunfire, and your rockets powerful, what other abilities have you?” (CRW 1979: 36; also Waley 1958). Unfortunately for China, such military projection and technological superiority was exactly what the West required to impose its will. From that debacle came the Treaty of Nanjing, ratified by the end of 1842. As Thomas Allom put it at the time, this was a treaty drawn up “when the British army, at the gates of Nanking, dictated terms of Peace to the Celestial Empire” (1843: 1.18). Another contemporary, William Langdon, was struck by how “the aspects and destinies of China are calculated to excite the most attentive and profound consideration” (1842: xviii). Geoculture was at play here, where “these ‘latter days,’ as they are called, are, in the prophetic view of many, destined to be marked by events of the most momentous importance; events calculated no little to facilitate the upward and onward march of civilization,” in “a struggle too, which may involve the mightiest results, both as regards commerce and Christianity” (xvii). In other words, geoeconomics and geocultural consequences stemmed from the geopolitical application of force.

HUMILIATION AND THE UNEQUAL TREATIES SYSTEM

Victory over China went down well in Britain. *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* declared, “Why then, *China’s* our oyster, / Which we with sword have

open'd" (1843: 20), a "quick triumphant result with which the world is now ringing" (20), and a due "signal humiliation" (21) of China. From the British side, Granville Loch described the dispatch of "the brave band sent to invade the largest empire in the world" (1843: 20), but it was a band sent by the British government to enforce China's importation of opium from British India. In such a vein, from the decks of HMS *Nemesis*, an appropriate enough name for such a moment, William Bernard looked forward to the opium trade from British India "to become a legal trade, under certain wholesome regulations" (1844: 95). Of course, from a Chinese point of view, forced opium imports were far from wholesome! As the statesman Li Hongzhang bitterly put it in 1893, "We Chinese have been laughed and sneered at in the streets of London itself, and have been called 'Pig-tailed Opium-Eaters,' when for years it is the Government of the same Londoners which has been responsible for the millions of human wrecks throughout the length and breath of the Middle Kingdom" (1913: 284).

Arthur Cunynghame, aide-de-camp to the British commander Saltoun, stressed "The British flag cannot be blamed for outstepping the bounds of moderation; having at one time, had the whole of central and southern China within her grasp, she contented herself with one little island" (Cunynghame 1844: 2.71), Hong Kong. However, China's defeat in the First Opium War of 1840–1842 had more wider-ranging consequences. William Bernard's sense was that "a new era has at length opened upon China, a sudden and almost incredible change in all her relations with foreigners" (1844: 920). He thought such change was all for the better: "Providence has at last ordained that a vast empire, which comprises nearly a third of the human race, shall no longer remain totally excluded from the great family of nations" (92). Such talk of the great family of nations was questionable in view of the lack of any true fraternity between the West and China. Other questionable hopes were also present in Bernard's musings. He rejoiced in how "the period has at length arrived when that wonderful nation is, by a slow but steady progress, to be brought under the influence of Christianity" (92). From a Chinese point of view this was but geocultural imperialism. Yet amid initial hopes came more long-term concerns. Bernard's hope was that "our intercourse with that remarkable nation ought to be recorded in the pages of history as a blessing, and not, what it might readily become, without great caution and prudence, a curse" (93). Moreover, there was the prospect of European intervention, which "leads us to the momentous question of the ultimate disorganization or breaking up of the Chinese empire. *This is the great event which we have to dread*; for who can contemplate the fearful results of such a crisis" (92) for the international system.

At a general level, defeat punctured the Qing aura of power. Weaknesses revealed by the war and its aftermath undermined China's residual prestige and traditional position of international preeminence within its Middle

Kingdom hierarchical system. Robert Fortune's travels across northern China left him with a view of China as "retrograding" and in "decay" (1847: 9) in the wake of the war. More specifically, the Chinese military defeat by British forces set the scene for the forceful mass entry of opium exports into China from British India. As Sir Henry Charles scathingly commented, "England, mistress of the world" (1849: 38) had "forced an evil legacy onto China . . . opium, China's curse . . . the use of which entails destruction, mentally and bodily on its infatuated devotees" (2). Opium importation into China was a bitter enough pill for China to swallow; a further bitter irony was that Chinese opium dens became part of the image of the decadent Chinaman in the United States and Australia, and the spark for subsequent discriminatory treatment against Chinese immigrant communities.

China's increasing weakness was now apparent to the West, and with it the degradation of the Chinese. According to Allom, "The species of worship which the Chinese embrace is so base and senseless, that genius and dishonesty are, in their tongue, synonymous terms—faith and falsehood valued only in the proportion to the success of the observer" (1843: 2.41). In the United States, "Beyond any doubt the first Anglo-Chinese war . . . served as a catalyst in the crystallization of the American image of China on the popular level" (S. Miller 1969: 83), as a decadent and "uncivilized" country. The pro-British *Boston Atlas* considered the Chinese "insolent . . . treacherous . . . as prone to fear as they are ready to injure; and their submission is usually as servile as their presumption was arrogant" (May 3, 1841).

While the Opium War damaged China's military reputation in the United States and opened China to the more powerful West, in turn the war could also potentially open the West to China. Indeed, "One fascinating side effect of the Opium War was a very faint stirring of what could be considered yellow perilist fear, probably its first public expression in American history" (S. Miller 1969: 110). One strange event was the circulation of Napoleon's alleged warning about China's future potential: "China is a sleeping giant. Let her lie and sleep, for when she awakens she will shake the world." This apocryphal warning, and its many variant translations ("astonish/shake/move"), continued to be repeated in journals and books through the following decades, to the present day (Fitzgerald 1999b). This was linked to the abortive Amherst Mission to China of 1816 that had visited Napoleon in St. Helena on its way back, with Napoleon supposedly telling the party that, should Britain invade China, it would teach the Chinese how to fight, and so to imperil the world. The publication in 1840 of Hall's reminiscences of the Amherst Mission, *Narrative of a Voyage to Java, China and the Great Loo-Choo Island*, coupled with the Anglo-Chinese Opium War, brought these supposed warnings into public circulation, as in the *New York Herald* of October 25, 1841, and December 22, 1841. Such rumors provoked a foreboding editorial in the *Providence Evening Herald* predicting that China would be "awakening from the lethargy of centuries" (July 29, 1840).

Wider issues were involved in the Treaty of Nanjing, signed under duress on August 29, 1842, by the Imperial Commissioner Qiyong. The Chinese considered the treaty a debacle: "Out of the assault of Western greed and lawlessness on Chinese morality there was borne in 1842 the treaty of Nanking [Nanjing], the first in a series of chains" (Tang Liangli 1927: 48) placed upon China in the international system. A century later, China's leader, Chiang Kai-shek, described it as "the first of China's unequal treaties with foreign powers" (1943: 54). As such, these "unequal treaties had hindered and prevented our attempts to build a nation. The unequal treaties implanted among us disunity, economic backwardness, and social chaos. They taught our people a sense of inferiority," for "they encouraged a mood of weak surrender . . . nothing but capitulation and humiliation" (56–57). For Chiang, "the weakening of China's international position and the deterioration of the people's morale during the last hundred years has been due chiefly to the unequal treaties . . . from beginning to end a record of national humiliation" (1947a: 17). Geopsychology was involved, for Chiang, in "the evils of the unequal treaties," which "not only rendered China no longer a state, but also made the Chinese people no longer a nation. They completely destroyed our nationhood, and our sense of honor and shame was lost" (1947b: 79).

The Treaty of Nanjing was indeed the first of the Unequal Treaties (*Bupingdeng tiaoyue*) forced on China. It featured territorial annexation of Hong Kong island; economic exploitation in setting up five Treaty Ports for the "China market" at Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, Xiamen (Amoy), and Canton; and the legal supremacism of extraterritoriality, Ruskola's "legal imperialism" (2005: 860), whereby Westerners were exempted from Chinese law throughout the Chinese Empire, and were instead subject to their own consular jurisdiction for crimes committed on Chinese soil. These three territorial, economic, and legal features provided a template for subsequent Unequal Treaties. Chinese observers came to see these features of the Unequal Treaties as "noticeable devices for securing the humiliation and subjugation of China" (Tang Liangli 1927: 57), and they were to be a continuous bone of contention between China and those powerful outsiders (Tung 1970).

Shanghai became the most prominent of all the Treaty Ports, complete with its own local Western-led International Militia, regularly visited by Western military forces and with the Western concession area gradually extended at various times from 1846–1914 (Fairbank 1983: 234–43; Wei 1993; Dong 2001; Sergeant 2002), at the expense of the remaining Chinese-controlled parts of Shanghai. With its imposing Victorian-style Bund frontage along the river, Shanghai became the most powerful nexus point between China and the West, "the focus of a new growth, in which foreign aggressiveness and Chinese weakness combined to create new Sino-foreign, treaty port institutions" (Fairbank 1983: 237). In the longer term, Shanghai was also an avenue and political space for Chinese critics, fermenting nationalist thought

(Perry 1993; Mittler 2004), in both the Chinese and Western-controlled parts of Shanghai. However, in the shorter term it was an avenue for Western economic penetration and Chinese dependency: as “the stronghold of the extraterritorial trader . . . Shanghai is a festering sore on the body politics of China” (Tang Liangli 1927: 52). As the novelist Eric Linklater later vividly put it, “With portentous banks for its battlements, and granite-walled huge officers for its watch-towers, Shanghai stood like a robber-keep at the entrance to China,” where “behind its tremendous walls were the incessantly toiling, tirelessly spawning provinces from which it took toll to build and maintain its magnificence” (1937: 27). In a geopolitical and geocultural sense, “Shanghai set the style of the foreign presence in China, a style the other [Western] concessions and settlements sought to emulate” (Feurwerker 1983: 137). Above all, Shanghai represented Western power and Chinese powerlessness within the international order and on Chinese national soil, with its legendary park notice “No Dogs and Chinese” (Bickers and Wasserstrom 1995). Consequently, “it is hardly surprising that Chinese nationalism developed so strongly in Shanghai, where the most confrontational aspects of imperialism were visible,” in a city “deeply divided by hardened European ideas of race” (Mitter 2004: 51).

Extraterritoriality became a key feature of China’s relations with the international system. In geocultural terms, as access to China’s interior was gradually but inexorably opened up, the extraterritoriality that followed, the Westerner impinged more and more on China. The international system jumped over China’s wall of sovereignty and embedded itself within and across China. Heald and Kaplan noted that “extraterritoriality as a cultural issue” should not be ignored in considering China’s relationship with the outside world, where “few arrangements could have been more expressive of contempt for China” (1977: 100). As Tang Liangli put it, extraterritoriality “has always been felt to be offensive and humiliating” (1927: 49) for China. This racial aspect was acknowledged in an internal Foreign Office memo on August 2, 1929, from Eric Teichman at the British Legation in China. He conceded that the result of “abolition of extraterritoriality . . . would be the disappearance of the position of racial superiority still enjoyed by the foreign resident in China” (DBFP 1960: 139). Geoculture was wrapped up in the West’s very application of power: “The treaty system had been set up by gunfire and had to be maintained by gunboat diplomacy” (Fairbank 1983: 232). Here, “gunboat diplomacy betrayed the unresolved struggle as to who should call the tune in Sino-Western contact. Fundamentally this was a cultural conflict in the broadest sense,” for “Britain wanted, not to rule the Chinese empire as a colony, but to get it to follow British ways” (232).

Geopolitics, geoeconomics, and geoculture meant that the Unequal Treaties became “a symbol invested with a host of meanings extending well beyond its significance in the first treaty encounters between China and Britain in 1842” (Wang Dong 2003: 420). The Unequal Treaties became an

important encapsulation of China's humiliation—"history as a mirror" in the eyes of many Chinese, "the discourse of the Unequal Treaties became integrated as a perpetual element in the common inheritance of Chinese-ness," in which "elicited from the century-long history of the Unequal Treaties and national humiliation are the contradictory images of China as a victim of Western imperialism and as a vanquisher who rises from the ashes like a phoenix" (442). Indeed, later on the sense of humiliation over the Unequal Treaties was to become the spur during the 1920s and 1930s to an ever stronger sense of nationalism that both the Guomindang (Nationalist) and Communist parties were to tap into and compete over. Thus, "China's struggle for national identity is reflected in the discourse of the Unequal Treaties with its dual concerns of 'national humiliation and eventual salvation,'" and "rhetoric used in the debate about the Unequal Treaties can thus be seen as instrumental in forging China's national identity . . . for achieving national salvation and strength" (424), both internally and externally.

CHINESE RESPONSES TO DEFEAT

In the immediate aftermath of the First Opium War, Chinese officials took stock. Qiying had been the Qing official who signed the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842. His 1844 *Memorial*, "Advice on How to Treat the Foreigners," considered it "necessary to control them by skilful methods. There are times when it is possible to have them follow our directions but not let them understand the reasons" (CRW 1979: 38). For some Westerners, this generated an image of Chinese duplicity. At the end of the year, Qiying was still dismissing the United States: "Of all the countries, it is the uncivilized and remote . . . an isolated place outside the pale, solitary and ignorant . . . in the forms of edicts and laws are they entirely unversed" (Swisher 1953: 177).

One figure immediately responding to China's defeat was the historian-geographer Wei Yuan. His *Haiguo tuzhi* (Illustrated Treatise on the Sea Kingdoms) appeared in 1842, four months after the Treaty of Nanjing was signed. It was "the first Chinese work to make a realistic geopolitical assessment of the worldwide dimensions of Western expansion and of its implications for Asian trade and politics" (Leonard 1984: 2). It was read with interest in Japan by thinkers like Shozan Sakuma and Shonan Yokoi. In his treatise, Wei used classic Chinese precepts, in effect IR balance of power maxims, that China "use barbarians to control barbarians" (CRW 1979: 34). Thus, "there is no better method of attacking England by sea than to use France and America" (32). On land, and closer to China's own sphere, "the British barbarians' fear of Russia lies not in her national capital but in India. This is one opportunity which might be used" (32). Alongside such external diplomatic ploys came the need for China to develop its own power by adopting Western technology, "to learn the superior skills of the barbarians in order to control them"

(34). This could be achieved through setting up a national shipyard and an arsenal, to “make the waterforces of China able to navigate large ships overseas, and able to fight against foreign barbarians on the high seas” (35). Such a program involved changing attitudes, where “we are learning not a single one of their superior skills” (35). However, this adoption of Western modes was limited. Western “technology” could be used but Western naval strategy, like seizing and building up networks of ports and territory and monopolizing trade, was not. Moreover, Wei still saw the oceans as barriers to communication, thereby underestimating the West’s maritime challenge.

Another Chinese voice was Xu Jiyu. The West was a challenging enigma for him during the First Opium War, Xu admitting in 1841, “I can neither eat nor sleep, trying to think of ways to help. The intractable barbarians are unfathomable” (Drake 1975: 1). Xu’s 1848 *Short Account of the Maritime Circuit* was widely circulated; “a Confucian realist on China’s frontier, Xu was motivated by geopolitical concerns as he searched out the facts that would help Chinese understand the non-Chinese world” (Drake 1975: 52). IR realism was, in retrospect, apparent. His book “went beyond objective geography to probe the nature of Western power as well as to reveal China’s tragic weakness in the world,” as he wondered “what now were the realities of China’s position on this planet? How did China fit in to the new order of states?” (191). China’s own traditional preeminence was still asserted by Xu: “The extensiveness of the land controlled by our dynasty has never been matched in ages past . . . China is the lord of Asia” (Drake 1975: 63, 68). Nevertheless, the growing challenge of the West to China was there for his readers, with descriptions of their control of key strategic points like Singapore, the example of Britain’s creeping annexations in India, and Russia’s eastward drive across Siberia, Europe’s basic and impressive technological and industrial transformation that was giving it increasingly dramatic military edge. In short, there was a recognition that “the threat to China was global in scale” (99). In an update of China’s horizons, the United States was noted for its growing expansion. The underlying lesson was that China needed to introduce structural economic and industrial reforms, “the essential ingredients of the new global politics” (193).

Such calls for systematic modernization were largely ignored during the 1840s and 1850s. Lin Zexu, the Canton Commissioner in 1839, did note the West’s military superiority, arguing in an 1841 letter to Xu Jiyu that “ships, guns and a water force are absolutely indispensable” (CRW 1979: 28) for any Chinese recovery. Lin organized translations of works concerning other countries, but his voice became marginalized, and he was exiled to Central Asia in disgrace following the outbreak of the First Opium War. Instead, conservative inertia held sway at the Qing court during the 1840s and 1850s. Consequently, the industrial, technological, and military gap between China and the West continued to increase and China’s power position continued to

decline. The Reverend William Gillespie, returning from Hong Kong and Canton, described China and the Chinese as sunk in a “state of hibernation . . . petrification . . . stagnation” (1854: 28). The imperial court saw greater danger in the various internal rebellions breaking out in the 1850s, the Taiping, Nian, and Xinjiang Muslim uprisings.

Religion was a factor in China’s relations with the international system. The Taiping’s quasi-Christian beliefs gave them a potential opening to the West in terms of support. Gillespie, for one, saw them as kindred Protestants (1854: 228–31) opening the way (237) for wider penetration of China, though the Taiping’s unorthodox radicalism eventually swayed the Western governments against giving them support (Teng 1971). Conversely, Western powers continued to push for greater access for European and American Christian missionaries. One Chinese student and future statesman, Li Hongzhang, wrote in 1849 that there were “far too many of these black robes teaching their nefarious doctrines, and uttering defiance to the Jade Emperor and all the gods” (1913: 23). Such “foreign devils come to the country for no good to it. They preach and talk in loud voices and hold up their hands and pretend that they come for the people’s benefit,” but “I heard that each and every one of them is a paid agent of some foreign power, and are only here to spy upon the government” (23). The relationships among missionaries, traders, and diplomats were in reality far more ambiguous, but the perception was strong and consistent in China that Christian missionaries were the geo-cultural arm of Western geopolitical expansionism.

In the West, some saw external European expansionism as the bigger threat to China. Thomas Meadows worried in 1850 about the danger of allowing Russia “to conquer China for when she has done that she will be *Mistress of the World*” (Colquhoun 1898: 350). A similar refrain was seen in 1856, with Meadows warning that “the greatest, though not the nearest, danger of a weak China lies precisely in those territorial aggressions of Russia.” China’s ongoing independence was necessary for international equilibrium, according to Meadows (Colquhoun 1898: 351). Otherwise, “she [Russia] would become mistress of Peking . . . with 120 millions of Chinese to work or fight for her, nothing could stand between Russia and the conquest of the Empire,” and “it would cost the Russian Emperor of China but little trouble to overwhelm the Pacific states” (Colquhoun 1898: 351). *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* profile on “The Celestials at Home and Abroad” judged that from one direction “Russia the great nascent power of the Old World, has rolled her armies across Siberia, up to the foot of the Great Wall, and now casts a covetous eye upon the northern portion of the celestial Empire” (1852: 113). From the other direction, “Britain, firmly seated on her Indian throne, has reached with her fleets every harbour of the Flowery Land, has menaced its capital with her broadsides and dotted its shores with her settlements” (113) like Hong Kong and the initial Treaty Ports. However, while

the West had an impact on China *in* China through military and territorial pressure, China was also now having an impact on the West *in* the West through Chinese emigration.

CHINESE EMIGRATION BECOMES AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE

While the West was opening up China, Chinese migration to the West, despite the Qing Edict of 1672 banning it, was becoming a noticeable international issue. This brought ongoing humiliation for China. It was denigrated as a nation and its people were denigrated as individuals, since its state impotence enabled this discrimination against its immigrants. This was to present legal ironies since Article I of the Treaty of Nanjing had talked of “their respective subjects, who shall enjoy full security and protection for their persons and property within the dominions of the other,” but this remained a dead letter for China. In 1844, Jenner Plomley saw such migration as serving the interests of Western economic expansion across the British Empire. He recognized that “next to the English, perhaps the Chinese, of all the nations of the earth, are most disposed to emigrate; and the extent to which emigration has reached of late years among them is truly surprising” (1844: 631) in Southeast Asia and across the Indian Ocean. Plomley also envisaged future beneficial Chinese immigration to Australia.

By the 1850s, Chinese emigration was erupting across the Pacific. For *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, “the greatest social phenomenon of the present day is the emigration fever of the Celestials . . . now finding their way, in great and increasing numbers, not only to California, but to Australia” (1852: 98,100) and elsewhere. Similarly, the American publication *Living Age* was struck by the international range of Chinese migration: “The populace of the Celestials moved by a common impulse . . . swarm in the islands of the Pacific; they serve in Australia, they sit down in the cities on the Western coasts of South America; they colonize portions of California” (1852: 427). Though the labor questions inherent in such mass immigration became highly charged cultural-political matters in California and Australia, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* was happy enough “that fusion is to be consummated,” that “the diverse elements of the population of Eastern America are gathered to a focus, and blending with those of China . . . will by and large settle in peace in California . . . Australia will ere long be the scene of an analogous combination” (1852: 113).

However, in Australia, local white sentiment and images were quickly forming against the Chinese. Charles Thatcher, dubbed “the colonial minstrel,” who died of cholera in Shanghai in 1878, warned in his 1857 poem “Chinese Immigrant,” “Of course you watch the progress / Of Chinese immigration— / For thousands of these pigtail chaps / In Adelaide are landing; /

And why they let such numbers come / Exceeds my understanding” (Jordan and Pierce 1990: 294). From such immigration came Thatcher’s nightmare of “this colony someday will be / Under Chinese dominion. / They’ll upset the Australian Government / The place will be their own; / And an Emperor with a long pigtail / Will sit upon the throne” (294). For Patrick Just, these Chinese migrants, virtually all male, were “a horde . . . given to idolatry, infanticide, and the practice of the most hideous immorality” (1859: 207), such as debauchery, murder, seduction, rape, homosexuality, and pedophilia! By the end of the 1850s, local anti-Chinese sentiment was evident in and around the Australian gold fields and had become a political issue. On the eve of the Lambing Flat riots, the editor of the *Bathurst Times* wrote that, faced with “an alien, degraded and heathen race” like the Chinese, “are we then, to submit to an invasion [by the Chinese] which, although at present peaceful, will at some future period become troublesome, if not bloody and turbulent?” (June 29, 1861).

In the United States, shades of the more positive literary images of the Chinese from the Enlightenment (Owen-Aldridge 1993) still lingered. The *Princeton Review* presented a sympathetic image of a typical Chinese visitor: “Long Achick and his celestial companions step ashore in satin shoes with white soles of paper, and float through the China and California streets of San Francisco in gowns of silk” bringing high culture with them, “waving their fans painted with extracts from poets and philosophers more ancient than Chaucer and Pelagius, and erect with the port of intelligence, refinement and enterprise” (1853: 83). Long Achick was no slovenly Chinese migrant; he was “a gentleman in his address, a scholar in his own polished and immense literature, every whit as cunning a trader and as acute a diplomatist as the Yankee: in fine he is the ‘Yankee of the East’” (*Princeton Review* 1853: 84). Scholarship and education cut both ways. Yung Wing became the first Chinese to go through an American university, graduating from Yale in 1854 (Worthy 1965; K. Wong 1996: 218–23), though with the intention that “through Western education China might be regenerated, become enlightened and powerful” (Yung 1909: 41).

However, more denunciatory images of China, Gyory’s “racist iconography” (1998: 18), were coming to the fore by the 1850s. Here, “beginning late in the 1840s, Chinese immigration to the West Coast of the United States introduced into Sino-American relations long-enduring uncertainties and confusions as American domestic reactions spilled into foreign affairs” (Hoyt and Trani 1978: 25). Diasporan Chinese communities became the focus for Yellow Peril racism on the part of the host communities. McKeown has noted how in “conceptualizing Chinese diasporas . . . depictions of Chinese as degraded, as parochial sojourners, as a Yellow peril . . . had wide currency at an international level, which helped legitimize their local application all the more” (1999: 328; also Chen 2000). Bayard Taylor helped set that tone with

his often-cited dismissal: “The Chinese, are, morally, the most debased people on the face of the earth,” with “a depravity so shocking and horrible, that their character cannot even be hinted . . . their touch is pollution” (1855: 354). Horace Greeley, in his editorial of September 29, 1854, in the influential *New York Tribune*, damned Chinese immigrants as “uncivilized, unclean and filthy beyond all conception, without any of the higher domestic or social virtues . . . pagan in religion, they know not the virtues of honesty, integrity or good faith.” Chinese migrants and their culture were increasingly seen as both alien and degraded, while China, and the Chinese, were seen as potentially threatening to the cohesion and power of the West.

California’s 1849 Gold Rush fostered Chinese immigration. California politicians quickly expressed fears for the future. Governor Peter Burnett asserted in his inaugural address of December 20, 1849, that “nothing is more probable than that China within the next century will fully learn and use her mighty power” and that “our position upon the Pacific, our commercial and mineral attractions, would bring swarms of this population to our shores” (Wu 1972, 109). The 1852 census reported around 25,000 Chinese in the new fledgling state, some 10 percent of the population. Governor John Bigler told his California legislature in 1852, “In order to preserve the tranquillity of the state, measures must be adopted to check the tide of Asiatic immigration” (Tsai 1985: 43). California’s ban on Indians and blacks testifying against whites was extended in 1854 by the chief justice Hugh Murray to include Chinese, describing the Chinese as a people “whose mendacity is proverbial; a race of people whom nature has marked as inferior” and “who are incapable of progress or intellectual development beyond a certain point, as their history has shown; differing in language, opinions, color, and physical conformation; between whom and ourselves nature has placed an impassable difference” (Odo 2002: 21). In San Francisco, the *Golden Hills News*, the first Chinese-language newspaper in the United States, asked in 1854 why, despite the depth and sophistication of Chinese civilization, do “our Conductors of the Press describe them as ‘Apes,’ ‘Brutes,’ ‘social lice . . . unfitted for Caucasian Civilization.’ Give them a fair trial before condemnation” (Odo 2002: 22–23). Their pleas were ignored. Instead, by 1858 the California legislature moved toward formally banning all Chinese immigration. California had become not just the main focus of Chinese immigration, but also the main center of anti-Chinese reactions (Sandmeyer 1973), becoming a model for Australian anti-Chinese sentiment (Markus 1979).

Anti-immigration sentiment reflected economic fears, but also underlying racism. Explicit racial theories were becoming more precisely enunciated as a science and used as justifications for colonial hegemonies, and “Orientalist” narratives. In 1853, De Gobineau presented a wide-ranging schemata and categorizations in his *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines*, a work that secured his position as a “racial prophet” (Biddiss 1970: 177). The publica-

tion reflected and profoundly affected much of the following nineteenth century discourse. In it, although the “yellow races” were acknowledged as relatively superior to the black races, De Gobineau saw them as superseded by the prowess of the white race. The Chinese “tends to mediocrity in everything . . . he invents little . . . no civilized society could be created by them; they could not supply its nerve force, or set in motion the springs of beauty and action . . . the Chinese are glad to vegetate” (De Gobineau 1966: 206–07). As such, they “would have crawled for ever at the feet of the lowest of the whites” (208), overshadowed as they were by “the immense superiority of the white peoples in the whole field of the intellect” (207).

Following his diplomatic posting to Persia 1855–1858, De Gobineau argued in his 1859 *Trois Ans en Asie* against imperial territorial expansion: “I am not inclined to give favourable consideration to this extraordinary ardour which is driving western nations towards Asia . . . a very appetizing dish, but one which poisons those who consume it” (Biddiss 1970: 188). He cautioned against too close an engagement with China, on account of its materialistic abilities, telling Tocqueville in 1856 that “observing such a great desire to open up China and become involved with all that part of the ancient continent, so voracious in its old age, I might be surprised that we do not examine more carefully the consequences of such camaraderie” (Biddiss 1970: 142). It is particularly frustrating that in January 1859 De Gobineau turned down the chance to act as First Secretary to the French Legation in China. This would have given him an invaluable firsthand opportunity to encounter the Chinese civilization about which he wrote frequently and strongly over the years.

Most liberal opinion despaired of China, retreating from the earlier positive Enlightenment images and estimations. Alexander Herzen felt threatened by the moral example of China while dismissing the actual Chinese state as a “clogging slough, this befouling fog . . . a sluggish Asiatic quiescence” (1974: 465, 463; also Lukin 2003: 18–20). He in turn had specifically cited and agreed with John Stuart Mill’s famous denunciation in 1859 of “the despotism of Custom . . . as is the case over the whole East,” where “we have a warning example in China” whose people “have become stationary,” and where “if they are ever to be improved it must be by foreigners” (Mill 1929: 88). The international system—foreigners—was more than ready to intervene.

THE SECOND OPIUM WAR (1857–1860)

Even as liberals like Herzen and Mill were despairing of China, further confrontation between China and the West erupted, as full implementation and expansion of the Treaty of Nanjing was sought by the West. In *The Rationale of the China Question*, Gideon Nye, the American Vice-Consul at Canton, starkly illuminated the geocultural “state of quasi-hostility in the respective attitudes of the West and the East” (1857: 3), in which “the East and West

are face to face with each other” (39). Power distribution could be assessed, with a more assertive Britain no longer afraid of an earlier “undefined dread of the latent resources of China” (1). Instead, an industrializing Britain, “with the ease of a giant conscious of his strength and resources” (1), had the power to break down “the wall of exclusiveness behind which China has hidden her weakness” (25). As a result, “diplomacy, in the ordinary sense of that term, is not required . . . these schooled diplomatists and natural sophists [the Qing] must learn from a new, blunt, hard tongue” (39). Nye’s advocacy was clear enough; Chinese “pretensions” needed humbling and humiliating: “The assumption of superiority and universal Empire by China for so many centuries must be relinquished—must fall at the feet of the invaders” (9). Force was likely to be more effective than “that dreary book of Diplomacy” (35). Consequently, “China entrenched behind these walls disdains to show her face; nor will she see clearly until compelled . . . by the contact of cannon balls” (20). They were soon to come.

Paradoxes, if not double standards, were apparent from Nye. Opium had been forced upon China by Britain in the First Opium War of 1839–1842. Nye felt “morally we regard it as an unmitigated devil,” but still judged that economically “the existence of this immense traffic in Opium . . . must obviously be permitted to enjoy the perfect immunity accorded to every other article of the World’s commerce” (37). What was “obvious” to him was not necessarily obvious to the Chinese. A picture of equality for China and the Chinese in the emerging international system was painted: “The Christian nations seek from China nothing but international comity; the recognition of reciprocal rights, the fulfilment of reciprocal duties” (3). Yet the growing backlash against Chinese immigration in Australia and the United States, which was followed by subsequent discriminatory “Exclusion” legislation, made Nye’s talk of even-handed “international comity” and “reciprocal duties” a little hollow. Nye’s geocultural assumptions were also evident in his hopes of “the great Nations of the West . . . confronting China unitedly” for “the cause of Christianity and civilization” (1). Such a confrontation offered “the golden opportunity . . . the three great naval Powers can act in concert” in China, with “the old CRUSADE revived . . . to rear the Cross and fight for principle . . . Shall not the sword, rather, bear a CROSS upon its hilt . . . and the Pistol repeat in its voice the echoes of Christian aspirations” (24). Consequently, “we may witness *the last armed struggle between Paganism and Christianity*” (34) in China.

As Nye exhorted his readers onward, Western governments were indeed moving toward confrontation with China during 1857. A Chinese-owned but British-captained boat, *The Arrow*, was boarded by Cantonese forces, her crew accused of piracy and imprisoned. She had been registered in Hong Kong, although the registration had expired. The key factor was that in geocultural terms there was a perceived insult to Britain as a British ensign had been torn down from the stern during the seizure. In geopolitical terms, Sir

John Bowring, governor of Hong Kong, and Harry Parkes, the British Consul at Canton, were already disposed to robust policies toward China and were ready to use the incident to open up and establish wider access at Canton and beyond. Although all the crewmen were returned, the Cantonese authorities refused to formally apologize, so were subject to a British naval bombardment. Thereupon sporadic fighting took place along the Canton river delta, riots with casualties took place in Canton, and tension grew for wider military intervention. In the British Parliament attitudes were forceful but divided.

In the House of Lords, various former Foreign Secretaries spoke against war. The Earl of Derby announced, on February 24, 1857, "I am an advocate for weakness against power, for perplexed and bewildered barbarism against the arrogant demands of overweening, self-styled civilization. I am an advocate for the feeble defencelessness of China against the overpowering might of Britain" (UK 1857: 1155). Earl Grey similarly felt, "a great wrong has been done, the arms and power of this great nation have been abused in waging an unjust war" (UK 1857: 1237). The Earl of Carnarvon warned against policies of "might should be right" (UK 1857: 1320). In an interesting IR-related way, he also warned against weakening China, given that "China was a necessity to the political equilibrium of the Eastern world" (1320). Conversely, the Earl of Clarendon argued on February 26, 1857, "There has been for a long series of years a habitual determination on the part of the Chinese to humiliate us, to restrict us in the exercise of our undoubted rights, to violate our privileges secured by treaty" (UK 1857: 1195). In that sense he was right; the Chinese authorities were obstructing full implementation of the Treaty of Nanjing. But the unequal manner in which Britain had obtained those rights and privileges was another matter.

A different sort of voice was heard in the House of Lords, from the Bishop of Oxford. He seemed to feel arrogant hubris was in the making, an overassertion of temporal power by Britain against a weaker temporal state. There was "injustice and wrong" (UK 1857: 1384) in these rising British demands and applications of power. It was dangerous at two levels. Divine retribution might work against Britain, "that [divine] Power will, if need be, find in the weakness of China an element to chastise and rebuke the strength of Britain" (1384). Since "England's might—England's supremacy at sea—her assertion of it—are not favourably regarded in any part of the world," the "exertion of that strength to force a lawless policy upon a helpless and unoffending race, will not pass unnoticed among the nations of Europe, of Asia, or America" (1384). Alignment against Britain could take place in effect among other Western powers—IR *balancing* in other words. However, the bishop underestimated the extent to which Western powers would during this period be willing to work together at the expense of China.

In the House of Commons, geocultural and geopolitical currents surrounded the rising tensions, and, with them, "the complacent tones of some

of the ministerial speakers, who termed the Chinese ‘barbarians,’ using precisely the same word which the Chinese employ when they mean to design ourselves” (Phosphorous 1857: 508). One such ministerial voice was that of Henry Labouchere, Secretary of State for the Colonies. In the debate, on February 26, 1857, Labouchere hoped “we may see it, when the vast population of the Chinese Empire may be brought into communication with the more fortunate races which enjoy the blessings of civilization” and “that we shall see them emancipated from the ignorance and thralldom of heathenism” (UK 1857: 1433). The Lord Advocate revealed underlying assumptions and images on the following day: “Every one was aware that, in dealing with Orientals, it was a most dangerous thing to neglect small beginnings and that if we submitted to trifling injuries and insults and injuries more important ones would follow before long” (UK 1857: 1513). That same day, Robert Lowe, vice president of the Board of Trade, elaborated further such different standards: In “the manner of dealing with an affront from Oriental nations there was a difference, for it was known that their conduct to those they were brought in contact was proportioned to their ideas of their power of resisting their aggressions” (UK 1857: 1483). Consequently, “insults which a great people might pass over, if offered by a member of the European confederacy . . . must, when offered by Oriental nations, be resented and punished on the spot” (1483). As Prime Minister, Palmerston’s position was clear: There had been “many acts of deliberate violation of treaty rights” (UK 1857: 1828) by China, and “we should require the fulfilment of treaty obligations” (1828). However, it also a matter of extending treaty provisions, “good revision of those [existing] treaties” with “larger markets . . . afforded to Europeans” (1828). It was also a question of “face,” of international prestige: “Foreign nations would feel that England has descended from that high [Great Power] status which hitherto she has occupied, at the beck of some of the meanest, and the most degraded beings in the civilized world” (1831).

Two famous adversaries both spoke critically on the issue. Gladstone took a high moral tone, as he had done over the First Opium War. Attempts to get opium into China remained abhorrent, “the worst, the most pernicious, demoralizing and destructive of all the contraband trades that are carried on upon the surface of the globe” (UK 1857: 1799). At the state level, the rising calls for tough military action represented “a trampling down of the weak . . . you go to China and make war upon those who stand before you as women or children . . . you have no equality of ground on which to meet them. You can earn no glory in such warfare” (1802). Benjamin Disraeli also attacked Palmerston’s policy: “A policy with respect to China which has begun in outrage and which, if pursued, will end in ruin” (UK 1857: 1839). Like the Earl of Carnarvon, Disraeli was concerned about regional instability being threatened by British action against China: “Great Powers have been brought into contact with us in the East . . . and a system of political com-

promise has developed itself like the balance of power in Europe” (1857: 1837). Instead of military threats, “We must habituate ourselves to the idea of extending to countries like China, the same diplomatic intercourse that we adopt to other nations” (1837).

A particularly famous speech was made in the House of Commons on February 26, 1857, by the Yorkshire radical Richard Cobden, who demanded, “I ask you to consider this case precisely as if you were dealing with a strong Power, instead of a weak one. I confess I have seen with humiliation the tendency in this country to pursue two courses of policy—one towards the strong, and the other towards the weak” (UK 1857: 1393–94). Cobden worried about double standards: “We never yet acquired the character of being bullies to the weak and cowards to the strong. Let us consider this case precisely as if we were dealing with America instead of China,” for “what I say is, let us, in our dealings with that country, observe towards them that justice which we observe towards the United States, or France, or Russia” (1394).

Yet British tempers were rising, with hopes to “conquest, and to annex China as we have annexed India” (UK 1857: 1419). Cobden was sceptical, given international complications: “Are you sure that extensive territorial acquisitions in China would be acquiesced in by other Powers?” he asked, and given China’s sheer size, “Does anybody who knows anything about China believe that you could annex it? It is an empire of 300,000,000 people. How are you to govern them?” (1419). He warned against force and advocated patience: “You will be disappointed, and deservedly so, if relying upon the supposition that you will be able to coerce the Chinese Government by force,” and “you will be disappointed if you think that you will be repaid by increased commerce for the employment of violence. If you make the attempt, you will be disappointed again, as you have been disappointed before” (1420). China deserved more respect in his eyes: “Are these people so barbarous that we should attempt to coerce them by force into granting what we wish? Here is an empire in which is the only relic of the oldest civilisation of the world . . . that supplied silks and other articles of luxury to the Romans 2,000 years ago!” (1420). Chinese economic potential was there: “They are the very soul of commerce in the East. You find them carrying on their industry in foreign countries with that assiduity and laboriousness which characterise the Scotch and the Swiss” (1420). But he saw no great threat in that, “you find them [the Chinese] not as barbarians at home, where they cultivate all the arts and sciences, and where they have carried all, except one, to a point of perfection but little below our own—but that one is war” (1420). In short, “there must be something in such a people deserving of respect . . . Is not so venerable an empire as that deserving of some sympathy—at least of some justice?” (1421).

Cobden’s censure motion, as supported by Gladstone and Disraeli, may have won by sixteen votes, but Palmerston’s success in the following general

election put Britain on course for greater confrontation with China. De Quincey was adamant, with a series of articles in *The Titan* during 1857, about the need for military intervention against an alien and decadent China. The Chinese were “intellectually a very imbecile people” with “a feeble moral energy” (1890: 360). As for Chinese diplomacy, “in dealing with a vile trickster like the Chinese executive, unacquainted with any one restraint of decorum or honourable sensitivity—it is necessary for a diplomatist to be constantly upon his guard” (354). China was dismissed as “this vilest and silliest amongst nations” (349).

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, may have warned that “candidates recommending a forcible extension of the trade with China, betrayed a degree of ruffianism . . . to force a trade by means of fire and sword . . . is little better than rapine and piracy covered by a flimsy garb” and “contrary to the law of nations . . . to international law” (1857: 706), but that is precisely what was arising. One “incipient” (P. Cohen 1967a, also 1967b) nationalist, Wang Tao, argued around 1858 in Shanghai that “if suddenly, the Westerners seized an opportunity to attack us, how could we resist them . . . our finances are inferior to theirs, our weapons are inferior to theirs, and our military strategies are also inferior to theirs” (CRW 1979: 137). He was right. This time, France entered the picture, fighting alongside Britain in the Second Opium War, enraged by the murder of a French missionary in 1857. At the outset there was blithe talk, in October 1857, of Anglo-French forces going north toward the capital and through “the pageantry of European warfare spread terror in the very heart of the enemy’s country” (De Moges 1860: 82). Warfare commenced with an Anglo-French occupation of Canton at the end of December 1857.

In China, Lo Bingzhang, the governor of Hunan province, dismissed Western strength on March 5, 1858. He considered it as “false strength . . . Barbarian soldiers are accustomed to naval warfare but when used in land battles, they are afraid of flanking and of ambush. When victorious they cannot penetrate deeply; when defeated they cannot easily retire” (Swisher 1953: 370). Other voices were more concerned about the West’s strength and China’s relative weakness. He Kuiqing’s *Memorial* of April 15, 1858, revealed his resentment of the West: “The barbarians have repudiated treaties, occupied our (provincial) capital city [Canton], abducted our high official and every red-blooded man is gnashing his teeth in bitter anger, wanting to eat their flesh and use their hides for blankets” (Swisher 1953: 411). His advice, as one of the imperial negotiators, was that “the management of barbarian affairs is self-evident: employ soft to manage hard . . . and not talk promiscuously about going to war” (412). Internal divisions between Western powers could be used by China: “The English and Americas cannot get along and that the Russians have left the English and approached the Americans . . . it should not be hard to separate them, and using barbarians to control barbarians, sow mutual disaffection and gradually weaken them” (413). China also

needed internal military renewal: “Our government ships can hardly meet them in battle . . . selecting and training naval forces, then will be the time to seize an opportunity to overcome our country’s enemies and mete out Heavenly punishment” (413).

At the Qing Court, Dan Tingxiang lamented on May 17, 1858, “The greed of the barbarians is insatiable, as they encroach step by step” (Swisher 1953: 259–60). The occupation of the Dagu Forts in the north was seen by Ban Cuyin as showing “the greed of the barbarians, thus fomenting China’s greatest humiliations in two hundred years” (Swisher 1953: 471). British and French demands on China were conceded in the varied Treaties of Tianjin, June 1858, with geopolitics and geoculture again entwined. Six more Treaty Ports were opened up to Western trade, ambassadorial residence was granted in Beijing, travel restrictions in the interior were eased, and Christians were given permission to preach throughout the Empire. Moreover, the emotive Chinese character *yi* (barbarian) was banned from any future use in diplomatic records, with official correspondence between Britain and China to be in English—perhaps an example of James Hevia’s “pedagogies of power” (2003) and Lydia Liu’s “semiotics of international relations” (2004: 5–30) at play.

By then the United States had become more formally involved in China. The U.S.-China Treaty of Tianjin was a paragon of virtuous rhetoric. Its Article 1 read, “There shall be, as there have always been, peace and friendship between the United States of America and the [Chinese] Empire, and between their people, respectively. They shall not insult or oppress each other.” “Equality,” “reciprocal respect,” and “courtesy” were phrases freely employed, though all the rights were focused on Americans in China rather than Chinese in America. Article 30, promising that the United States would gain any other rights ceded to other Western nations, was immediately triggered in the following Anglo-French treaties with China later that month.

For the *United States Democratic Review*, the Western advance was providential: “The treaties of amity and commerce, lately negotiated at Tientsin [Tianjin] . . . stand forth as additional testimonials of the virtue and power of the civilization of the present age” (1858: 337). Thus, “all progressive and Christian nations will hail in it [the treaty] the advent of a highly propitious era—the dawn of an important and fruitful epoch . . . the pre-ordained decrees of destiny are inevitable” (352). China’s regression was equally evident, “possessed, as a people, of the fairest and most fruitful heritage allotted to any portion of mankind . . . their imbecility and almost total moral destitution and depravity is the most conspicuous and marked feature” (338). There was “the singular anomaly of a nation, in population the most powerful,” where “as yet neither the rays of modern civilization, nor the dawn of enlightened Christianity have penetrated or broken upon the vast interior recesses of China” (339). The Treaties of Tianjin enabled such penetration into the interior reaches of China.

Ratification of these treaties proved difficult in Beijing. At the Qing court, Kuiliang argued on June 26, 1858, that “the present English and French treaties can by no means be taken as actual commitments; they are nothing more than a few pieces of paper useful for the moment to drive their warships from the harbor,” with the option available for China “to repudiate the agreement and give up friendly relations” (Swisher 1953: 505). Chinese comments in late 1858 in the aftermath of the treaties were reflective. On the one hand lay the West’s military strength, which for He Kuiqing, “depend[ed] on the strength of their ships and the superiority of their cannon” (Swisher 1953: 529). Here, for “controlling barbarians . . . when our army is strong and supplies adequate, we thrash the barbarians in our four frontiers,” but for the moment, “today the barbarians pretend to trade in good faith and fairness, therefore your official wants to show them good faith and, taming them by conforming to their mood, get them into our power” (530). The stakes in this East-West confrontation were high for He Kuiqing: “This is the greatest crisis in barbarian affairs of the past two hundred years of our Dynasty” (Swisher 1953: 532). For any longer-term hopes, military renewal was essential. Consequently, for the Shanghai Commissioners led by Kuiliang: “The best we can do is one at a time to think of ways to eliminate them eventually . . . only when China’s army is efficient, supplies adequate, artillery effective and ships strong can we do as we please and repudiate everything” (Swisher 1953: 541).

Heavy fighting and some initial Chinese successes were seen the following summer around the Dagu forts in June 1859, from which Prince Senggelinqin took heart. This skilled Qing general argued, on July 14, 1859, that “[Qing] strength opposed [Western] violence and the humiliation of these barbarians was certainly deep, so they will collect troops and ships and plan revenge” (Swisher 1953: 591). However, he thought, “if they are severely thrashed two or three times by Chinese military forces, the hollow arrogance of these barbarians, unable to stand more setbacks, will certainly be visibly blunted and suppressed. Then China can be assured several decades without trouble” (591). Unfortunately, from China’s point of view, the West was not going to be “severely thrashed” anymore. Instead, Britain and France regrouped. This was ruefully acknowledged by He Kuiqing on August 1, 1859: “Fighting among barbarians is a constant occurrence; but in matters involving China they always shield one another” (Swisher 1953: 608). Karl Marx described the events of that summer as a Huntington-style “Civilization War” (1859), waged by the West on the East.

A curious interlude was seen in the arrival at Shanghai of George Smith, Bishop of Victoria, who was on his way to Japan. In a rallying call to the Anglican clergy on March 16, 1860, Smith was naturally pleased with the openings given to Christianity under the Treaties of Tianjin. China generally was denounced, “their civilization now diminished and waning to decay . . . China now hopelessly decrepit and defunct” (G. Smith 1860: 10). Conse-

quently, the Chinese “need Christianity and they need Christianity alone, to spread the blessings of the highest and truest civilization over the land” (10). However, Smith also was aware of impending military movements, “who shall predict the consequences of the whole empire of China of the part which Britain may be destined to sustain,” as “she now appears in all the power of her naval and military demonstrations off the maritime provinces of this bleeding, helpless, suffering nation” (18). What role would Britain play, “invested with the attributes either of a giant commissioned to destroy, or as a minister of mercy endeavouring to heal and to save” (18)? A good question.

As it turned out, a large expeditionary army of some 18,000 troops marched on Beijing to enforce the provisions of the Treaties of Tianjin—the British troops under the authority of Lord James Elgin and the French troops under Jean-Baptiste Gos. As Anglo-French forces assembled at Hong Kong, George Allgood told General Eyre, on April 24, 1860, that it was indeed “a very large force . . . to humble the Court of Peking. Anyone who understands the Asiatic character knows that forbearance on our part at the present time would only be attributed by them as fear,” so “*we must advance on Peking . . . when the enemy is thoroughly humbled . . . when they see we have the power to enforce our terms at the gates of their capital*” (Allgood 1901: 19–20). Complete dismissal of China was seen in June from the *Atlantic Monthly*, which portrayed the encounter as one between a superior West and an inferior East, where the eighteenth-century Enlightenment’s “imagined attractions of China disappear” when faced with “a nation so palsied, so corrupt, so wretchedly degraded, and so enfeebled” (1860: 722). Gideon Nye summed up the encounter in the title of his book, *The Gage of the Two Civilizations, Shall Christendom Waver?* (1860).

GEOCULTURAL POLITICS AND THE BURNING OF THE SUMMER PALACE

As Anglo-French forces approached Beijing and the emperor Xianfeng fled to Jehol in the interior, geocultural clashes became apparent in the events taking place at the Yuanming Yuan, the emperor’s Summer Palace on the outskirts of Beijing. As Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General, Garnet Wolseley’s description of the Yuanming Yuan was mixed. He conceded that “everything upon which the eye could rest was pretty and well designed, each little object being a gem,” but still saw it as second rate: “The artists and architects of China have failed to produce any great work capable of inspiring those sensations of awe or admiration which strikes every one when first gazing upon the magnificent creations of European architects” (1862: 233). The garden-palace complex had been built by Kangxi in 1709, “a paradise lost” (Y. Wong 2001). In this sense, the chaplain to the British expeditionary force was correct in recording, “If you can imagine fairies to be the size of ordinary mortals, this

then was fairyland. Never have I beheld a scene which realized one's ideas of an enchanted land before" (M'Ghee 1862: 7). It was not just the individual palace of a ruler, it was also a national repository of Chinese art and civilizational prowess. In such a light Beeching judged it "the treasure house of China—such a concentration of visual beauty, artifice and wealth as neither existed nor could again once again have been brought into being anywhere else in the world" (1975: 331). Hanes and Sanello considered it an "incalculable . . . archive, museum, treasure-trove, and sybaritic paradise" (2004: 4–5).

The initial occupation of the Summer Palace by French and British troops was marked by widespread looting. Wolseley's description from the British camp was blunt enough: "Officers and men seemed to have been seized with a temporary insanity; in body and soul they were absorbed in one pursuit, which was plunder, plunder" (1862: 227). Memories of the looting would inform the British soldiers' recollections of the occupation for years: "The wild moments of enjoyment passed in the pillage of a place live long in a soldier's memory . . . they talk of such for years afterwards with pleasure" (225). Likewise, the incident would live on in Chinese national memory as a brutal and humiliating act.

Following the surrender of Beijing, the Summer Palace was systematically burned down on October 18, 1860. British troops left "a dreary waste of ruined nothingness . . . the summer palaces had ceased to exist" (Wolseley 1862: 280). The rationale for the burning was that it was deliberate retribution for atrocities the Chinese had committed against British prisoners, but wider issues of perception and power were involved. Elgin told Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell, on October 25, 1860, that "as almost all the valuables had already been taken from the palace, the army would go there, not to pillage" but instead "to mark, by a solemn act of retribution, the horror and indignation which we were inspired by the perpetration of a great crime. The punishment was one which would fall, not on the people, but exclusively on the Emperor" (BDFa 1994a: 154). Wolseley attempted to justify it in similar terms, arguing that "the destruction of Yuen-ming-yuen was the most crushing of all blows which could be levelled at his Majesty's inflated notions of universal supremacy," in which "the destruction of his favourite residence was the strongest proof of our superior strength; it served to undeceive all Chinamen in their absurd conviction of their monarch's universal sovereignty" (Wolseley 1862: 280–81).

Lieutenant-General Hope Grant commanded the British forces. He reflected, "I could not but grieve at the destruction of so much ancient grandeur, and felt that it was an uncivilised proceeding; but I believe it to be necessary as a future warning to the Chinese against the murder of European envoys, and the violation of the laws of nations" (Grant 1875: 205). Wider issues were involved: "It is scarcely too much to say that the China War of 1860 may be considered the most successful and the best carried out of Eng-

land's 'little wars,' if, indeed, the latter term be not a misnomer" (224). Grant was satisfied with the outcomes: "No mistake occurred to mar the outline of the whole," and, within three months, "the Chinese received three defeats in the open, their strong forts of Taku, on which they based their powers of resistance, were captured and their capital itself was forced to succumb under the guns of the invaders" (224). Geocultural power was exerted. "We procured for the civilised world protection from the oppression and barbarous outrages which the nation [China] had been previously wont to inflict upon strangers," and "we struck a salutary blow at the pride of China, which, as experience shows, has been successful in convincing her that she is no match for the peoples of Europe" (224–25). Finally, "above all, we exacted from them the Treaty of Peking, which has proved far more lasting than any former engagements with that nation" (225).

At the time the decision to burn the palace was controversial. The Western forces were widely accused of barbarism. In 1861 Charles "Chinese" Gordon arrived in Beijing, describing British military actions as "pillaging . . . destroying in a Vandal-like manner . . . you can scarcely imagine the beauty and magnificence of the buildings we burnt . . . everybody was wild for plunder" (Cameron 1976: 352–53). The French disassociated themselves from what they called "a Gothlike act of barbarism" (Wolseley 1862: 279). Victor Hugo deplored the action: "A marvel of the world; this marvel was called the Summer Palace," where "all that was able to create the image of a people almost extra-human was there . . . Voltaire spoke of them . . . as a silhouette of the civilization of Asia on the horizon of the civilization of Europe. That marvel has disappeared" (Hugo 1861). For Hugo, "before History, one of the two bandits will be called France, the other will be called England . . . there was one theft and two robbers," each of which should have "a heavy load on her conscience" (Hugo 1861). Ringmar's juxtaposition of "liberal barbarism and the oriental sublime" (2006) is appropriate. In a sense, and in effect, Western hard power was being used to smash Chinese soft power.

Within China the deliberate burning of the Summer Palace achieved its immediate purpose of Qing compliance. However, the Palace ruins remained as a haunting reminder of past glories and present humiliations. Wo Ren, head of the Hanlin Academy, was outraged that "our Imperial palace was burned . . . there had never been such insults during the last 200 years of our dynasty. All our scholars and officials have been stirred with burning rage, and have retained their hatred," so "how can we forget this enmity and this humiliation even for one single day?" (CRW 1979: 76). Poets echoed these sentiments. Prince Yihuan witnessed the torching of the varied Imperial gardens. His descriptions of the results were stark: a "gloom, ravaged pavilion, a wretched stillness" (Schwarcz 2004: 45). He felt "the shame of helplessness in the face of disaster" (33) when faced with this "traumatised landscape" (46). It left in its wake "no human sound" but a "boundless ache" (55) for the future.

Such destruction was a highly emotional-cultural issue. Elgin's "conscientious act of vandalism could only confirm to the Chinese people that the Europeans were indeed barbarians—and barbarians intent on dominating the Middle Kingdom" with "an act that would further poison relations between China and the West, and that would fuel Chinese determination to resist Western encroachment for the next century and a half" (Hanes and Sanello 2004: 11). Its deliberate sacking by Britain could be seen as a cultural attack on China itself, an action "which continue[s] to haunt the Chinese view of the West to the very present" (Finlay 2002: 103). As such, "the issues that underlay . . . the burning of the Summer Palace . . . went much deeper" and "represented both a culmination and a new beginning in a much larger game of cultural confrontation—a confrontation between great world civilizations, one new and one ancient, each believing itself to be the pinnacle of civilization on the planet" (Hanes and Sanello 2004: 12).

The deliberate and public destruction of the Summer Palace, as a matter of state policy, left ongoing geocultural images. Consequently, "the burning of the Summer Palace still has the power to shock a century and a half later . . . it has never stopped rankling the Chinese since Imperial days, through the Nationalist regime and the People's Republic today," in which "regardless of the political bent of whatever government happens to be in power, a national humiliation remained and remains a national humiliation" (Hanes and Sanello 2004: 288). The sacking of the Yuanming Palace became replete with subsequent symbolic significance in China. It was first commemorated in 1915 by thousands of students gathering in its ruins to proclaim, amid Japanese pressures at the time, a National Humiliation Day. More recently, under the PRC it became "the iconic image of the official history of the century of national humiliation" (Callahan 2004b: 208).

Though a *Times* leading article of December 25, 1860, supported the retributive necessity of the "the blackened ruins of the Summer Palace," it still sounded a warning note for the future, advising: "Let us then act wisely, let us resolve never again to rush into a war, to resent an imaginary insult, or to vindicate British etiquette against Chinese etiquette." Instead, it suggested, "let us make certain to our Consuls, and to our pro-Consuls, that they are in China to preserve peace, and not to be the causes of war," and "let us make it understood by our merchants that it is in their interests to render commerce a bond for peace, for that, come what may, we will never again make it a pretext for war." In effect, this conceded that such pretexts, imaginary insults, and etiquette issues had been at play in Western actions toward China. Real territorial issues had, however, simultaneously arisen to the north with Russia.

RUSSIA'S DRIVE TO THE
AMUR BASIN AND VLADIVOSTOK

China was not only beset from the sea and southward by Britain and France; it was also faced with Russia's overland drive from the steppes. De Moges noted, in October 1857, how amid preparations for the Second Opium War, "Russian colonization in the basin of the Amour . . . sufficed to alarm the colonial press of Hong Kong" (1860: 85). At Shanghai, Feng Guifen was also aware of new Russian pressure from the north, where "recently we have heard that the footsteps of the Russian barbarians have reached the regions of the Sui-fen River which is not far away from the Ch'ang-pai Mountains and Kirin, and this merits even greater attention" (CRW 1979: 55). The growing weakness of the Qing by the mid-nineteenth century was reawakening Russian "imperial visions" (Bassin 1999) for Eurasian dominance and Pacific windows, at the expense of China. Perry Collins's trip down the Amur in 1856–1857 saw him reiterating these hopes of "the great advance" by Russia toward the East as "the only means by which nearly half of the inhabitants of the earth can be Christianized" and "brought within the pale of commerce and modern civilization. May we not look to this as a solution of the Chinese riddle? . . . prophecy fulfilled and Asia Christianized" (1962: 289–90).

Russia was indeed annexing large swathes of Chinese territory, in Central Asia and especially in the Far East. There, the Amur basin was gained through the Treaty of Aigun in 1858, with Russian control down to Vladivostok and its Maritime Province frontage on the Pacific gained through the Treaty of Beijing in 1860 (Quested 1968)—around 650,000 square miles in all. Russian expansionists like Dmitrii Romanov claimed that the Treaty of Beijing was "a glorious and resounding event" for the West and for China: "One third of the human race, which up to this point remained as it were non-existent for the rest of the world, is now entering into contact with the advanced nations, and is becoming accessible for European civilization" (Bassin 1999: 185). A different geocultural and geopolitical memory ensued for China: Russia as the biggest imperialist robber.

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THREE

Humiliations Maintained

*Should we, as a large country, alone accept defilement and insult?
... We must consider manufacturing, repairing and using weapons by ourselves
... only thus will we be able to play a leading role on the globe;
and only thus shall we restore our original strength,
and redeem ourselves from former humiliations.*

—Feng Guifen, 1861

*If policies are altered,
China can become the leader of all nations;
if policies are not altered she will become the servant of all nations.
Thus will the future's domestic affairs
depend upon your handling of today's foreign affairs.*

—Robert Hart, 1865

EFFECTS AND AFTERMATH OF THE SECOND OPIUM WAR

ANY CHINESE HOPES of controlling the West diminished further as China was subject to still harsher constraints imposed by the Convention of Beijing, negotiated under duress by Xiangfeng's brother, Gong Qinwang 'Prince Gong.' This reaffirmed but also extended the scope of the Treaties of Tianjin. Indemnities were increased. Tianjin was added to the Treaty Ports. Kowloon was ceded to Britain. For Spence, "thus did the 'treaty system' reach its fruition" (1990: 181). In retrospect, Immanuel Hsu argued in his *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations* that "the Unequal Treaties of Tientsin and Peking left an indelible mark of injustice on the Chinese mind" (1968a: 109). Henry Loch may have argued that this all represented "the commencement

of a new era . . . the introduction of four hundred millions of the human race [China] into the family of civilized nations” (1869: 289), but it was the West setting the norms for what it considered “civilized” relations between states. Huang Zunxian, the diplomat-poet, looked back sadly to China’s Middle Kingdom heights: “What a manifestation of grandeur! / Alas! It has become only a memory of the distant past. / For since the Court has had to take refuge in Jehol / The country has weakened miserably” (W. Hung 1955: 51), as “six or seven Powers around the globe / Are as vultures waiting with covetous glances” (52).

At the time, Karl Scherzer, having passed through China in 1858, judged that “never before had the Middle Kingdom sustained such a humiliation . . . conditions such as those that had been imposed by the Western nations in the Treaties of Tien-Tsin and Peking, were altogether proof of its weakness and approaching downfall” (1862: 389). However, if the Qing Dynasty was likely to fall in the short term, a longer-term process could be seen for the people, “rousing the immense Chinese Empire from its thousand years’ lethargy” and “forcing the natives who populate it to follow in the great onward career of civilization, which in our days is rushing with the rapidity of a tempest through the world” (390). China was in little position to block such movements, given its own immediate weakness and enfeeblement.

The Japanese followed the events with alarm. Yokoi Shonan had already read Wei Yuan’s earlier geopolitical analyses of the First Opium War. Shonan’s *Kokuze sanron* (The Three Major Problems of State Policy) was composed in late 1860, in the immediate aftermath of the Second Opium War and the Treaty of Beijing. Shonan started by asserting, “We should well consider China’s case. She was the great power of Asia” (1968: 69) that had fallen into decline. When “she was badly defeated by England in the opium war,” the Qing court had failed to reform and had fallen into “extravagance, indolence and arrogance” (170). Consequently, “China did not honor the terms of the treaty, but with each crisis and each treaty she yielded to the superior morality out of fear of military force. She parcelled out good ports and fertile lands in reparations for violating treaties. Her humiliation was extreme” (170). With the second defeat, Shonan reckoned that “even if China remains an empire through the good will of England, her government has fallen to such a state that she no longer deserves to be called an empire” (170). All in all, “the results of China’s debacle are right before our eyes, causing us to shudder so we cannot calmly sit back and watch” (170). Instead, Japan needed to strengthen itself, to “earnestly make our country strong economically and military in order to avoid indignities from other countries” (170) in the way that China had. China’s troubles, and decline, were to provide a spur to Japan’s own policy of reform and consequent rise. China “does not know how to gain knowledge from others. For this reason her arms are weak, and she must suffer indignities from various countries” (171). A key

question would be whether China would follow Japan's thorough top-down drive for modernization, seen in the wake of the 1868 Meiji restoration, which posed serious questions for China's role in the world and in the steadily impinging international system. Faced with Japanese modernization, would there be an equivalent Chinese attempt? If so, would it be successful? And, if not, how much of a power gap would open up between Japan and China?

China's whole *weltanschauung* worldview was being fundamentally challenged. In IR terms, as a result of the two Opium Wars, the old Sinocentric Middle Kingdom worldview of "China as a [superior] culture based on universal and ethically correct principles" was giving way to China "as a nation-state among other theoretically sovereign independent states within the Western world order" (Cranmer-Byng 1973: 69). The only trouble was that "China was being forced by [humiliating] circumstances and her own weakness into an international system in which the Chinese did not believe because, in their view, this system had no universal moral justification" (69). Thus, "as a result of being forced into this alternative world order, they were now faced with the stark reality of 'the survival of the fittest' among nation-states" (70). In this Darwinian international jungle, China was weak and so was able to be pushed around, despite her theoretical equality within the community of nations.

As IR *realism* "power" imbalances combined with *constructivism* "images," the result was a situation that "was so patently unjust, and so galling to Chinese pride, that a number of Chinese were driven by inner compulsion to find ways . . . of making China strong enough to resist foreign domination and regain her position of leadership in the world" (Cranmer-Byng 1973: 70). Realization of China's plight was much more evident after the Second Opium War, where "after 1860, a segment of the literati realized that China was facing a new situation the like of which she had not seen in thousands of years" (Hao and Wang 1980: 156). China's problem was further exacerbated by the readiness of European powers to move against it, reducing China's ability to balance them off against each other. The picture in 1864 for Wang Tao was that "the foreigners, coming from all corners of the earth, are now convergent on China. This is indeed an unprecedented event—an enormous changed situation" (Hao and Wang 1980: 156).

Gong Qinwang, the uncle of the new five-year-old emperor Tongzhi, dominated China's foreign policy formulation from 1861 to 1884. He saw the need to carefully handle Westerners in order for China to reestablish itself. In his *Memorandum*, presented and accepted by the court on January 13, 1861, Gong considered that "the barbarians take advantage of our weak position and try and control us" (CRW 1979: 48). In the one corner, "Russia with her territory adjoining ours, aiming to nibble away our territory like a silkworm, may be considered a threat to our bosom," while in the other corner lay "England, her purpose is to trade, but she acts violently, without any regard for

human decency. If she is not kept within limits, we shall not be able to stand on our feet” (CRW 1979: 48). His overall advice was: “Therefore we should suppress the Taiping and Nian bandits first, get the Russians under control next, and attend the British last” (48). With this plan, a degree of initial “softness” but ultimate “toughness” was needed: “The ancients had a saying, ‘Resort to peace and friendship when temporarily obliged to do so; use war and defense as your actual policy.’ This is truly a well founded statement” (48). Thus, “in our external expression we should be sincere and amicable but quietly try to keep them in line . . . we should act according to the treaties and not allow the foreigners to go even slightly beyond them,” and thereby “tame and control them while we ourselves strive towards recovery” (48). China needed to strengthen itself.

“SELF-STRENGTHENING” ADVOCATES IN CHINA

In China the trauma and challenge of defeat and occupation by Anglo-French forces generated dramatic responses. The *Ziqiang yundong* (Self-strengthening Movement), a form of Westernization otherwise called the *Yangwu yundong* (Foreign Affairs Movement), aimed to bring about China’s internal and external rejuvenation. While “humiliation of the Anglo-Saxon occupation of Peking could not be easily forgotten by the statesmen who had lived through the event” (Kuo and Liu 1978: 490), there was “the realization that a new policy was needed to meet the unprecedented change in China’s position in the world” (525). Economics and military matters overlapped, and with them came the slogan, “To enrich the state and to strengthen the army,” which was popular in the 1860s and 1870s. Indeed, Robert Hart, on being appointed Inspector-General of China’s Imperial Maritime Custom Service in 1863, quickly advised the Qing court in 1865 that “if policies are altered, China can become the leader of all nations; if policies are not altered she will become the servant of all nations. Thus will the future’s domestic affairs depend upon your handling of today’s foreign affairs” (Wright 1957: 181).

Internal recovery took the form of defeating the Taiping rebels by 1864 as well as the Nians by 1868, and introducing general administrative reforms. External recovery took the form of introducing Western technology and strengthening military forces. This was a long-term program aimed at probing the secrets behind Western power, avoiding short-term confrontation with the West in order to allow time for such strengthening trends to come to fruition. Recovery also involved using the Unequal Treaties to actually set limits on them, by scrupulously observing them in what was styled “Faithfulness and Honesty” diplomacy. Whereas previously they had been seen in Western circles as a minimum base to press forwards in opening up China, Chinese officials were able to use the treaties as maximum boundaries. Their

approach was to see them as the extent, and no further, that the West could go. In effect, “it enabled the Chinese government to reverse the function of the treaties” (Wright 1957: 232). The Zongli Yamen (Office for General Management) was set up in 1861, bringing with it a more deliberate organized foreign policy as China tried to take its place in the much-vaunted family of nations (I. Hsu 1968a). At the court of the young boy-emperor Tongzhi, self-strengthening renewalists held sway, in particular his uncle Prince Gong and Wenxiang. Other reformers were to be found in positions of power in the provinces and among the intellectual literati (Zhang and Xu 2007: 419–24), alongside opposition and persistence from more traditional elements. Such hopes for internal Chinese renewal were set against a still burgeoning pace of industrialization across Europe and America, which was to underpin further waves of imperialism and projection from the West.

One immediate attempt by Prince Gong was to commission Horatio Lay to organize the buying and Western manning of ships for a new Chinese navy. However, this venture collapsed in 1863 amid European reluctance to accept Chinese jurisdiction, typified in Horatio Lay’s comment that “the notion of a gentleman acting under an Asiatic barbarian is preposterous” (1864: 19). On the other hand, a significant success was perhaps gained in 1864, when Gong, for once, was able to use international law against the West, to demand and gain financial compensation from Prussia over its seizure of a Danish vessel in Chinese territorial waters. Russian designs on China were a recurring theme for Prince Gong. In his *Memorial* of January 24, 1861, he reckoned that “while all barbarians are insatiably avaricious by nature, Russian barbarians are inscrutable” (Swisher 1953: 694). Russian “creeping” tactics in 1858–1860 had already proved highly effective. In Gong’s words, “previously the Russian barbarians encroached on our borders without open warfare and up to now it has been impossible to expel them” (694). In contrast, Gong sought longer-term American leverage: “The American barbarians are pure-minded and honest in disposition and have always been loyal to China and are not allied to England and France . . . the problem is how to control them to make them exploitable by us” (695). Meanwhile, other reformers were emerging and pondering China’s relationship with the international system, namely Zeng Guofan, Yung Wing, Feng Guifen, Li Hongzhang, and Zuo Zongtang.

Zeng Guofan argued that restoration of China’s greatness would be partly brought about through administrative renewal based on reapplied Confucian ethics and standards, as well as through technological advancements. His diary entry of June 3, 1862, reads, “regard learning to make explosive shells and steamships and other instruments as the work of first importance” (CRW 1979: 62). He also successfully argued in 1871 for the setting up of an Educational Mission in the United States, to serve as a complement to the domestic reforms within China. This was so “that the Chinese can learn thoroughly the new techniques in which the Westerners are particularly

strong, and then we can gradually plan for self-strengthening” (CRW 1979: 91) to be matched in China, where “to establish arsenals for manufacturing and to open schools for instruction in China is just the beginning of the struggle to rise again” (92).

Zeng sent Yung Wing to the United States in 1863 to buy the machinery needed to set up a small arsenal in China, an effective choice since Yung had earlier in 1854 become the first Chinese student to graduate from an American university, Yale no less. Yung’s own words were: “I was anxious that China should have the latest modern guns as well as the latest modern educated men” (1909: 192). The machinery purchased by Yung in the United States was set up at the Kiangnan Arsenal near Shanghai, which was soon turning out guns and cannons, together with steamships like the SS *Tianqi* (The Auspicious). Yung’s “Four Proposals” (c. 1868), stressed that “the encroachment of foreign powers upon the independent sovereignty of China has always been watched by me with the most intense interest” (1909: 174). Yung Wing’s official work during the 1870s, as a diplomatic envoy and Commissioner for the Chinese Educational Mission in the United States, saw his attempts to foster China’s renewal being maintained (Desnoyers 1992).

Feng Guifen also argued, in *Kangyi* (Protests), a book of essays that he presented to Zeng Guofan in 1861, for China’s self-strengthening. In “On the Better Control of the Barbarians,” Feng proudly described how “China is the largest country on earth with ample, fertile plains and marshes, numerous people and abundant resources. Naturally the mouths of all nations are watering with desire” (CRW 1979: 55). He noted in another essay, on the manufacture of foreign weapons, “the most unparalleled anger” (CRW 1979: 52) in China. The power juxtapositions were the issue, where “the largest country on the globe today, with a vast area of 10,000 li, is yet controlled by small barbarians” (53), leaving China “shamefully humiliated by these four nations [Britain, France, Russia, and the United States] in the recent treaties . . . Should we, as a large country, alone accept defilement and insult throughout all time?” (54). Realpolitik multipolar balance of power dynamics were at play, since “Russia, England, France, and America have too much uncultivated land, equal power, outward harmony, and covert jealousy to act together,” and so, “mutual hatred among the four countries will take precedence over their hatred of us. Their relations can never be consolidated and the date for the struggle between them must not be far away” (55).

Regarding the West, Feng argued that “we should henceforth take their methods and apply them in return” (CRW 1979: 55); Japan, too, he noted, was moving in that direction. China’s population gave it an edge, “making use of the ability of our manpower” (53). Overall, he thought, in “the pursuit of manufacturing weapons and instruments and imitating foreign crafts . . . the intelligence and wisdom of the Chinese are necessarily superior to those of the various barbarians” (52). Thus, China had the potential not merely to

learn and equal the West but also to “go ahead and surpass them” (54). On a practical note, ultimately China needed to “manufacture, repair, and use weapons by ourselves” (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 235). The results would be internal consolidation to “pacify the Empire” and external projection, “only thus can we become the leading power in the world; only thus can we restore our original strength, redeem ourselves from former humiliation” and “maintain the integrity of our vast territory so as to remain the greatest country on earth” (237). China had the “resources” but “the inferiority [vis-à-vis the West] is due to ourselves, it is still a greater shame but something we can do something about. And if we feel ashamed, there is nothing better than self-strengthening” (235). This was technological appropriation, not cultural adoption: “We should use the instruments of the barbarians but not adopt the ways of the barbarians” (237). Western means for Chinese ends.

One young Qing official and future statesman, Li Hongzhang, bluntly admitted the military superiority of the West in 1863: “I have been aboard the warships of British and French admirals and I saw that their cannons are ingenious and uniform, their ammunition is fine and cleverly made, their weapons are bright,” all signs of industrial technology, where “these things are superior to those of China . . . the various firearms they use are unknown in China” (CRW 1979: 69). His advice to Zeng Guofan was for China to learn, revive, and bide its time: “I feel deeply ashamed that Chinese weapons are far inferior to those of foreign countries. Everyday I warn and instruct my officers to be humble-minded, to bear the humiliation” so as to “make use . . . take over the superior techniques of foreigners” (69). Li was instrumental in setting up the Kiangnan Arsenal (T. Kennedy 1978, 1994) at Shanghai in 1865, the Nanjing Arsenal in 1867, the China Merchant’s Steam Navigation Company in 1872, and various naval projects (Wang Chia-chen 1994). Recognizing Japan’s modernization progress, Li argued in 1863 that “if China desires to make herself strong, there is nothing better than to learn about and use the superior weapons of foreign countries . . . so as to prepare to inspire awe in the empire and reject foreign encroachment” (CRW 1979: 72). His remedies were specific but perhaps narrow, short-term surface technological fixes rather than necessary longer-term political-cultural restructuring. An interesting element in his analysis was to speculate on an “Eastern” Sino-Japanese alignment against the West. Ultimately, it was a question of power imperatives, Li recognizing in 1870 that “in spite of all our dislikes, if we truly have the best interests of China at heart, we will no longer oppose the coming of the foreigner,” for “he is bound to come anyway even if he must ride behind a bayonet or sit upon the big gun of a warship” (1913: 34). At least, though, if China had to bow to Western *force majeure* in the short term, it could try to use the impact of that force to build up her own force in the longer term.

Zuo Zongtang, deeply influenced by Lin Zexu, argued in 1866 that China’s “national dignity” and “national prestige” (CRW 1979: 83) were at

stake. For him, “the great advantage of southeast China lies on the water and not on land,” but “since warfare has opened upon the sea, the steam warships of various European countries have come directly to Tientsin,” and “our national defense line has actually become fictitious. Their ships sail as rapidly as a shooting star or a whirlwind and we have no ways to them” (81). His response was to set up the naval dockyard near Fuzhou, though later his eyes were to turn elsewhere.

On the international front, Prince Gong’s policy of cooperation with the West saw some advancement with the Burlingame Treaty, signed with the United States in 1868. As Richard Hinton judged it, “The formal recognition of the Chinese Empire as one of the family of nations may not seem to us to be of very great importance, but to the Chinese government and people, the treaty embodies vast result” (1868: 613). In Hinton’s mind, “it means to that nation the preservation of its character, integrity, and political autonomy, against that rapacity for conquest and possession of other lands, which seems to be the chief characteristic of all European dealings with Asiatic peoples” (1868: 613). As such, the Treaty signatories not only introduced “equal international recognition and rights; but they will also have introduced a new element into the world’s history . . . The recent Chinese treaty stays the process of Asiatic dissolution” (614). This “will ere long bear fruit in the presence of a [Chinese] power strong enough, under the energizing influences of modern and material civilization, to stay the progress of Russia on the one side and of England on the other” (614). China’s diplomatic renewal seemed matched by some military advances, the “military character of a people who have proved themselves capable of being made excellent soldiers when well armed, disciplined and commanded . . . the gradual formation of a Chinese naval and military force” (615). The following year, Hinton offered the scenario of a Chinese role in the Eastern waters, where “England and France combined might undertake to cripple the United States. In such a case, the Chinese . . . might be found no mean allies, as . . . fast increasing their navies, or, at least, laying the foundations of them quite broadly” (1869: 191).

Certainly the initial years 1868 to 1876 seemed impressive enough, in terms of output. However, in reality the technology “fix” provided at the arsenals may have been too superficial, not underpinned by thorough enough social and political reforms that would have provided the wider infrastructure and initiative to translate initial quantity into qualitative performance (Rawlinson 1967; Elman 2004; cf. T. Kennedy 1978: 146–60). Nevertheless, on the surface it looked impressive enough, with the arsenals being in advance of those of Japan and indeed even of Germany in some respects. The logic was comparative; as Wang Tao explained around 1870, “If China does not make any change at this time, how can it be on a par with the great nations of Europe and compare with them in power and strength,” changes “in the governance of the people and next in the training of soldiers” (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 253–54).

The effect of China's attempts to modernize and introduce military reform were intertwined for some Western observers with this migration of China's citizens. Raphael Pumpelly's *Our Impending Chinese Problem* pictured "a giant spectre slowly defining its shadowy form against the Western heavens . . . of a distant empire, a looming of one-third of the human race" posing "a problem" (1869: 22). This China-related problem was "one of the most important in the world's history," since "political restraints which have opposed emigration are disappearing, and the first consciousness of an expansive power is beginning to show itself in the maritime provinces of the empire" (22). Such was the apparent pace of events that the *New Englander and Yale Review* was moved to talk of "the Renaissance in China," a country "stigmatized as barbarians, because we want the breadth to comprehend a civilization different from our own" (1869: 47). Given its previous Middle Kingdom glories, the *Review* felt there was "the humiliation felt by the Chinese mind, to find itself, on awakening, in the rear of the age" (61). However, "the Chinese are learning. With them the days of bows, and arrows, bamboo spears and lumbering war-junks has passed away, and they intend henceforth to make war like other nations in a Christian style" and "to maintain their self-respect in the face of the world" (56). Thus, "the government, though rudely shaken and much exhausted, gives unmistakable signs of convalescence. With its growing superiority in discipline and arms, it can smile at the menace of border tribes," while European dangers could be held in check through "the doctrine of the balance of power . . . now transferred to Eastern Asia" (67–8). Indeed, "favored with the friendship of powerful nations" (65), China could avert a Poland-like partition and instead "by the splendour of its intellectual progress, may eclipse the military glory" (68) of previous rulers.

Chinese attempts to carve out a better place for herself in this new international system was helped to a degree by some sympathetic diplomats stationed in China. This was not, though, consistent. French diplomats held high to claims of a civilizing mission and saw themselves as protectors of the Catholic missionary enterprise, following a "diplomacy of contempt" (Israeli 1992) in China during the 1860s. Nevertheless, the arrival of Anson Burlingame, the American minister to China from 1861 to 1867, saw him fostering a deliberate cooperative policy between the Western Treaty Powers to maintain Treaty Rights while supporting Chinese reform and stabilization and territorial integrity (S. Kim 1971; Anderson 1985: 16–37). On his departure from that post, he served as a diplomatic representative for China back in the United States, negotiating the U.S.-China Burlingame Treaty of 1868.

Burlingame's approach in China was bolstered by that of his British counterpart, Rutherford Alcock. In one striking dispatch, on November 15, 1867, Alcock described Chinese reformers as "a leaven at work" who were faced with "interference with their internal affairs which affects their sovereign rights as an independent nation . . . under an incessant menace . . .

wounded in their amour propre, and irritated with a great sense of humiliation in their inability to resist” (1887: 459). He was central in the drawing up of the Alcock Convention, acknowledging on October 20, 1869, that “hitherto we have only attempted to make Treaties with China after an appeal to arms, under which they have succumbed. Now for the first time, there is an opening for negotiation on a totally different basis, one of mutual interests and friendly relations” (Wright 1957: 295). In retrospect, the 1869 Alcock Convention represented a move away from the coercive Treaty of Tianjin, “not only in the way it was negotiated but in its form and substance” (286), with reciprocal treatment and “equality of diplomatic rights” (287) and hopes for a “dignified place for the traditional Chinese state in the modern world community” (286).

However, internal opposition in Britain brought about the Alcock Convention’s collapse, as Britain refused to ratify the agreement in July 1870. As such, “the rejection of the Alcock Convention reaffirmed Chinese suspicion of foreign trustworthiness” (I. Hsu 1980: 78) and fed into the growing jingoism of the 1870s. This deterioration was compounded by the Tianjin massacres of two French diplomats, two French priests, ten French nuns, and Chinese Christian converts in June 1870. These two events undercut Chinese-Western cooperation. In terms of China’s role in the international system, “the country became weaker rather than stronger . . . the [relatively] successful foreign policy of the sixties gave way to an era of ever more humiliating treaties” (Wright 1957: 299) in the 1870s. Humiliations also faced the Chinese outside China.

CHINESE IMMIGRATION ISSUES IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE “HEATHEN CHINEE”

Contempt for China swirled around the Pacific during the 1860s, with China in no position to face down the growing reaction against it by politicians and the public along the American Pacific Coast, where “the attitude of California and Californians . . . largely determined American foreign policy towards the Oriental” (G. Chang 1996: 103). In San Francisco, Arthur Stout’s *Chinese Immigration and the Physiological Causes of the Decay of a Nation* (1862) was already painting a picture of physical and moral degeneration caused by Chinese migrants. White representation of the Chinese were settling down as the Chinese being “addicted, demented, and taken to the cleaners” (G. Lee 2003: 24–54) in political terms—be it domestically and indeed internationally.

The “Chinese Question” had become a political question. Leland Stanford’s inaugural address on becoming governor of California asserted that “Asia, with her numberless millions, sends to our shores the dregs of her population . . . of a degraded and distinct people,” so that “it will afford me great pleasure to concur with the Legislature in any constitutional action, having

for its object the repression of the immigration of the Asiatic races" (1862). In such a vein, the California legislature enacted into law the earlier 1854 court ruling that Chinese people could not testify against whites in court. In his inaugural address of December 5, 1867, Governor Henry Haight asserted, "It would not be wise statesmanship in my opinion to invite an immigration of Chinese or any other Asiatic race. Those races are confessedly inferior in all high and noble qualities to the American and European" (C. Wu 1972: 111). The Mechanics State Council of California consequently petitioned the California Legislature with a *Memorial* warning that "the barbarian hordes of China . . . infest our cities . . . the continued immigration to the Pacific coast of vast numbers of Chinese is a serious evil, injurious to the present well being of California, an injustice to the white working classes," which "if continued, will prove disastrous to the future greatness and prosperity of the entire Pacific slope" and would "inevitably produce a conflict of races too fearful to contemplate" (Mechanics State Council of California 1868).

International diplomacy was affecting migration patterns. One effect of the Unequal Treaties signed with various Western powers was to, somewhat unexpectedly, facilitate Chinese emigration into British and American territories. In California, Chinese immigration had been legitimized at the international level by the U.S.-China Burlingame Treaty of 1868, a "watershed" (Tsai 1985: 24) moment in Chinese emigration policy that granted most-favored nation treatment to the two country's immigrants and permanent residency rights in each other's countries, rather notional in the case of Americans in China. Article 5 asserted the "inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage of the free migration . . . for purposes of curiosity, of trade or as permanent residence." Consequently, the Burlingame Treaty "provided China with a diplomatic channel to protect Chinese immigrants. The treaty later became a major bargaining card for Chinese diplomats negotiating with the American government on immigration issues" (Liu 2003: 152). Conversely, it became a source of resentment along the U.S. Pacific coast.

In discussions with Burlingame, Richard Hinton stated that "the first thing that strikes one in China, especially when regarded from the new stand point offered by the Burlingame embassy, is the vastness of its population," some "four hundred and fifteen millions, one-third of the estimated population of the world. This is probably understated" (Hinton 1868: 615). Given Article 5 of the treaty, the prospect was that "to the Chinese themselves, the policy established by the treaty will surely open the door to a large development of travel and emigration, and a consequently rapid melting away of traditions and prejudices" (613). Such an irenic view of future relationships was brought into doubt by Hinton's own admission, on the one hand, that "our so-called Christian nationalities always have insisted upon the principle of extraterritoriality for their own citizens residing in countries like China"

(617). Yet, on the other hand, this was coupled with “at the same time, rigidly exacting obedience to their own laws and submission to their tribunals from any unfortunate natives of those lands who may be residing in Christian countries . . . exemplified by . . . our own brutal oppression of the Chinese in California” (617).

Such California-generated images became widespread in the American media. As the *New York Tribune* put it, “the Chinese in California” were “utter heathens, treacherous, sensual, cowardly and cruel” (George 1869). For *Punchinello*, “there has been much obloquy heaped upon the Chinaman ever since he has become an article of importation. He has been morally pilloried on account of the alleged immorality of his character . . . liar, thief, counterfeiter, and apt practitioner, generally, in all the branches of infamy and crime” (1870). A *New York Herald* editorial on October 30, 1870, simply dismissed the Chinese for “their pagan savageness . . . as barbarous as ever.” John Stuart Mill, despite his liberal philosophy, still penned a letter to the *New York Tribune* on October 30, 1870, asserting that Chinese immigration could result in “permanent harm” to the “more civilized and improved portion of mankind.” Images were solidifying of the alien “otherness” of China and the Chinese.

California commentators continued to emphasize this threat from China and its inhabitants. Eugene Casserly warned the state Senate in *The Chinese Evil*, “The evil to be dealt with is so obscure, so covered up with the peculiar customs of this singular people, the Chinese, with their language so strange to us, and the mystery in which they envelop the most ordinary transactions of their lives in our country” (1870: 2). For him the white community in California were “my people on the Pacific coast. They are the outposts of your civilization,” faced with the danger “to be scourged by these Asiatic hordes; perhaps to be driven out by them or trodden under foot” (6). For Casserly, demographics was a nightmarish destiny, given “the desolating march of this terrible population,” which “threatens to supplant the entire Christian forces of our civilization by forces which are not merely Asiatic but pagan . . . importation of these people is but a fragment of the evil” (5). He considered “the real danger” lay in China’s population, “how easily they might they be among us in overwhelming numbers! They are one third of the human race,” within which “the single province of Canton, lying over against California, could, out of the surplus of its twelve to fifteen million people, swamp the whole Pacific coast and all the States and territories west of the Mississippi” (5). Frank Pixley’s letter to Senator Charles Summer in April 1870 was similarly riddled with geocultural Sinophobia (Stanley 1979).

Brett Harte’s “The Heathen Chinees” potently encapsulated emerging American images of the Chinese. This poem first appeared under the title “Plain Language from Truthful James” in the *Overland Monthly* in September 1870 as a satiric parody of Swinburne’s *Atalanta* (Duckett 1957). It was then

reprinted as *The Heathen Chinee* in Boston in 1871. It has been argued that Harte was being ironical in his portrayal of anti-Chinese bigotry, and he did distance himself further from the anti-Chinese hysteria in subsequent writings like *Wan Lee the Pagan* in 1875. However, such caveats were largely immaterial considering the actual impact of his verses. Harte's irony was largely lost on (Romeo 2006: 111–2) his readership. Instead, *The Heathen Chinee* strengthened negative perceptions of China and the Chinese. Sax Rohmer, the subsequent creator of *Dr. Fu Manchu*, considered that “much of the reputation which attaches to the Chinese is to be traced back to Bret Harte. . . . His poem introducing the ‘Heathen Chinee,’ . . . undoubtedly created a thought-form which survives to this day . . . the thing created by Bret Harte still walks among us” (Rohmer 1938). For Spence it was “because of the context of [actual] discrimination and killing that the poem had such an impact when it appeared” (1999: 136). In looking back, Romeo noted how it was an “overnight sensation” (2006: 108), while looking forward, “the cultural impact the poem exerted throughout the rest of the nineteenth century cannot be underestimated” (123), being set to music and having several parodies of the poem written during the 1870s (Scharnhorst 1996). Moreover, it was popular abroad, as in England, and was often cited in immigration debates in the American Congress (Fenn 1933).

In *The Heathen Chinee*, Harte's portrayals contained the images of the times. This was reflected in his protagonist Nye's feelings that “We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor . . . / And he went for that heathen Chinee” (Harte 1882: 132). The attack itself was initially sparked by the cheating of Harte's Chinese character, “Ah Sin,” reflecting in turn wider Western images of the devious and lying Chinese. Behind this lay a still deeper image of the threat of the Chinese, behind their supposed inscrutability. Thus, the poem started and ended with the verses and image, subsequently frequently invoked by others, “Which is why I remark, / And my language is plain, / That for ways that are dark / And for tricks that are vain, / The heathen Chinee is peculiar” (131, 133). Meanwhile, in another of Harte's related poems, “The Latest Chinese Outrage,” one of the white protagonists called Joe Johnson could demand, as were politicians, “Shall we stand here as idle, and let Asia pour / Her barbaric hordes on this civilized shore? / Has the White Man no country? Are we left in the lurch?” (Harte 1882: 146). The imagery was potent: The Chinaman as a “degraded unclean Believer in Buddha” (147), a geocultural threat. Irony or not, Harte was picking up on the unease, the crisis of racial confidence, found in Californian circles. Thus the refrain in Harte's “Further Language from Truthful James” was “Is our civilization a failure? Or is the Caucasian played out?” (Harte 1882: 168).

The U.S. Secretary of State, William Seward, wrote in the *New York Times* on February 25, 1871, “I look for the practical advancement of [Western] civilization in China chiefly to commerce—commerce across the Pacific

Ocean,” in which “the free emigration of the Chinese to the American [continent] is the essential element of that trade and commerce.” In his view, both countries stood to benefit: “Chinese emigration to the American continent will tend to increase the wealth and strength of all Western nations,” while “at the same time, the removal of the surplus population of China will tend much to take away the obstructions which now impeded the introduction into China of [Western] art, science . . . religion.” However, Seward’s welcoming voice was the exception to the rule. Instead Harte’s image and the very phrase “Heathen Chinese” became frequently used shorthand for American fears over domestic Chinese immigration, as in the “Heathen Chinese planks,” profiled in the *Boston Globe* on July 6, 1876, that were issued by both Democrats and Republicans in the 1876 elections. These reflected the “cultural, racial and medical fears of national dimension” (S. Miller 1971: 201; also McClellan 1971: 207–42) over the Chinese presence in America.

Meanwhile, archetypal Chinese images were developing still further in American fiction, where “tales imagining a Chinese invasion of the United States were a staple of the futurological fiction published . . . in this burgeoning genre” (Lyman 2000: 690). San Francisco writer Henry West’s *The Chinese Invasion* warned “the Chinese in California are the advance guard of numberless legions that will, if no check is applied, one day overthrow the present Republic of the United States” (1873: 5). Atwell Whitney’s 1878 novel *Almond-Eyed*, also published in San Francisco, featured hordes of Chinese immigrants driving California’s white workers and shop keepers into ruin and introducing a smallpox epidemic. This genre of fiction reflected the fact that during the 1870s anti-immigration feelings continued to strengthen in California.

Thus, M. B. Starr’s *The Coming Struggle: Or What the People of the Pacific Coast Think of the Coolie Invasion*, published in San Francisco in 1873, posited a clash of races and civilizations, Huntington-style. Church figures were drawn into the debate. The Methodist preacher Otis Gibson’s *Chinaman or White Man, Which?* rejected denunciations of the Chinese as a race and acknowledged, “We are the aggressors, we battered down China’s walls of exclusion” (1873: 29), although he started his paper with the disclaimer, “I do not stand here to defend the civilization nor the religion of China” (5), which he also considered as inferior. Meanwhile, external geopolitical concerns were present in Joseph Kinley’s *Remarks on Chinese Immigration*, which warned that “it may be answered that they [China] have not fleets and navies; let us answer they have capital opportunity and ingenuity to construct, man, and use them” (1877: 8).

Such American trends were big enough in their own right. However, these images and political responses formed but a part of “the global ‘Chinese Problem,’ the related debates over Chinese immigration in the Americas and across the Pacific” (E. Lee 2007: 10), in which “the ‘Chinese Problem’ in the

United States served as a constant example to Canadians, Mexicans, Australians, and others anxious about their own countries' abilities to withstand an onslaught of Chinese immigrants" (10–11). Consequently, "a transnational conversation about race, migration, and national security circulated throughout the Americas and across the Pacific. The subject was the global migration of Asiatics [Chinese] and the alleged threat they posed" (1). In particular, Lee notes, the "anti-Chinese movement in the United States was also a key reference point in similar debates in Australia" (1). It is to Australasia that we turn.

THE "CHINESE THREAT" IN AUSTRALASIA

During the 1870s, the presence of and response to Chinese immigration in Australasia and the United States were often similar, at both the local level, with "street level" scares, the role of the press, and the influence on local politicians, and at the national level in terms of increasing immigration restrictions and strategic military fears.

In Australia, the door to Chinese immigration had, like the Burlingame Treaty in the United States, been provided through bilateral treaties. One clause of the 1860 Anglo-Chinese Treaty provided that "Chinese wishing to take service in the British colonies, or parts beyond the sea, are at perfect liberty to enter into engagements with British subjects for that purpose" where "full security and protection" would be offered on arrival. However, developing white Australian opinion at the local level, as distinct from imperial strategists in London, saw the issue more negatively. George Chanson lamented in his ditty "Chinese Emigration" about "the evil of this mighty rush, the Chinese emigration; / Ships from Canton, and famed Hongkong, will bring us all up standing, / Because each day in Sydney town, more Chinamen they're landing. / . . . our sad situation . . . of Chinese emigration" (1869). The press was ready to stoke the fires. *The Yellow Conqueror* cartoon in the *Illustrated Sydney News* was particularly graphic in its edition of September 16, 1876, with its great hulking gorilla-like Chinese male sweeping up a fragile wilting white female. Elsewhere in Australia, the *Newcastle Morning Herald* of August 15, 1878, branded the Chinese as "the greatest social evil that stained the annals of civilisation, very much "a danger no language could magnify" (Graham 1984). This was Australia's "Yellow Agony" (Evans 1988: 253–340). Similar danger was perceived as being faced by California, with anti-Chinese activists on both sides of the Pacific appealing to each other for mutual ideological support and precedents. As the *Queenslander* of May 19, 1877, put it, "In California there is a white population of about 500,000 in a territory less than one third of the area of Queensland and . . . this territory is supported by nearly forty million in the inland and Atlantic states," so that "if the Chinese invasion is formidable, even to this vast power [the United

States], what must it be to us with a population of less than 160,000 whites backed up only by the small numbers in other Australian colonies?"

Politicians were also well aware of the wider situations. Faced with London's request that the Australasian colonies beware of anti-Chinese legislation "aimed at the subjects of a friendly power with which it is for the advantage of the empire at large that free intercourse should be maintained." Australian politicians had retorted that these were "treaties which have been entered into and brought about by councils in which they [white Queenslanders] have no voice, and no means of being represented" (Queensland 1877: 106). Instead, the Australian colonies pushed ahead with restrictive anti-Chinese legislation. The 1877 Gold Fields Bill was introduced in Queensland to combat the threat of "the unrestricted invasion of the country by an inferior race" in which "we are enabled to turn to the experience of a greater extent, of the United States of America," where "the Chinese have congregated to the number of many thousands in the Western States of that nation, and the whole population has been excited by the magnitude of the evils attendant on their presence" (Queensland 1877: 74). Indeed, in introducing the bill, the Queensland Postmaster-General included copious verbatim recitals of the report by the U.S. Congressional Investigation on Chinese Immigration that had come out earlier in 1877. For the Postmaster-General, "the substitution of the word Australia for 'America' would apply very forcibly to the circumstances of our own colony at the present time" (74).

In New Zealand, wide-ranging concerns were also evident in parliamentary debates on August 22, 1878. Reeves considered that "taking into consideration the alarming position of the United States of America and the Australian colonies through the large influx of Chinese, and the probable influx of Chinese into this colony . . . immediate legislation should take place" (NZ 1878: 418). The Chinese presence threatened not only California, but also Hawaii: "There they had the 'yellow agony' in full force. There were 2,000 Chinamen in those islands, and they had introduced every disease that human flesh was heir to" (417–18). In turn, "in all probability New Zealand will have a touch of the 'yellow agony,' this coming summer, and not a mild dose . . . God help New Zealand if such takes place" (417–18). A race war was in the offing, according to fellow representative Joyce. He described "the Chinese as an effete race, which very well be left to die out" in Asia, but who, if emigrating to New Zealand and other "white" lands, would face a future where "there would come a time when the superior [white] race, in obedience to the first law of nature—self-preservation—would be compelled to wage against them a war of extermination" (NZ 1878: 419). Barf bluntly considered the Chinese as a leprosy-spreading "lower order of humanity" (NZ 1878: 422) and also drew attention to Californian responses.

Countervailing voices were raised against this in these New Zealand parliamentary debates, but even they were ambiguous. Manders praised the qual-

ity of Chinese life and its immigrants but wondered “whether they were not educating the Chinese in the English ways and habits, and accustoming them to lead a civilized life, and thus enabling them to return to China, where they might turn their knowledge into a weapon against us” (NZ 1878: 419). Stout said he “did not agree . . . that the Chinese were effete, for he himself believed they were a race that would yet make their mark in the world to a greater extent than we were aware of” (NZ 1878: 420). Nevertheless, he still thought “at present it would be better to watch what was being done with the Chinese in California before rushing into legislation upon the subject” (420). Russell thought that in the short term, “at the present time a certain number were valuable to the colony” and that “as a rule, they were a highly civilized and intelligent people.” But in the longer term “he believed himself that in years to come, when the present generation had passed away, the Chinese race might flood the world . . . The Chinese were a race that would yet take a leading place among the peoples of the world” (NZ 1878: 421). The common thread throughout were perceptions of a cross-Pacific dimension of a Chinese threat.

ONGOING AND NEW THREATS TO CHINA IN ASIA

While American and Australian circles manifested continuing concerns over a Chinese demographic and military threat, China was faced with much more direct pressure in Asia from established and new quarters.

Russian expansionism had been renewed with their occupation of the Ili valley in 1871, notionally in view of local Muslim revolts against Qing control. The arrogance of the Russian representative in Beijing was noted by others: “Shvaloffsky’s idea of maintaining the honour of his [Russian] flag in Chinese eyes was highly original . . . as he reduces every question to one simple and intelligible formula: ‘Do it-or be thrashed’” (Old Peking 1873: 316). In 1873, in the wake of his military-related “explorations” in Central Asia on behalf of the Russian General Staff, Nikolai Przhevalsky considered that the “moral and physical debility, and complete unfitness for the hardships and privations of warfare” (1876: 2.131) of the Chinese army meant that “a bold, well-armed enemy might march into any part of the Middle Kingdom with perfect confidence . . . every European soldier is a wolf in comparison with Chinese soldiers” (2.133).

Gideon Nye’s estimation was uncertain about the “sick man” at Beijing, where “the pregnant question of the day is:—Will the regeneration of the Chinese people be attained by . . . a gradual infusion of Western ideas that may eventuate in a national renovation of thought” and which would “break the continuity of the chain that holds them to the routine of the ancients” (1875: 194). In terms of any threat from China, he had mixed feelings. He saw China’s strategic culture as peace-oriented: “We may declare of the Chinese

people as emphatically that their genius is not for war . . . China's reluctance to War evinces high civilization" (1876: 235), though he still judged that "the highest civilization is resultant of and inseparable from Christianity" (241). Robert Hart's sympathetic view of China, in a letter to Campbell in August 1873, was that "she [China] is advancing, and the next ten years will see immense changes," but given her "philosophical *calm* . . . I don't think she'll ever threaten or thwart Western civilisation" (R. Hart 1976: 121). In the immediate term, for Nye, "the essential fact presented today is the numerical inadequacy and personal inefficiency of China's defensive forces . . . to cope with European or even Japanese aggression" (1876: 237), an early indication of pressure on China not only from the West but also from a newly modernizing Japan.

Chinese fortunes continued to slide in the 1870s. Resentment over extraterritoriality emerged "intensively" (Hao and Wang 1980: 194) during the decade as an issue raised by Chinese officials, but to no avail. Concepts of national sovereignty emerged with some vigor among Chinese literati and officials, helped by translations of Western legal texts. Yet China still faced the challenge of how a state, especially a weak one, could maintain its sovereignty, with some Chinese figures citing the examples of small states like Belgium and Switzerland as examples of IR balance of power principles. Finally, 1873 saw the first formal joint audiences by Western envoys to the imperial court, with those envoys euphemistically telling the Qing court that "encouragement was [to be] given to the arts and sciences of the West" with "confirmation of friendly relations between China and the Treaty Powers, which so greatly gratify their Government" (K 1874: 82). However, China remained a target for the West. The 1876 Chefoo Convention returned to "the unilateral pattern in Sino-foreign relations" seen in the Treaties of Nanjing and Tianjin, opening China up to "Western intercourse on Western terms" (Wright 1957: 295).

The prognosis of Samuel Williams, the Chargé d'Affaires in the United States Legation to China from 1860 to 1876, started with a different tone on China, where "its people are remarkable for their industry . . . peacefulness and numbers" (1876b: 269). However, he still concluded that China needed "the advance of that people in the highest Christian culture. It is the Gospel . . . which can alone elevate and teach them true civilization," for "to give them our material prosperity and power without our moral restraints and sanctions, will be like starting a locomotive engine without an engineer, and can only result adversely" (284). Elsewhere that year, Williams reiterated this dual analysis. On the one hand, "the future of her [China's] political history looks dark and disastrous . . . the people of China present a picture of melancholy spectacle of a great nation in decrepitude" (1876a, Preface, 12). On the other hand, "when the purifying, elevating and regenerating influences of true Christianity come to their aid, certainly a new era in the history of the

Middle Kingdom will begin” (Preface, 13). In religious terms China was the land of the heathen, to be converted to the true religious message being brought in from outside. Religious exclusivism was the norm, to be judged against Christian tenets. As Charles Eden put it, “the religion of the Chinese may be regarded as total darkness” (1880: 126), needing to be swept away.

Yet Christian missionaries were part of a wider Western international political system, and, indeed, were perceived as agents of the West by Chinese commentators, where Tang Liangli’s sense of the Western missionaries was that “they certainly had contributed to the break-up of Chinese society and to the international humiliation of China more than any other group of foreigners” (Tang Liangli 1928: 212). The missionaries may have generated social reform awareness, but they also generated rising nationalism and anti-foreign feelings, which were to culminate in the cataclysmic events of 1900. The foreign missionary “by the mere fact of his presence in the interior played a decisive part in popularizing and in activating this force [anti-foreignism]” (P. Cohen 1963: 270) that was already evident in the 1860s. Opposition to missionaries was not just due to religious differences, but also because they had entered through the forcefully opened ports, backed by gunboats. In effect, the Bible was held in one hand and the bullet in the other. The *soft power* aspirations of Christianity were underpinned by the *hard power* military might of the West. Western missionaries were seen by the Chinese as integrally linked to the international politics of imperialism: “Opposition to Christianity symbolized the determination of an ancient civilization to resist the foreign forces threatening it” (P. Cohen 1978: 590).

By the 1870s another crucial relationship in the international system was emerging—that between China and Japan. Both faced pressures from the West, but each responded differently. Japan’s post-1868 Meiji Restoration and its deliberate state-led drive for modernization were not matched in China. During the 1870s, Li Hongzhang had “some vague hope for Sino-Japanese cooperation in China’s struggle against Western aggression” (K. Kim 1994: 146). As Li saw it in 1871, “an antagonized Japan could be an even greater source of trouble than the Western nations because of her geographical proximity. It was therefore in China’s interest to treat Japan on a friendly and equal basis” and “create harmonious relations between the two states” (Leung 1983: 260). Article 1 of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1871 had recognized both countries’ territorial possessions but left unclear whether or not that included “tributary states” around China’s periphery. Japan’s modernization program to cope with the West had undercut its traditional respect toward China’s *soft power* preeminence. Consequently, Japan had already distinguished itself from “Oriental” China in the Soejima diplomatic mission to China in 1873 (McWilliams 1975).

In Japan, modernizers—universalists, in effect—turned their backs on Chinese Middle Kingdom primacy in both the cultural and international spheres.

Gideon Nye considered in 1874 that “we must, in future, look for the influence of Japan as a new feature in the field of diplomacy at Peking” (1876: 240). His comments had been sparked by the landing of Japanese forces on Taiwan during 1874, which were only withdrawn following financial compensation from China (Gordon 1965; Falt 1985; Eskilsden 2002). Wenxiang judged Japan to already be the “great enemy” (CRW 1979: 90) in 1874, able to threaten China over Taiwan through China’s neglect of her self-strengthening program. Li Hongzhang recognized Japan’s emerging power and the need for further self-strengthening by China, noting in the Great Debate of December 1874, “She dares to display her strength in eastern lands, despises China and takes action in invading Taiwan . . . Japan is near to us, and is prying into our emptiness or solitude. Undoubtedly she will become China’s permanent and great anxiety” (CRW 1979: 119). In Japan, Masanao Nakamura may have argued in 1875 that “China should not be despised” (De Bary et al. 2005: 717–20), given its earlier soft power cultural heights and potential economic strength if reformed. Yet in the current situation, seen by Nakamura as one where “[China’s] people are seemingly in a drugged condition unable to move their arms and feet . . . and awake from their stupor” (718), a growing Japanese dismissal of China was precisely what was underway.

Japan went on to challenge China in various other areas during the 1870s. First, she imposed the unequal Treaty of Kanghwa on China’s vassal Korea in 1876, as well as considering military intervention. Second, she annexed China’s “tributary,” the Ryukyus, in 1879 during its “quasi-war” (Leung 1983) with China that rumbled on throughout the 1870s. Li Hongzhang advised Zeng Jize, on October 19, 1879, that “since we cannot threaten war with Japan [over the Ryukyus], we have to adopt a soft policy, and at the same time to try our best effort for self-strengthening in order to strive for later strength and power” (Chu and Liu 1997: 169). Wang Tao, while involved in the Pan-Asiatic *Koakai* (Rise Asia Society), noted on September 20, 1881, that Japan’s “attitude towards China, their contempt for it is indeed great . . . they are going to humiliate China in the same way Westerners have been doing it, securing from China everything they wished,” for “they consider themselves being next to the Western states, and follow the same arrogant and violent line towards China. Every time China found itself in troubles, they used the moment to either invade Taiwan or annex Ryukyu Islands” (1881). It all revolved around comparative power within the international system: “Let us look at the relationship between Japan and its close neighbour, Russia. Do they dare to do the same things?” (1881).

Chinese concerns over Japanese “contempt” were well founded. Sugita Teiich’s trip to China in 1884 left him describing “decay truly beyond imagination and description,” with the Chinese being “narrow-minded and obstinate; they do not know the great trends of the world” (Mayo 1970: 7), and so would be carved up at the international table. In turn, Yukichi Fukuzawa’s

famous 1885 essay “Datsu-A Ron” (“An Opinion about Leaving Asia”) had as its encapsulating slogan “Datsu-A, Nyu-Ou” (“Leaving Asia, Going into Europe”). As East Asia was faced with increasing intervention and interference from the West, Fukuzawa argued that “we must not wait for neighboring countries to become civilized so that we can together promote Asia’s revival. Rather we should leave their ranks and join forces with the civilized countries of the West” (Mayo 1970: 7). Consequently, “we don’t have to give China and Korea any special treatment just because they are neighboring countries. We should deal with them as Western people do” (7). Such dealings involved geocultural dismissal of and geopolitical expansionism against China. The sting in the tail from Fukuzawa was that he envisaged that, having joined the West, Japan could then reenter Asia so as to bring progress to a backward China. Thus, Fukuzawa’s tract became a legitimizing prelude (Miwa 1968) to Japan’s subsequent war against China in 1894. Li Hongzhang again warned about Japanese ambitions, in a secret report to the Zongli Yamen in 1885, that “in about ten years, Japan’s wealth and power will be considerable. She is China’s future disaster” (CRW 1979: 119–20). A prophetic enough analysis, given the outbreak of war in 1894.

Such pressures pulled China in two directions, landward facing Russia and seaward facing the other Western powers and also Japan. In the wake of Russia’s occupation of the Ili Valley in 1871 (I. Hsu 1965) and Japan’s activities around Formosa in 1874, Chinese officials conducted geopolitical discussions—“the great policy debate” (I. Hsu 1964–5) of December 1874 between maritime-naval needs advocated by Li Hongzhang and land-army defence needs advocated by Zuo Zongtang. In the end, reestablishing China’s land frontiers in the interior was seen as the priority. The logic was expressed by Wang Wenshao: “If our troops fall behind a step, the Russians advance a step. If our troops lose a day, the Russians gain a day. There is nothing more urgent than this affair,” in which “the several nations of Britain, France, and the United States also may exploit the situation to their advantage and take action” (I. Hsu 1965: 38) against China. Consequently, “any progressive worsening of the Russian affair will inevitably bring on the maritime problem, and our defence will be hard put to the double challenge. As a result the general state of Chinese foreign relations in the future will be unthinkable” (38), unless Chinese control was reasserted in the Tarim basin. It was a question of geopolitical threats; Zuo’s views “reflected China’s traditional fears of invasion by barbarian hordes from Central Asia,” while Li’s “indicated a keen awareness of China’s new position in the world and the rising threat of Japan . . . hard headed calculations of the new forces in international relations” (I. Hsu 1964–5: 212, 223). It was also a question of different technologies: “If Sinkiang was China’s first line of defense in the age of the horseman, the coastal area played the same role in the age of sea power” (223). On the one hand, some neglect of China’s maritime program became evident. On

the other hand, land success was gained in Central Asia. The modernizer Zuo Zongtang, having pacified the Muslim revolt in Shanxi and Gansu provinces in 1873, turned his attention to Xinjiang, where the Ottoman Empire had just recognized the breakaway Muslim state. He moved 60,000 troops with success across Xinjiang during 1876–1877, coming up to the Ili Valley and its Russian occupiers. Negotiations were started in the Russian capital, but with the Chinese envoy weakly signing the Treaty of Livadia in 1879, which gave the Russians control of most of Ili, despite remonstrations from Beijing. Zhang Zhidong's *Memorial* of June 1, 1880, considered the Russians to be "plunderers and bullies of the worst type" (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 161), with Zhang hoping to see the Qing Empire "acting on the national indignation" (162) to reverse it.

POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS IN CALIFORNIA

The Qing government may have decided to focus on reestablishing its presence in Central Asia, militarily and demographically, but emigration across the seas was also manifest. Here demographic fears of the "Chinese threat" were generating direct political agitation in California and the U.S. Congress in the late 1870s.

In the light of these attitudes, restrictions—financial and otherwise—mounted during the 1870s in California. Typical of the petty detail was the Queue Ordinance of 1876, specifying length of hair and thereby literally cutting the Chinese "pig-tail" of hair. California's *Memorial of the Senate of California to the Congress of the United States* dismissed China as a civilization: "The national intellect of China has become decrepit . . . long since passed its prime and is waning into senility" (California Legislature 1877: 8). Its simultaneous *Address to the People of the United States* was equally strong. Quite simply, "we must exclude them [the Chinese], or imperil society itself" (40). It was a choice between mutually antagonistic civilizations. California was "engaged in building up a civilized empire, founded upon and permeated with the myriad influences of Caucasian culture . . . our race, to our civilization, to our kindred blood . . . we already possess a civilization, and it is American, and not Chinese" (45–46). Consequently, "this immigration begins to assume the nature and proportions of a dangerous unarmed invasion of our soil," leading California "to become a mere colony of China" and where "the advance guard is already upon our shores" (48–49).

Some American voices were raised against the *Memorial*. John Kerr, who had lived in China for twenty-three years, issued a detailed rebuttal of the factual and moral basis of its concerns in his *The Chinese Question Analyzed*. Some hard power considerations were also evident. China "has constructed arsenals and docks, and is making weapons of war and vessels of war of the most approved patterns. She is training her soldiers and seamen after the drill

of the best disciplinarians,” able to be matched to “the material resources of the country, the mines of iron and coal, of silver and gold, [which] have lain all these ages almost untouched . . . now she is beginning to see the power which those resources have in store for her” (Kerr 1877: 15). Consequently, “then with a population so vastly outnumbering all other nations, she looks forward to the time when she will be able to maintain her rights and protect her people against all the powers of the earth,” for “that time may be fifty, or it may be hundred years hence, but it will surely come” (15). Meanwhile, Chinese migrants to the United States receiving the “abuse, injustice, and oppression which sends so many of them back” to China “with a bitter hatred of our laws, our civilization, our religion” (20). Instead, if the anti-immigration furor was ended and they were treated well, the United States would be able to “point to a record of honourable justice in intercourse with her in the days of her weakness,” and “claim her for an ally, and not fear her as an enemy” (16). This recognized China’s power potential.

At the national level, the U.S. Senate Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration produced a particularly negative report of the Chinese presence in February 1877, a report picked up and cited in Australian parliamentary debates. The report worried that “the tide of Chinese immigration is gradually tending eastward, and before a quarter of a century the difficult question that now arises upon the Pacific coast will probably have to be met upon the banks of the Mississippi, and perhaps on the Ohio and Hudson” (US 1877). On the West Coast “many people of the Pacific coast believe that this influx of Chinese is a standing menace to republican institutions upon the Pacific, and the existence there of Christian civilization” (US 1877). The political implications were prominent for the Senate Joint Special Committee, worried that “an indigestible mass in the community, distinct in language, pagan in religion, inferior in mental and moral qualities, and all peculiarities, is an undesirable element in a republic, but becomes especially so if political power is placed in its hands” (US 1877). The political danger was that “our Pacific possessions are to be ultimately given over to a race alien in all its tendencies, which will make of it practically provinces of China rather than States of the Union” (US 1877).

For M. J. Dee, Malthusian population pressures were generating Chinese “migration on such a scale . . . the tidal wave is now forming in [the] interior of China, which may overwhelm us . . . the first ripples have struck our shore” (1878: 516–17; also Connelly 2006: 302). Sinophobic imagery was evident: “Those characteristics of the Chinaman we most despise—his miserable little figure, his pinched and wretched way of living, his slavish and tireless industry,” with “his capacity to live in swarms in wretched dens where the white man would rot, if he did not suffocate—all these make him a most formidable rival for ultimate survival as the fittest” (Dee 1878: 524). Dee’s Social Darwinist undertone was clear, as “not only in America, but wherever he may find

a footing . . . the swarm of Chinese, in San Francisco particularly . . . have driven out the white, brings the latter face to face with the possibilities of the future” (524). His conclusion was stark: “Is not the Mongol [the Chinese] a thistle in our field? Shall we pluck it up, as does the wise husbandman?” (526).

Some disdain of such anti-Chinese feelings was perceptible in other circles. Luther Townsend rejected the “exaggerated alarm-cry from California, with the request to abrogate the Burlingame treaty and forbid Chinese immigration” as “a manifest act of injustice and such an unwarranted breach of international obligations” (1876: 18). The Californian Methodist minister Reverend M. C. Briggs considered the image of “the Chinese pest, alias the Asiatic nuisance, alias the Cooly invasion, alias the cheap-labor plague of the Pacific Coast” as reflecting “whisky and brag . . . leather-lunged demagoguery . . . stump orators and bannered agitators,” a position that was “as unstatesmanlike as it is unphilanthropic,” attitudes that were “so prevalent in the halls of legislation” (1878: 343). Briggs considered these attitudes as a widespread “Chinaphobia” (1878). Such attitudes were also observed in 1879 by Robert Louis Stevenson. He had considered China’s “philosophy so wise that our best philosophers find things therein to wonder at” (1898: 66). However, in his travels across America, he also noted the “stupid ill-feelings” prevalent among Americans who saw the Chinese as one of the “despised races . . . their enemies in that cruel and treacherous battle-field of money . . . and hence there was no calumny too idle for the Caucasians to repeat, and even to believe” (62, 64). Consequently, “they declared them [the Chinese] hideous vermin, and affected a kind of choking in the throat when they beheld them. These judgements are typical of the feeling in all Western America” (64).

In this setting, Yung Wing’s application in 1878 to the State Department for the admission of Chinese Educational Mission (CEM) students to the Military Academy at West Point and the Naval Academy at Annapolis was turned down with a curt refusal. This was a violation of the Burlingame Treaty, which had guaranteed access to both countries’ public educational establishments, but it was too sensitive a subject for the U.S. government. Yung attributed the about-face in U.S. policy to the violent protests against Chinese laborers on the West Coast and to the opportunism of American politicians riding the resulting wave of xenophobia. However, this refusal had further ripple effects. Since one of the key objectives of the CEM was the acquisition of Western military expertise, the rejection of the Chinese applicants called the whole Chinese Educational Mission into question. The U.S. government’s willingness to exploit anti-Chinese prejudice provoked China’s anger and a sense of betrayal, which undercut its commitment to the continued existence of the Mission.

Chinese voices were raised, not surprisingly, against this anti-immigration wave. The letters of one Kwang Chang Ling to the San Francisco *Arg-*

onaut denounced “that demagogism by which your politics, as you call it, have been degraded to a level scarcely higher than incendiarism, pillage and murder” (Kwang 1878: 2). America’s double standards were apparent for Kwang: “You desire to possess advantages in China, which at the same time, you would deny to Chinamen in America. You have bombarded our ports and forced us into an unwilling commerce with you, which now you desire shall be entirely one-sided” (7). Thus, “you demand every privilege for Americans in China, but you would deny the same privileges to Chinamen in America, because in your opinion, the presence of the Chinese is a menace to your civilization” (7). Geoculture was again wrapped up in geopolitics. As to the future, Kwang thought Americans should beware “the day that you become so weak and faithless as to give way to your ignorant classes, and permit the torch and dagger to drive us from your shores” (11). In such a scenario, “that day will see every resource of Ta-sing Empire put forth to punish you. Your commerce will be swept from the Pacific, perhaps forever; it may even be seriously crippled on the Atlantic,” and “you may then learn, when too late, that China, though old and apathetic, is by no means dead or powerless” (11). He admitted that the menacing tone of “these threats” of his came from an “injured patriotism and outraged sense of justice” (11). It was preferable for China and the United States to cooperate: “We should be your friends, not your enemies. The oldest and newest empires of the world, joined together in the common cause of Free Trade” would “form a spectacle whose sublimity might form the Pharos [lighthouse] to a new and higher civilization for a united world” (11). Conversely, “disunited, warring with each other,” a Sino-American conflict “might involve each other in ruin and the world in a desolation so widespread that its rehabilitation may need the work of centuries” (11). Such macro-scale significance for the international system is to be heard again at the start of the twenty-first century.

Such words had little impact in California, and, in fact, were more likely to reinforce fears of an invasion of Chinese immigrants backed up by a resurgent Chinese Empire. The California Legislature’s *Address to the People of the United States* on the Chinese threat was distributed to governors, legislators, and newspaper editors throughout the country. Inside California, its new Constitution of 1879 further restricted the Chinese presence—for example, banning their employment on public works; and denying the vote to all “natives of China, idiots, and insane persons.”

Edward Burlingame—not to be confused with his father, Anson Burlingame, the author of the earlier 1868 Burlingame Treaty—saw American fears of “an evil of vast proportion, which is now threatening to outnumber our Pacific coast population, and imperil the best interests of this side of our continent” as inaccurate and “greatly exaggerated” (1877: 689). He recognized that this “threatening terror” of “the dread of an ‘Asiatic Invasion’ before which the ‘Caucasian’ will be driven helplessly . . . has afforded so rich a field

for the demagogues . . . naturally enough help to elect the political leaders” (689). Demagogues were certainly to be found in Congress. From California, Horace Davis regaled the House of Representatives with how the Chinese were “utterly an alien in the body politics . . . like some foreign substance in the human body, breeding fever” (1878: 1). For him, the Chinese population of the Pacific States was “an army of nomads . . . dangerous . . . like a foreign army encamped among its people” (14). Davis’s nightmare was the formation on American soil of an extension of China, “in the end an Asiatic State. Is this an imaginary danger? The Chinese Empire contains three hundred and fifty millions of population. Science has bridged the Pacific Ocean with a short and cheap transit” (8) for Chinese migrants, but also potentially for Chinese warships. As such, the “condition of the Chinese in Australia is in every respect the counterpart of California” (11). Another California representative, Aaron Sargent, similarly warned the Senate of the geocultural stakes, “an antagonism which I plainly perceive between American civilization and that of the Chinese,” bringing with it “the heathenizing of the western coast of the United States, the substitution for the Anglo-Saxon civilization, which would otherwise grow up there, of the pagan civilization of China” (1878: 9–10). The prospect was that California “will become to all intents and purposes a mere province of China,” where “this dangerous flood . . . this hive of human beings has been swarming to the neighbouring countries, the islands of the sea, and to Australia” (11). This American-Australian linkage by politicians and demagogues is notable.

Admittedly, courts could strike down, as in *Ho Ah Kow vs. Matthew Nunan*, some local California restrictions like the Queue Ordinance of 1876, on the grounds that this ordinance against Chinese hairstyles violated the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Yet that same court could concede ground in the longer term. After all, in delivering the court’s verdict, Judge Stephen Field nevertheless noted on July 7, 1879, “the general feeling—amounting to positive hostility-prevailing in California against the Chinese, which would prevent their further immigration hither and expel from the State those already here” (Odo 2002: 55). Field was not unsympathetic to such sentiments about the Chinese, “their dissimilarity in physical characteristics, in language, manners, and religion would seem, from past experience to prevent the possibility of their assimilation” (55). Indeed, “thoughtful persons, looking at the millions which crowd the opposite shores of the Pacific” and “the possibility at no distant days of their pouring over in vast hordes among us, give rise to fierce antagonisms of race, hope that some way may be devised to prevent their further immigration” (55). With such sentiment, “we feel the force and importance of these considerations,” but Field cautioned that the “remedy for the apprehended evil [from the Chinese presence] is to be sought from the general government . . . to that government belong exclusively the treaty-making power, and the power to regulate com-

merce with foreign nations . . . the power to prescribe the conditions of immigration” (55–56). It was a question of division of power between the federal and state levels, over who should make such decisions, not whether such decisions should be made. Thus, “the [California] State in these particular [cases] . . . is powerless” (56). The question was something to be dealt with at the federal level, and that was precisely what was to take place. The question, then, would be whether the Chinese state would also be powerless against a determined American response.

CHINESE DIPLOMACY IN THE WEST

One aspect of China’s emergence into the international community was the appearance of Chinese legations in the West (Zhang and Hu 2007: 437–44). This was a formal sign of China joining the Community of Nations and operating in the structures of the international system, although Ma Jianzhong lamented in 1878 that Westerners, “consider Chinese diplomats as figures of fun and do not think people from Asia are worth talking to” (1998: 49). However, this ridicule merely exacerbated Chinese perceptions of their unequal status in the international system, shackled within China and discriminated against outside its shores. It is no coincidence that “a Chinese sense of humiliation and inferiority—a direct result of the treaties—could only be discerned from the 1870s onwards, in the writings of Qing scholars and diplomatic officials” (Wang Dong 2003: 402–03). Guo Songtao, China’s first ambassadorial Minister to Britain and France, from 1877 to 1879, felt that “the West should treat China as an equal (*gongping*),” and specifically that “Westerners should fall under the jurisdiction of Chinese local authority, instead of their [own] consuls” (Wang Dong 2003: 402–03). However, this was not the case, and from such power imbalances came Guo’s perception in 1877 that in China “the foreigners’ power is daily becoming more oppressive, and we suffer increasingly from their disturbances” (CRW 1979: 100).

Guo’s sojourn in London did, though, raise China’s profile in Britain (O. Wong 1987). Indeed, British newspapers began to take Chinese political-military credentials a little more seriously. The discussion in the *Graphic* of January 27, 1877, on the emigration of the “yellow man” pointed out that a genuine alliance with a nationality some four hundred million strong was not to be despised. Later, on March 15, 1879, the *Graphic* reminded its readers that the Chinese were destined to play an important part in the future history of the world, and another invasion of Europe like that of the Huns might come to pass. For the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on May 23, 1878, faced with such an immense population, British policy “should be based upon friendship and mutual advantage,” the more so as Chinese forces had just reoccupied Kashi (Kashgar) in Central Asia and so could be seen as a counterweight against Russia.

Outside China, the establishment of the first official Chinese diplomatic presence in the United States had been initiated with Chen Lanbin's arrival in 1878 as first resident Minister to the United States (Desnoyers 1991). In the *New York Times* of September 29, 1878, Chen hoped that "this embassy will not only be the means of establishing on a firm basis the amicable relations of our two countries, but may also be the starting point of a new diplomatic era, which will eventually unite the East and the West under one enlightened and progressive civilization." However, Chinese merchants in San Francisco were more immediately keen for the Chinese government to intervene on their behalf concerning their treatment in the United States. The Chinese consulate office at San Francisco was faced with more than two hundred unsettled legal cases involving Chinese nationals and more than three hundred Chinese detained in jail!

Yung Wing noted sadly that in the late 1870s "the race prejudice against the Chinese was so rampant and rank . . . the whole Pacific atmosphere was impregnated, and . . . had hypnotized all the departments of the government, especially Congress" (1909: 208). Consequently, "the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 was, without the least provocation, and contrary to all diplomatic precedents and common decency, trampled underfoot unceremoniously and wantonly," and "set aside as though no treaty had ever existed, in order to make way for these acts of Congressional discrimination against Chinese immigration" (208). Similarly, the Reverend Joseph Twichell thought the proposed violation of Burlingame Treaty provisions over entry and protection had "something in the likeness of a medieval edict against the Jew . . . worked-up irrational furore . . . fomented by the press" (1879: 404). A Hartford Congregationalist minister, Twichell was a friend of Mark Twain and of abolitionists like Hawley, and had befriended Yung Wing during his years at Yale (Cohn and Lee 2003: 9). International implications were suggested by Twichell: An "affront perpetrated in the halls of Congress . . . an attempt which, had it succeeded, would have destroyed our friendship with China" (1879: 405), given that the Chinese community in America "constitute by far the most vital point of our contact with that great nation beyond the sea and afford the most available means and medium of reaching it [China] that we possess" (406). While fervently hoping for evangelization of the Chinese communities in the United States and China, he approvingly cited Ulysses S. Grant's call that year that, "the time had now arrived when . . . China . . . should no longer submit as they had done to the interference of foreign powers; should assume control of their own commerce," and "stand for their independence and their proper rights, as it became so great nations to do" (Twichell 1879: 106).

Such questions of rights involved tortuous diplomatic efforts, where the first Qing representative at Washington, D.C., Chen Lanbin, was immediately involved in trying to avert the Chinese Exclusion Bill being passed by

the Senate. In discussions with American government officials, Chen made of a point of emphasizing that such an Exclusion Bill would violate the 1868 Burlingame Treaty. Some diplomatic success was gained insofar as President Rutherford B. Hayes did veto the initial bill on March 1, 1879. However, American pressure was still mounting for drastic revisions of the Burlingame Treaty, with or without China's consent. Public opinion was against Hayes (Pennanen 1968). A *New York Times* editorial on February 26, 1880, argued in *realpolitik* terms that the United States could ignore its treaty obligations, asking "Can China compel us to keep a treaty, and if not, can we be expected to keep it? We can violate it, since China cannot possibly invade our coast with a powerful fleet and batter down our towns."

Restrictive changes were forced through. James Angell was sent to negotiate a new treaty. The prefix of the Treaty Regulating Immigration from China was ironic, in retrospect, asserting, "The United States, because of the constantly increasing immigration of Chinese labourers to the territory of the United States and the embarrassments consequent upon such immigration now desires to negotiate a modification of the existing Treaties which shall not be in direct contravention of their spirit." Yet such "contravention" was exactly what happened. The 1880 treaty did stipulate that "immigrants shall not be subject to personal maltreatment or abuse," under Article 1, nor "ill treatment" under Article 2. Nevertheless, the United States was given *carte blanche* for the future. Article 1 set out that "the Government of the United States may regulate, limit, or suspend Chinese immigration . . . whenever"—the keyword—"in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States . . . affects or threatens to affect the interests of that country, or to endanger the good order of the said country." Significantly, these first restrictions on immigration were decoupled from economic trade access, where a separate commerce treaty was negotiated. The interaction of internal and external politics was at play as China was also trying to gain American diplomatic support over Japan's recent annexation of the Ryukyu Islands.

Rutherford Alcock's summation of Chinese foreign policy, from his diplomatist background, portrayed a China that was "in a very pitiful position at this moment" (1880: 1007). In the "game of Empire" (1002) being played out in Asia among Russia, Britain, and China, in calculations of military power, the Celestial Empire fell short, "below the required standard" (1002). China's situation was weak, "the Celestial empire can neither successfully defend their territories against invasion, nor make the Empire feared in attack . . . no voice . . . given to her in the political councils of Western states" (1002) and in the international system as a whole, faced as it was with trying "to preserve the integrity of their Empire, and its independence against aggression from without and disintegration" (1004). Yet again, the paradoxes of China came through: "China, with all her infinite potentialities of resistance, and even of

attack . . . lies helpless, like a waterlogged and dismasted ship” (1010). As he admitted, “if China, then, were to fuse a million men into a disciplined force under European drill—as she might easily do in a very short time, and arm them with breechloaders—is there any European Power that could hold her cheap as an enemy?” (1003). This was a threatening prospect, only held back by a crucial qualification, “but all this refers to *potential* force, not to actual or available power” (1003).

All of these preceding trends during the 1840s through 1870s showed what a tangled web of perceptions was at play, in which the Unequal Treaties system of power projection by the West on a relatively weak China went hand in hand with a gradually rising fear of a Chinese presence in the world. For the moment, the Chinese state and people remained relatively separate factors in the international system in the mind of the West. In political state terms, China was weak and able to be pushed around. However, in demographic—“people”—terms, China could represent an expansionist migratory force that many in the West could perceive as needing to be restrained and controlled. The 1880s was to see both strands come together in China’s so-called “Awakening” within the international system.

FOUR

China's Attempted "Awakening"

*We have four or five hundred millions of people,
Out of whom we may enlist ten millions of soldiers;
We have iron and metals in limitless quantity,
With them we could build thousands of war-ships;
Then we shall stride across the Five Continents
Where you will see the Yellow Dragon Banners fly and dance.*

—Kang Youwei, 1880s

*I found a large army of Chinese
. . . they were the first army corps on the march of the Mongol.
The scouts are at Calcutta, and a flying column at Rangoon.
Here begins the main body, some hundred thousand strong, so they say.
Was it not De Quincey that had a horror of the Chinese
of their inhumaneness and their inscrutability?*

—Rudyard Kipling, 1889

IN THE 1880s there were some signs of China improving its political-military capability. This attracted the attention of Samuel Williams, who had lived in China since 1841 as an influential American “missionary-scholar-diplomat” (Brinke 1978: 13–14). Williams profiled the “rapid and great changes in this Empire . . . it is certain that the country has passed its period of passivity” and “in the hands of statesmen as far sighted and patriotic as those who now control the government . . . hopeful signs abound” (1883: 2.738–39) of China’s Awakening. These hopeful signs were found partly in the Qing Empire settling the varied internal revolts that had plagued it during the previous decade, and partly through its seeming to put in place the required technological infrastructure. Hope was also seen in the Qing’s external projection of

its power. China's sheer size impressed—at times awed—onlookers. Its demographic pool remained striking for strategists, “her most copious raw material, manpower . . . there was something awe-inspiring in the possible size of China's armies” (Kiernan 1970: 214–15).

CHINA'S MILITARY REVIVAL

Chinese figures were well aware of China's military potential. Xue Fucheng, a member of Li Hongzhang's staff, had argued in his 1879 paper “On Reform” for the need to “make the Westerners not dare to despise China” (CRW 1979: 142). This necessitated that China “take over the knowledge of Westerner's knowledge of machinery and mathematics . . . the improvement of the military system and strategy should be discussed . . . after reform we may be able to surpass them” (142–43). In such a vein, a plan for a modern navy was launched in 1880 with a program to buy warships from abroad and a naval school established at Tianjin. Internal applications had external applications. Li Hongzhang recognized in 1880 that “in mobilizing troops speed is of the essence, a telegram from Russia to Shanghai takes only one day, whereas from Shanghai to Peking . . . a Chinese mail steamer requires six or seven days” (CRW 1979: 100). In 1881, railroads north of Tianjin were built and the first telegraph line was opened from Shanghai to Tianjin.

Chinese renewalists felt encouraged over the advancement of their cause. Their attitudes were encapsulated in Kang Youwei's 1880s poem, “Let us hasten to develop our industry and steam-engines . . . We have iron and metals in limitless quantity, / With them we could build thousands of warships” (Zen 1931: 1072). Economics underpinned military potential, as did China's demographic size, “We have four or five hundred millions of people, / Out of whom we may enlist ten millions of soldiers” (1072). From such realization, “Then we shall stride across the Five Continents / Where you will see the Yellow Dragon Banners fly and dance” (1072).

Western figures were also aware of, but concerned about, China's military potential. James Whitney's *The Chinese and the Chinese Question* warned that “China, instead of standing upon the defensive, is upon the verge of, if she has not already adopted, an aggressive policy” (1880: 60). Steam line companies plying the waves across the Pacific were also enabling “China to avail herself of the latest and most improved resources, whether for peaceful or warlike purposes” (61). On the war front, Whitney's perception was that “armories have been established on Chinese soil for the manufacture of improved fire-arms for Chinese troops,” and contemporary events noticed whereby “China has defeated the Russians in Kashgar with muskets from the arsenals of Europe, and has mounted Krupp guns on the earthworks that guard the inlets to the great rivers” (61). Indeed, “within the past few years she has equipped a navy, which with the single exception of that of Great

Britain, carries heavier and more effective ordnance than that of any other nation in the world" (61). Consequently, for Whitney, a triple threat was underway, consisting of "the influx of such a people, the commercial enterprise of such a country, the possible [military] aggressions of such a power" (1880: 61). In California "the signs of aggression . . . to our own country . . . if continued, will soon constitute upon the Pacific coast a power too strong to be overcome by policy or war" (60). Faced with the danger of the Chinese government involving itself in ensuring the application of the 1860 Anglo-Chinese Treaty—namely, "the right, on all part of their citizens, of passing without restraint to all portions of our country"—Whitney felt that "Chinese immigration should be stopped by all the power of the government" (62) and "our Treaty with China should be abrogated" (63).

Chinese diplomatic voices on immigration were finally being heard. Indeed, for Whitney, they could be seen as evidence of Chinese intent and capabilities, where "the strong, clear postulates and decisive demands of the Chinese Central authorities are manifest," since "Prince Kung [Gong], Minister of Foreign Affairs, hardly veiled a threat under the form of diplomatic courtesy in addressing the American Envoy concerning an alleged assault upon some Chinese coolies landing in San Francisco" (Whitney 1880: 84). Diplomatic courtesy reflected "the menace . . . that China is stronger on the Pacific Coast . . . she could send vessels with stronger armor and heavier guns to breach the walls of Alcatraz" (85). All of this was affecting American foreign policy, in Whitney's eyes, since "fear then, and its corollary a futile expediency . . . may lie at the basis of our temporary policy with China; a policy that drags and dawdles and sentimentalizes, that sends vain embassies abroad to talk," despite a situation that "has lasted far too long. The conflict is upon us. It cannot be evaded or repressed. Each year of delay renders its labor more arduous and its dangers more great" (85). Throughout all of this, geocultural concerns were fused with geopolitical concerns as the American-Chinese encounter took place on both sides of the Pacific.

China's own military renewal was commented on by De Gobineau in his 1881 essay "Events in Asia." The Qing recovery of Xinjiang was a "great undertaking . . . the prime preoccupation of the Peking government after centuries of total indifference" carried out with "bloody-thirsty rage of the Chinese obsessed with slaughtering and eradicating the Moslems" (De Gobineau 1970: 243). Meanwhile, "France and England have conducted a war in China which has taught them a great deal, especially that the Chinese fight well and could make excellent soldiers" (241). China was on the move in the Eurasian heartland: "It is evident that the route history has taken is being reopened. It is again opened in and around China, where we can see the masses on the move. We may tremble at the anger which threatens us" (246). Though he died in 1882, De Gobineau's epic posthumous poem *Amadis*,

painted a picture of a Europe defended by a noble white elite against Chinese hordes in a “final cosmic conflict” (Blue 1999: 117).

Recognition of China’s renewal and strategic importance were apparent in British parliamentary debates on April 3, 1883, over stopping the opium trade. Such a debate is, of course, ironic, given that Britain had first gone to war with China in 1839 in order to open up the export of opium from British India to China. Quite simply, Sir Joseph Pease told his colleagues to note, “this trade has been forced on the people of China from the days of the Chinese War up to the present day, that we have never let the Chinese be free agents in the matter” (UK 1883: 1347). Samuel Smith pointed to “that vast Empire” on which “we have done nothing there to conciliate them. We have done everything to make them hate us and European civilisation” (UK 1883: 1350). For him, “the conduct of this country towards China has been shameful and unjust in the highest degree, and that we have been the means of inflicting upon the people of China one of the greatest curses which ever befell a nation” (1347)—opium.

The British parliamentary debate also revealed strategic concerns over antagonizing China. As Smith noted, the Qing Empire was “the equal to one-fourth of the whole of the inhabitants of the globe,” on which “I cannot think of an object more worthy a country like this than to make 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 of people in China think of us as friends instead of enemies” (UK 1883: 1350). Indeed, “in the event of a possible struggle with Russia for our Indian Empire, which I trust may never occur, the good feeling of the Chinese population towards us would be an important element” (1350–51). Other MPs, like Edmond Fitzmaurice, asserted that previous talk of China falling to pieces needed to be changed: “That day was over. The Chinese Empire in the last few years had shown an extraordinary recuperative power,” whereby it “occupied a position in Asia almost equal to the most palm days of its history” (UK 1883: 1355). As a result, the British government needed to be “fully aware of the great and transcendent importance of a good understanding with that country” (1355). The move by Britain to curb its opium exports was seen by the *Chinese Recorder* as a change in tone: This “new Opium Treaty . . . makes a new stage in Chinese diplomacy . . . to deal in a new style with this people” (1886: 39).

De Gobineau’s sense of French, Western, superiority would have been shaken by the further “resisting power” (*Living Age* 1885: 312) of China shown in the Sino-French War of 1884–1885. At its start a young reformer, Kang Youwei, was in Canton, “where he personally experienced all the tensions and fears that attended the immanence of foreign attack. This direct experience of the power and militancy of Western nations lent a special urgency to his study of Western learning” (Hao 1980: 284), in which “from the very beginning Kang saw the threat of Western expansion as not simply socio-political but cultural and religious as well” (285). Jules Ferry’s

famous dismissal of China as "une quantité négligéable" had been echoed by Rutherford Alcock's equally forthright dismissal of the "contemptible . . . strength of any Chinese army" (Alcock 1884: 886). However, in reality, China proved a more worrisome adversary. Robert Hart had early on warned in a letter, on April 14, 1883, that "the French will then find China a very difficult nut to crack" (1976: 459–60). Elsewhere, in France, Eugene Simon warned in 1885 about the dangers if "we shall find ourselves at war with the most powerful and irreducible nation in the world" (1887: 145). After all, China "possesses a sufficient number of men for the slightest movement on her part to disturb Europe, and compel us to stand to arms . . . nothing could be more unfortunate than the fatuity of those who brought us into conflict" (142). Not only were French forces repulsed from Taiwan in October 1884, but in March 1885, China defeated French forces at Bac- le and recaptured Langston in northern Indo-China. Meanwhile, Chinese Americans were sending money across the Pacific to help the Chinese military campaigns against France. For William Dunlop, "The news of the successful storming of Langston by the Chinese sent a shiver of fear through every foreign heart in China," and was a sign of "the march of the Mongol" (1889: 39). In such straits, France sought an alliance, in vain, with Japan against a potentially resurgent China (Sims 1995). The French government resigned in ignominy.

Admittedly, the French fleet did destroy almost the whole of the Chinese fleet at Fuzhou. Consequently, under the Second Treaty of Tianjin, June 1885, the French grip over Tonkin and Annam was reaffirmed. Guo Songtao may have decried Chinese military efforts in 1884, arguing in the wake of the Fuzhou destruction that "China's coastline is 8,000 or 9,000 *li*. By what means can we oppose them? . . . the Westerners have occupied our ports and have penetrated deeply into the interior . . . the catastrophe they bring will be even more serious" (CRW 1979: 121–23). Nevertheless, Rudyard Kipling, traveling through the region in 1889, had enigmatically noted that "their little difficulty with the French a few years ago has taught the Chinese a great many things which, perhaps, it were better for us that they had left alone" (1919: 1.303). This had led to Canton becoming "much better defended as far as the art of man was concerned" (1.303), since "China was rapidly importing twelve and forty-one ton guns for the defence of her coasts" (1.294). Charles Denby, the American Minister to China from 1885 to 1898, recognized that "[China's] power was respected. Li Hung Chang had built a fine navy which was regarded as invincible, the Chinese had whipped the French, and the enormous population promised soldiers in illimitable numbers" (1906: 2.57). In the wake of the war, the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Review*, published by the American Presbyterian Mission in Shanghai, reckoned, "it is evident that China has learned much from the conflict [with France], and comes out of it stronger than ever before" (1886: 39). It also noted, "stimulated by the

very remarkable dying counsels of Gen. Tso Tsung-t'ang [Zuo Zongtang] she [China] is preparing to increase her navy, to reorganize her army" (1886: 39).

A difference was noted by the *New York Times*, on February 18, 1887, in its profile of Zeng Jize's widely noticed paper "China, the Sleep and the Awakening." The *New York* editor noted, "when he [Zeng] quitted Peking, almost eight years ago, China was looked upon by the outside world with a certain amount of contempt and as being in the last stage of decrepitude and decay," and "it was considered that the most ancient, populous, and wealthiest of Asiatic kingdoms was doomed to disruption and ruin at the touch of Western civilization—in short, that the nineteenth century air would prove too much for her aged lungs." At that time, "the Chinese were warned on all sides that their downfall was at hand" and "that their only chance of salvation was to abandon their fossil prejudices and to accept the civilization thrust upon them by the cosmopolitan adventurers from the West." However, such had been the renewal of China's military and diplomatic credibility that "the result is that to-day China is admitted by all competent judges to hold the balance of Asia in her hands, while her alliance is courted and her enmity feared by the greatest powers in the world." China's military progress was also noticed in Australia. As Minister of Defence, Sargood informed the Victoria parliament, "China has a strong fleet and is increasing it very much. She also has an immense population, who, when properly led, make good soldiers" (Victoria 1887: 2637).

A difference was also noticed in the second edition of Whitney's *The Chinese and the Chinese Question*. Explicit references to Chinese victories over French forces were the springboard to wider comments by Whitney on how "according to our State Department in 1885, China is taking thorough and effective measures for naval and military reorganization" and "it is significant that she has turned to Germany as affording the most valuable examples and means of instruction" (1888: 104). Given "the drill, the arms of precision, and the improved equipments of Europe, the Chinese will be by far the strongest military nation in the world" and "a few decades may witness a total reversal of the position of China with reference to the countries of the west" (104). Demographics still lurked: "Our people may watch from afar the conflict which must arise when the millions of Chinese, swarming like the bees from the hive, but furnished with the means of aggression from the west, shall overflow her borders . . . with all the avid anger of conquest" (106). Such images and fears were held elsewhere in the Pacific.

AUSTRALASIAN INVASION SCARES AND POLITICAL DEBATES

In the 1880s, a perceived sense of China's military credibility was a factor entering into domestic political debate, not just in the United States, but in

New Zealand and Australia as well. Australian debates were particularly extensive. Napoleon's earlier testimony, recorded by O'Meara, was known enough for Henry Parkes to retell it, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on May 29, 1880, that "he apprehended that great difficulties would arise from their coming here. [He] said that the first Napoleon expressed himself to the effect that if they learned the art of shipbuilding, they would be able to conquer the world."

In New Zealand, Whitaker introduced the Chinese Immigrants Bill amid warnings of "the evils of Chinese immigration" (NZ 1881: 209). In one direction, Californian precedents were again prominent, where "it must be recollected that the Americans are of the same race as ourselves, and what has happened there would be most likely occur here," for "we shall be flooded with a far greater number of Chinese than we can with advantage receive" (208–09). In another direction, the concurrent legislation being introduced in the Australian parliaments was also a source of reference. Some New Zealanders warned that the bill was "panic legislation . . . an inhuman and barbarous policy" (212, 210). Indeed, Holmes called the entire record of Western contacts with China "a black catalogue of crimes to answer for in connection with our intercourse with that people . . . taking advantage of their weakness, their helplessness, and compelling them to receive what they knew to be injurious to the great mass of their people" (NZ 1881: 240). He concluded, "It seems to me that the Chinese have been systematically wronged by us in the past, and I hope we shall now pause in our wrongdoing, and begin to deal out more even-handed justice to them" (240).

However, these voices were in the minority. Fraser's language was stark about the Chinese, "with their loathsome diseases, and their accumulated dark and hideous vices consequent on five thousand years of arrested civilization, coming here, robbing our land of gold and our people of bread . . . these people are in every way alien to us" (NZ 1881: 212). Chinese migration posed a cultural problem for Waterhouse, as "they never become absorbed in the rest of the population. They become an *imperium in imperio* . . . they are there in the midst of the people, yet they are there waiting the turn of subsequent events" (NZ 1881: 214).

In terms of the future, wider vistas were apparent to Waterhouse: "The Chinese threaten to swarm every place they went to . . . when an empire like China, with its 400,000,000 of people, begins to move, it is time for other nations to begin to look out" (NZ 1881: 213). This threat was exemplified in the Pacific, where "it is idle to deny that the future of the South Sea islands is in the hands of China. The Chinese are sending out advance couriers in all directions," so that "within the lifetime of the present generation the Sandwich [Hawaiian] Islands will be to all intents and purposes Chinese territory" (NZ 1881: 213). As to those subsequent events, "When China, as will be the case within the next twenty-five years, is in a position to defy foreign Powers—and

the marvellous progress she has been making of late years shows that she will be able to do that,” then “it will be too late to turn around and say, ‘We will now shut out the Chinese from our midst’” (214). China’s progress was noticed by other colleagues as well, with Chamberlin warning, “The Chinese are an advancing people . . . they are building a large number of mercantile and war steamers” (NZ 1881: 215). The long-term future for Waterhouse was one of China’s rise, where “those who come after will have to settle with China itself, which will be one of the greatest powers on earth” (NZ 1881: 214). Paul Kennedy’s *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (1988) comes to mind here.

China’s international presence also became a tangible factor in public debate in the Australian media. In Sydney, the *Bulletin* editorial “The Chinese Invasion of Australia,” published September 1, 1886, described how “the Chinese immigrant in Australia, and especially in New South Wales, is now on his trial . . . with a view to deciding once and for all whether he is a desirable tenant . . . on Australian soil.” Individually, “the average Chinaman . . . is necessarily a sensuous brute,” reflecting “the product of a peculiar national system . . . the Chinese are unique among nations in that they have not advanced in thought or method as they increased in number and density of population.” Individually inferior, “they must always act together and overpower their rivals by sheer force of numbers.” The *Bulletin* cartoon “The Mongolian Octopus. His Grip on Australia,” published August 21, 1886, was graphically threatening, part of a “tapestry of Chinese vice, disease and immorality that circulated throughout the Australian colonies as press illustrations and cartoons in the late nineteenth century” (Kwok 2004). The Queensland *Figaro* of December 4, 1886, had its own disturbing cartoon, “The Chinese Plague.” This showed an Australian laborer standing up to massed ranks of Chinese-faced locusts, who were threatening his wife, child, and baby, and saying “It’s these pesky locusts that are eating me out of house and home. I must exterminate them somehow.” Further south, the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, on April 30, 1888, warned, “A vast stream of population is pouring out of China and is flowing towards this continent . . . the only way to save Australia for the British race is to immediately prohibit Chinese immigration . . . loyalty to our race demands it.” Lawson’s soaring hopes in his 1887 poem “Flag of the Southern Cross” also warned, “see how the yellow-men next to her lust for her [Australia], / Sooner or later to battle we must for her” (1967–69: 1.8).

Australian politics were affected in turn, partly through politicians reflecting such racial concerns and partly in terms of race being an electoral weapon (Evans 1988: 312–18). The Queensland *Figaro*, on August 7, 1886, while itself often anti-Chinese, nevertheless lamented how the Chinese issue was being “used as a political tool,” with MPs employing “an anti-Chinese oration, which is received by applause, although the Chinkie had nothing to do with the subject of discussion and was dragged in merely to divert attention

from the point at issue." Local anti-Chinese fears during the 1880s were exacerbated by fears of being left in the lurch by Britain, where many Antipodeans saw any China revival as a threat to themselves rather than to Britain, which was more concerned about its "Great Game" with Russia. In Queensland parliamentary debates, Morehead argued that it was a question of "informing the Imperial authorities that if they insist upon keeping friends with China . . . they had better make up their minds to part with us. If the Chinese, or rather the Chinese trade, is of more importance to the Empire than the Australian colonies are, let us understand it, and then we shall know what to do" (Queensland 1887a: 1091). Consequently, immigration fears were felt at the national and international levels between the Australian colonies and China, and indeed with the British imperial administration in London. This resulted in two Chinese "commissioners" visiting Australia. These were no lowly officials, being General Wang Ronghe and Consul Yu Qiong. Their official visit, with British permission, from May to August 1887, increased Australian fears over an imminent Chinese invasion. The appearance of Zeng Jize's paper on "China, the Sleep and the Awakening" was also noticed, a "remarkable" paper according to the Melbourne *Argus* on May 30, 1887.

Australian newspapers tracked the progress of the Chinese Commissioners and discussed the wider implications. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on August 4, 1887, how "in Queensland the Commissioners have encountered nothing but hostility. An official reception was denied them. The Premier went out of his way to tell them that Chinese were not wanted in that colony." China's internal and external relations with the world were entwined. Potentially this could play to China's advantage. As the *Sydney Morning Herald* noted, "Great Britain enjoys, under treaty, commercial and other privileges in China of very great value, and it may occur to the authorities at Peking to ask that in return Chinese subject may be more liberally dealt with in Australia." The newspaper felt that could cause difficulties to the British government: "Satisfaction could not be given to China without [Britain] interfering in some way with what we should regard as our domestic affairs; and if China were persistent trouble might arise out of the business." Moreover, China was in a stronger position to demand concessions: "China has her treaty rights, and is becoming year by year more powerful. She is not reckoned as a fighting nation," but "if circumstances led her to form an alliance with Russia, she would become a very awkward antagonist for Great Britain, whose possessions in India, Burmah, and the Straits would be threatened." In that setting, "if Great Britain had to choose between a Chinese war and a quarrel with her Australian colonies, her position would be an unfortunate one, to say the least of it." Australian fears were of being left isolated by British withdrawal of support. In the wake of the visit, the *Sydney Morning Herald* warned its readers on October 17, that any report by the Commissioners would not only be concerned with further Chinese

immigration to Australia but also that any such report “is likely to be followed by a Chinese invasion of Australia.”

In similar tones, the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, in its profile on April 30, “The Chinese View of Our Chinese Question,” reckoned that “the report of the Commissioners shows that the Chinese government had a political as well as a charitable motive in undertaking the investigation.” Military concerns were seen as involved in their supposed “plans for the raising of funds . . . for the purpose of building warships for the protection of Chinese emigrants . . . whose guns may be turned upon the city [Sydney] in the event of . . . prohibitory laws against the Chinese.” The *London Times* also picked up on this, its “Chinese Report on the Condition of Chinese Emigrants Abroad” on May 7, 1888, noting that the Commissioners had reported back to the reformist Cantonese viceroy, Zhang Zhidong, who in turn had supported their calls for the appointment of locally based Chinese consuls, the raising of funds from among the local Chinese communities, to include “a fund for the introduction of war ships to be specially used for the protection of Chinese abroad.” Their visit became the setting for Kenneth Mackay’s 1895 novel *The Yellow Wave*, which was subtitled “The Invasion of Australia” and featured Commissioner Wang returning at the head of a large Chinese fleet, with forces ready and able to sweep into Australia.

Fears were expressed in the Australian Parliament. Tarlton warned on September 7, 1887, against curbing Chinese immigration in South Australia’s Northern Territory: “The threat held out the other day by the Chinese Commissioners was no empty one,” for “the French had lately got into a war with the Chinese which they were very glad to get out of . . . if we did a political wrong to China she would make it very troublesome for Australia” (*South Australia* 1887: 74). In Victoria, the Minister of Defense, Frederick Sargood, noted in December 1887 that the Chinese Commissioners “feel very keenly . . . what they think is the unjust way that their countrymen here are treated . . . the Chinese Commissioners spoke very strongly upon the point, and referred to action that it might be necessary to take when they returned to China,” a stance that gave him forebodings that Australian colonies “not do anything that would jeopardize the good feeling subsisting between the British Empire and China” (*Victoria* 1887: 2637). The Chinese Minister in London, Liu Daren, received the Commissioners’ report and was soon writing on December 12, 1887, to the British Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Rosebery, complaining that “the Imperial [Qing] Government sees with regret the continued existence of the exceptional laws which some of the Colonial Legislatures of Australia and the Dominion have at different times enacted against Chinese subjects,” laws which were “at a variance with Treaty obligation” and asked “how far are they compatible with . . . friendly relations which now happily exist between the two countries?” (B DFA 1994c: 152). British officials were mindful of China’s sensitivities on this issue. The British

Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, admitted on June 22, 1888, to Walsham, the British Minister at Beijing, that he was "most anxious that all proper regard should be shown to the feelings of the Chinese nation, with which this country is, happily, on a very friendly footing" and "that no measures should be adopted in the Colonies that could be regarded as at variance with the Treaty engagements between China and Great Britain" (B DFA 1994c: 154).

The British government was getting advice from its own officials in China, notably Edward Parker's *Report on the China Question*, which was received by the British government in early 1888. Parker, the British Consul at Kiungchow, speculated that British control in China might actually replace the Manchu dynasty at some point. More immediately, though, with reference to the immigration issue, he judged that "the disturbing vision of unlimited Chinese immigration which appears to affect the imaginations of the Australians and Americans may be reduced on careful examination to comparatively shadowy and unsubstantial dimensions" (B DFA 1994c: 115), for the "extent and danger of Chinese immigration into foreign states have been greatly exaggerated" (121). This was not to say that issues of race did not concern him, as "the question of race prospects . . . [is] a serious matter . . . likely to extend to a propagation of half breeds . . . if China were inclined and powerful enough to insist on unlimited emigration and equal treatment" (121). China's current revival was acknowledged by Parker, since "the Chinese Ministers who were originally dragged to Europe by the Peking Legations have now begun to find out, not only their power abroad, but also the latent power possessed by China in having subjects abroad," in which "the check administered to Russia in 1881 and France in 1885 has given China renewed confidence in her legions" (B DFA 1994c: 127). Consequently, Parker argued that "instead of treating her emigrant subjects as enemies, and supplying grist to the foreign mill, she [China] wishes to gather them into the fold and makes them stones in the foreign querns" (127).

Australian politicians generally felt threatened by China and the Chinese. This was noticed in the United States, where the *New York Times* reported on May 20, 1888, that "the popular movement in Australia against the Chinese has rapidly gained force since the visit of Gen. Wong Yung Ho and his associate Commissioners to the colonies." In Victoria, the government cabled London in spring 1888 about its geocultural fears of the Chinese and their culture, "essentially different from the European civilization . . . they are not only of an alien race but they remain alien" and thereby posing a "peaceful invasion" (Campbell 1971: 68–69) of the Other. In the Victoria parliament, China's international rights were acknowledged by Charles Pearson, on September 12, 1888, with his reference to "the rights of Chinamen of subjects of a foreign and friendly power" (Victoria 1888a: 1059), but were ultimately considered as secondary, to be "set aside . . . in self defence . . . when the existence of the whole [white] community is at stake" (1060). In its

debates, fears over Chinese immigration were recognized as part of a wider Australian dynamic. For Charles Andrews, on December 6, 1888, the Chinese presence was “continental . . . a justifiable scare . . . a universal scare, for it extended to South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, and even New Zealand,” around which the Chinese Immigration Bill would “tell the Imperial authorities and it will tell the Chinese authorities that we do not intend to allow the colony to be invaded by an alien race” (Victoria 1888b: 2359).

In Victoria, some counterarguments were put forth. William Shiels, on December 6, 1888, thought that “because the Chinese are weak, because this colony may expect to receive no vengeance at their hands, it behoves us as an English community . . . to show all the more consideration, all the more mercy, to these people” (Victoria 1888b: 2360). Shiels’s critique was wide-ranging. Like Gladstone in 1840, he dismissed the First Opium War as “one of the most disgraceful and oppressive wars ever undertaken . . . upon the defenceless empire of China . . . forced upon that country, at the point of the bayonet” (2361). However, Shiels considered the freedom of movement, and protection, insisted upon by the West in Article 5 of the 1860 Convention of Beijing, as “one of the most significant clauses” (2361) and something to be honored. As the Chinese Immigration Restrictions Bill was working its way through the Victoria parliament during December 1888, MPs also received the petition of Chinese residents in Melbourne asserting that the measure “is degrading, and, in our opinion, quite unworthy a civilized community; and though we feel ourselves too weak to arrest its progress . . . as subjects of a great and friendly power, we have a right to demand protection and fair treatment” (Victoria 1888b: 2484). Such sentiments meant little to most Australian politicians.

In New South Wales, Premier Henry Parkes stressed geocultural civilizational aspects, telling the British government on March 31, 1888, that “there will be no peace between the two races . . . there can be no interchange of ideas of religion or citizenship, nor can there be intermarriage or social communion between the British and Chinese . . . the Chinese must be restricted from emigrating to any part of Australasia” (NSW 1887–1888: 3790). Consequently, Parkes told the New South Wales parliament, on April 5, 1888, that “I connected my observations with the visits of the Chinese commissioners some months ago, and with other events in other parts of the world [California]” (NSW 1887–1888: 3788). His concern was that “the Chinese Government were privy to what was taking place in the Northern Territory . . . where they might become strong enough to form, in the course of time, a kind of Chinese colony” (3788). The Chief Justice, Sir Julian Salomons, in moving the Exclusion Bill, argued on May 30, 1888, that it revolved around “the question as to whether we are to plant among us a civilization which tends downwards rather than upwards . . . their habits, their modes of life are not desirable, and should not, if it can be avoided, be intro-

duced into this colony" (NSW 1887–1889: 5013–14). Basically, "the deteriorating influence of hordes of Asiatics . . . their system of ethics is quite foreign to us. In no sense are they akin to us . . . they come from a lower civilization" (5014–15). For Andrew Garran, the Chinese were quite simply "an inferior race" (NSW 1887–1888: 5031). O'Sullivan, on July 5, 1888, supported the legislation, admitting that "although our present legislation might be regarded by some people as being harsh towards the Chinese, the great instinct of [racial] self-preservation must compel us to protect ourselves when the Chinese or any other inferior race menaced our civilization" (NSW 1887–1888: 6134).

Chinese immigration was also a highly charged issue for South Australia's Northern Territory. Sparse white settlement had become overshadowed there and to some extent overtaken, as at Darwin, by Chinese settlement. Some argued that the Northern Territory's tropical climate was permanently unsuitable for Europeans, and was only fit for either Chinese or "coolie labor" from British India. Such a prospect filled the neighboring colonies, especially Queensland, with fears of Chinese settlers flooding across the border. In the Queensland parliament, Palmer warned about Chinese emigration on October 26, 1887, worried how "enormous populations of this obnoxious race of people . . . will come in hordes through the Northern Territory of Queensland and South Australia" (Queensland 1887a: 1236). Wider dimensions continually impinged on parliamentary deliberations in South Australia. The attorney-general recognized, on June 28, 1888, that "the matter had become a national question all through Australasia," faced with "so alien a race" (South Australia 1888: 173). Further dimensions were involved since action against the Chinese "might seriously embarrass that country [Britain] to which we must after all depend for protection" (163). As such, Chinese restrictions "had become not only an Australian question, but also one of considerable extent as affecting the relations of Great Britain with the Chinese Empire" (172). Geocultural judgments continued to raise their heads in debates on August 16. For John Cockburn, subsequent premier from 1889 to 1890, "experience proved that the Chinese and Caucasian races would not blend. They were in conflict and the presence of the Chinese gave offence" (South Australia 1888: 647). Moule could merely allude that "we should all regret to see our countrymen descend to the China's style of living," before looking across the Pacific to cite California's "yellow agony" (South Australia 1888: 646) and the welcome precedent of British Columbia's 1884 restrictions on Chinese immigration.

In Queensland, the immigration issue remained highly charged, especially given her semitropical northern zones. Strident voices were apparent in debates during autumn 1888 over the Chinese Immigration Restriction Bill. Basic demographics surrounded parliamentary discussion on September 12. Palmer warned that "we are only 3,500,000 people, and if 3,000,000 or

4,000,000 of Chinese, who would never be missed [in China], were to arrive,” the “result would be that they would inundate us; they would swamp us and leave us no alternative but either to fight the matter out to the bitter end on our own shores or else to succumb” (Queensland 1888: 242). Bluntly, for Sayers, “we want no Chinese here at all. We do not want this country a mixture of Chinamen and whites; we want it for whites alone” (Queensland 1888: 244). For Barlow, “socially, politically, and morally, they [the Chinese] are unfit to associate with us” (Queensland 1888: 247). Fears and stereotypes were present in abundance. Watson alluded to American writers: “As Bret Harte says—‘the ways that are dark, and tricks that are vain, the heathen Chinese is peculiar’” (Queensland 1888: 245), another example of literary images feeding into deliberations over political policy. The debate the following month, on October 18, was little better. Equally damning, and smearing, John Annear felt impelled to point out “that a great proportion of the lunatics in the asylums in Queensland were Chinamen” and that no one should “see their own people fall so low as to compete with Chinamen. Queensland was for white men, and would be kept for white men, and proper government would always remain a white man’s country” (Queensland 1880: 730). Basic images were raised. As Colonial Secretary Morehead saw it, there was “a dread—a terror—which the Anglo-Saxon race seemed to have of the Chinese” (Queensland 1888: 749). Geopolitics lurked, Morehead arguing in the September debate that “we are much nearer to China than the other colonies and more exposed to the Chinese invasion” (Queensland 1888: 243).

Most Australian politicians saw any Chinese military strength as a threat to Australia rather than as a helpful counterbalance against Russia. Admittedly, in the New South Wales parliament, Macintosh emphasized China’s weakness. He asked the prime minister, Henry Parkes, on May 17, 1888, “Would we dare to pass this [Exclusion] bill against the subjects of France or Germany? We know that the Chinese nation cannot resent our action in the same manner as those nations would, so we dare do it in their case” (NSW 1887–1888: 4864). However, like most politicians, Parkes emphasized China’s perceived strength. His speech at Wagga Wagga, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on April 9, 1888, was detailed, alarmist, and widely read. Amid the Great Power rivalries, there was the problem that China was “rapidly creating armies and a formidable navy . . . she has now some of the finest armour-plated ships floating on the seas.” All of this was backed up by the demographic starkness of three and a half million Australian colonists dwarfed by China’s four hundred plus millions. As such, China “represents here a great Power . . . which has risen up to be one of the most formidable Powers in the world.” In citing Napoleon’s supposed comments that with good generals China could conquer the world, Parkes was implying that that moment could be near at hand.

In the Victoria parliament, geopolitics also reared its head in debates on October 18, 1888. Jones warned there was "some danger that the Chinese government might be induced to take action against this colony" (Victoria 1888a: 1605), and if "that action should be the means of bringing about a war between the Chinese Empire and the British empire the consequences might be very serious" (1607). Demographics loomed. China as a "fighting nation of 400,000,000 would be a great danger to Australia. A very small portion of that force would be sufficient to destroy all the Australasian colonies" amid "a long-continued war between powerful empires" (1607). Similarly, Gaunson in noting, "the day was coming, when either China would make war upon England or China would have to make war upon China," asked, "who feared China? Possibly Victoria," and warned if "China . . . sweep down upon the Australian coast . . . had Australia sufficient power to repel an invasion of that character?" (Victoria 1888a: 1617). In military terms, he was sadly impressed by how "China now possessed a more powerful fleet than Great Britain could command in Australian waters; and that, if the Russians and Chinese were to coalesce, the position of Australasia would be disastrous to the extreme" (1618).

A *Melbourne Age* report of October 12, 1888, was also cited by Gaunson, complete with its warnings that "the reasonableness of a Chinese invasion is increased," given that "the Celestial fleet in the Pacific is a more powerful one than the British . . . there is no limiting the mischief of which China might be capable, animated as she is by revengeful feelings of the strongest type towards the Australasian colonies." War rumors were present, with Gaunson reporting that China was telling its citizens to return to China within the next three years, "the length of time the [Qing] Government require to complete their naval and military preparations to enable the Empire to take satisfaction for the breach of its treaty obligations by the English government" (Victoria 1888a: 1619). Indeed, he noted, "I hear from quite another quarter that the Chinese contemplate a large addition to their navy, and that ships are to be constructed in Germany" (1619). One factor in Gaunson's war-torn visions was a letter quoted by him to the Sydney Conference, a letter by Chinese residents of Melbourne that warned the delegates, "a time may come, nay probably will come sooner than is supposed, when the presence and power of China as a great nation will be felt in these seas" (1619).

Similarly, the military threat was raised in the Queensland parliament in the 1888 debates. For Smyth, power considerations lurked in the back of his mind, where "in fact there are only four or five nations in the world in a better position than China" (Queensland 1888: 244). Moreover, "of course the United States can exclude the Chinese. They have a population of about 60,000,000; but our population is under 4,000,000, and we are not prepared to build ironclads [warships] as the United States were" (244). More specifically for Smyth, "we must consider that the Chinese are . . . becoming a warlike

nation . . . last year when in England I saw two Chinese ironclads fitted with Armstrong guns; I saw Chinese sailors on shore, smart active looking fellows—not your ‘cabbages’” (244). Thus, “it is only a matter of time when China will refuse to be bounds by our laws to keep them out of the colony. They will force their way in,” for “there is no colony in the whole group so exposed to an attack from China as Queensland. We are their closest neighbour . . . the threat has already been made that within two years the Chinese will force their way into Australia” (244).

The *Boomerang* reflected and affected such tides of opinion during 1888 being Australia’s “yellow journalism” equivalent to William Randolph Hearst in the United States. Its cartoon “Wake, Australia! Wake” of February 11, 1888, had a maiden representing Australia, asleep as an advancing Chinese man, dagger in mouth, came through her bedroom window. The *Boomerang*’s editor, William Lane, was a prolific and influential journalist, whose twelve-part serial, “White or Yellow? A Story of the Race War of A.D 1908,” ran from March to April 1888 (Evans 1988: 293–98). This was no isolated journalistic quirk; “fiction depicting Chinese invading Australia litter Australian literary history, throwing long ominous shadows from the earliest days” (Yu 1995: 74). Social Darwinism was at play in Lane’s *Boomerang* editorial of April 4, 1888: “It is a *race struggle*, this white-yellow controversy, the clashing of distinct civilisation [cue for Huntington!] The strong hand must win in this as in every struggle for existence. The Chinaman has got to go.” Stibbins’ “The Race War” also appeared in the *Boomerang*’s March 31, 1888, issue. Contemporary domestic discontent was further profiled and perhaps exacerbated by the *Boomerang* profile on June 23, 1888, of the current “passion and shouting for ‘Lynch law’ because Queensland has given sanctuary too long to degraded off-puts of degraded races,” in which white Australians “have seen their civilisation polluted, their social life corrupted and their wages ground to a rice and chop-sticks point . . . they naturally think the time has come for something more serious than a wind-baggy protest.”

Such perceived external and internal Chinese threat had already engendered closer intercolonial cooperation at the Sydney Conference, which met in June 1888 without British representatives, to coordinate local anti-Chinese legislation among the Australian colonies. The *Bulletin* of May 26, 1888, editorial reflected “that growing spirit of growing federation between the peoples of Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania and New Zealand, which it was hoped that the Chinese agitation would expand, cement and solidify.” Lord Carrington, the governor of New South Wales, reported to Colonial Secretary Lord Knutsford on June 14, 1888, that “the [Australian] Colonies have reason to dread a large influx from China,” so much so that “the several Governments feel impelled to legislate immediately to protect their citizens against an invasion which is dreaded because of its results, not only upon the labour market, but upon the social and moral

condition of the people" (B DFA 1994c: 156). Similar calls came from Parkes (NSW 1887–1888: 558–60) and Tasmanian figures (Ely n.d.). Australian calls for the exclusion of the Chinese, as in the case of the United States, were strident. They clearly stated their goals at the Conference: "To prevent their country from being overrun by an alien race, who are incapable of assimilation in the body politics, strangers to our civilization . . . and unfitted for our free institutions, to which their presence in any number would be a source of constant danger" (B DFA 1994c: 157). Though Manning argued in Australian parliamentary debates, on June 28, 1888, that the Conference and Exclusion Bills were acceptable enough, and "we shall not be doing anything in any way insulting to the Chinese nation" (NSW 1887–1888: 5917), in reality they were.

Consequently, Australian delegates resolved that Britain should seek an international agreement excluding from Australia all Chinese people—British subjects included—unless they were officials, travelers, merchants, or students. With regard to the wider external ramifications, delegates weighing the political and commercial interests of the empire and the colonies concluded that China was of little value to them as an export destination. Typical of the Conference leadership, Parkes, the New South Wales premier, told Playford, the South Australia premier, that "for a long time I have had serious apprehensions of the growing designs of China in relation to Australia," but "it would be imprudent to make these apprehensions public . . . the Chinese government is at the back of the present movement of Chinese to your Northern territory . . . with the view of ultimately forming a Chinese colony" (Trainor 1994: 87).

Meanwhile, anti-Chinese riots took place across Australia (Donegan and Evans 2001). In Queensland, the mob orator, John Potts, organized about eighty demonstrations amid a barnstorming tour of twenty-nine towns and calls for the establishment of local anti-Chinese leagues. British responses were revealing, responding to Australian restiveness, but the Colonial Office told Walsham, "in order not to wound the susceptibilities of China, the stipulations contained in these Articles avoid all [explicit] mention of the exclusion of Chinese from Australia" (B DFA 1994c: 159). As restrictive legislation came into force across Australia, the Queensland government told London that "what is aimed at, therefore, is no indignity to the Chinese or the Chinese Empire," but it justified such restrictions as being enacted to avoid Australia being "degraded to the level of Chinese civilization" (B DFA 1994c: 163).

As the immediate immigration furor died down, longer-term concerns about internal and external Chinese presence remained, and indeed constituted, one of the factors driving toward the setting up of an Australian federation. The *Melbourne Punch* cartoon on May 10, 1888, "The Only Way," showed the Australian colonies using a "Federation" lever to roll away the

looming boulder of the “Chinese Pest.” Within Australia, the colonies did huddle closer together, with Charles Kingston telling the South Australia parliament, on June 28, 1888, that an intercontinental Australian “Conference was rendered necessary . . . by the Chinese ambassador having interfered in the matter” (South Australia 1888: 174). It was this effect that General James Edwards, commanding at Hong Kong, perhaps had in mind when he wrote to New South Wales’s Prime Minister Henry Parkes in 1890, that “a portion of the Chinese imperial Squadron is now at anchor under my windows, consisting of two magnificent ironclads of the newest type, and four very fine and heavily-armed cruisers, Admiral Ting in command,” to whom “I have been urging him strongly to take his fleet and show his flag in foreign ports, especially in Australia . . . Would not this help your Federation?” (J. Edwards 1890).

In addition, the Australian colonies were looking to the United States. The *Boomerang*, on May 26, 1888, disillusioned with Britain, looked across the Pacific to potential American support where “the Pacific is theirs as well as ours, they know the yellow hordes as we know it; Australia can never be isolated or beaten down while the stronger nation [the United States] under the sun is her near and natural ally.” British politicians were aware of these trans-Pacific sentiments at play between Australia and North America. On June 22, 1888, Salisbury told Walsham, the British Minister at Beijing, “the recent conclusion of a Treaty between China and the United States of America, for the exclusion of labourers from China . . . increased the feeling in Australia in favour of more stringent Regulations in the Colonies of that Continent” (B DFA 1994c: 153).

AMERICAN SOCIAL DARWINISM AND ANTI-IMMIGRATION POLITICS

In the United States, James Whitney’s *The Chinese and the Chinese Question* presented a wide-ranging synthesis in 1880 of perceived internal and external threats to the West posed by China. Whitney started by immediately asserting that “the Chinese problem . . . of the migration of races” was one where “in its political, social, industrial and commercial bearings upon the future of our country it is of broader import than any other that has ever engaged the attention of the American people . . . Chinese immigration is full of danger to our country, to our institutions, and to our people” (1880: 1). The image of the Chinese mass was present, “silent and persistent . . . ants that destroy the strongest timbers while the householder sleeps” (137). Around the Pacific, “the only outlet, therefore for the population of China is to the western, to Australasia, and to the distant coasts of America . . . where the presence of the Asiatics has already produced mischief and discontent,” and where “the white man has gone to the wall in competition with the Asi-

atic" (35, 49). An international racial fracture line was present: "On our latest territory [California] we are met by those same Chinese . . . the two races have met, and one or the other must give way . . . they will not mingle, they cannot fuse" (Whitney 1880: 87).

Apocalyptic literature flourished, especially on the Pacific Coast. In Per-ton Dooner's *Last Days of the Republic*, immigration was a prelude to an invasion bringing about imperial Chinese control over American political, cultural, and moral institutions. For Dooner, China's awakening, coupled with migration, had "combined the circumstances that promised the realization of this [Chinese] national dream . . . to rule the World . . . a dogma, a creed, a holy tradition of China" (1880: 22). Consequently, "the very name of the United States of America was thus blotted from the record of nations . . . the Temple of Liberty had crumbled; and above its ruins was reared the colossal fabric of barbaric splendour known as the Western Empire of His August Majesty, the Emperor of China and Ruler of All Lands" (257). Robert Wolter's *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the Year A.D. 1899*, published in San Francisco, put "fiendish" (1882: 65) invasion fears closer in time.

Events also seemed to be converging for De Gobineau in a most disquieting way as the 1880s beckoned. He had already admitted in a letter, on July 11, 1879, that "the flood gates to the vast human hordes that we find so ill at ease in China" were opening up with "an avalanche of Chinese . . . The United States, which fears a yellow invasion from the direction of California, will gain little from this. Europe will lose everything" (Biddiss 1970: 252). This was the context for De Gobineau's 1881 essay "Events in Asia," where he publicly warned, "My attention is seized by the rapidly growing dangers in Asia, which are going to explode on Europe" (1881: 246). For him, the ongoing threat of Chinese migration across the Pacific was still present, facilitating the intermixture of races, "with all the violence, upheaval and misery that this will inevitably entail" (247). The problem for him was racial but also economic, where, around the Pacific, "the Chinaman . . . has become an object of horror and fear, because people do not know how to answer the industry, applications, persistence and, ultimately, the unparalleled cheapness of his labour" (242). As such, "the Americans fear the Chinese invasion, from which not even the Pacific can protect them" (243). The threat was in all directions, with British India's eastern borders also "being swamped by Chinese immigrants" (243).

In the United States, one practical upshot of China's rising international profile was the abrogation of the 1868 Burlingame Treaty and the implementation of the 1880 Treaty Regulating Immigration from China. As negotiated by George Seward, this gave the U.S. government the right to modify immigration conditions in whatever ways it thought fit. Amid such rising official restrictions, the Chinese government withdrew the Chinese Educational

Mission in June 1881, despite the protests of diplomats like Huang Zunxian (W. Hung 1955). The subsequent 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was draconian. It reflected sentiments that had been expressed in the Senate by figures like Senator John Jones of Nevada, on March 9, 1882, that “our own race may be kept intact and uncontaminated, and that our own civilization may be preserved in its integrity” (Jones 1882: 4) from “this inferior Chinese race” (6). Under its Article 1, all Chinese laborers were banned from entry, and under Article 14 no Chinese was to be allowed citizenship. Future U.S. president Woodrow Wilson’s interpretation of all this was that “Chinese laborers had poured in . . . Caucasian laborers . . . found themselves being steadily crowded out” by “Orientals, who, with their yellow skin and strange debasing habits of life, seemed to them hardly fellow men at all, but evil spirits” (Wilson 1902: 3.186). In his eyes, “negotiation with China had been tried, but she had refused to agree to the exclusion of her people by her own act and consent; and an end was at last made of the matter by the Act” (3.186).

Chinese diplomats, hampered by conflict with France over Vietnam, nevertheless felt insulted and expressed their concerns over the measure (Liu 2003). As Consul-General at San Francisco from 1882–1885, Huang Zunxian was bitter in his poem “Expulsion of the Immigrants,” which is revealing at various levels. As an individual, Huang cried, “Who can say our fellow men have not met an inhuman fate, / In the end oppressed by another race?” (Arkush and Lee 1989: 62). From an American perspective, it was a situation where “a thousand mouths keep up their clamour, / Ten thousand eyes, glare, burning with hate. / Signing names, the Americans send up a dozen petitions; / Begging their rulers to reconsider” (63). From the Chinese point of view, “Alas! What crime have our people committed, / That they suffer this calamity in our nation’s fortunes? / Five thousand years since the Yellow Emperor, / Our country today is exceedingly weak” (61–62). At the international level, he wondered, “Suddenly the order of exile comes down / Though I fear this breaks our treaties . . . the nation’s laws and international relations / Are all abandoned in some high tower” (63, 64). American power was on the rise, “the American eagle strides the heavens soaring / With half the glove clutched in his claw” (64). Conversely, China’s image had been damaged: “Great China and the race of Han / Have now become as a joke to other races / . . . It would be hard to wash this shame clean” (65). However, he concluded with the line, “When will China’s territory expand again?” (65).

Another Chinese observer of the Chinese Exclusion Act was “Richard” Lee Yan Phou (A. Ling 2002), one of Yung Wing’s Chinese Educational Mission students in the United States. Five years on from the passage of the legislation, Lee’s graduation address at Yale University was vehement about how “the torrents of hatred and abuse which have periodically swept over the Chinese industrial class in America had their sources in the early California days” (1887: 269). The passage of the 1882 Exclusion Act was denounced: “The

catastrophe was too terrible, and has made too deep an impression to be easily forgotten . . . the Chinese will not fail to keep the sad record of faith unkept, of persecution . . . of rights violated without redress" (269). The whole process was a bitter one for Lee: "From being an economic question, the expulsion of the Chinese laborers was made a political question. Disinterested demagogues easily won mob-favor" at the local level, and while "you would suppose that Congress at least would be just and dispassionate . . . it, too, was borne along the waves of prejudice. In every such conflict might is right; the weakest goes to the wall" (271). The Chinese community was too weak within the United States to protect itself, and China was too weak within the international system to protect its countrymen in the United States. The consequences were apparent: "By passing a discriminating law against an already persecuted class, the Central Government yielded to the demands of the mob," and "to that extent countenanced its violence and lawlessness. The Anti-Chinese Act is a cause of all the outrages and massacres that have been since committed" (272) against the Chinese communities in the United States.

Some American voices were raised against the new immigration barriers being raised in 1882, notably New England Republicans like the Connecticut Senators Joseph Hawley, Orville Platt, and George Hoar (Cohn and Gee 2003). In the Senate, Hoar compared rising anti-Chinese sentiments to anti-Semitism, while Hawley compared them to the racist theories used to justify slavery. It is worth noting how "the Yung Wing-Twichell connection was a very strong influence on Hawley" (Cohn and Gee 2003: 10). Despite having negotiated the initial enabling Treaty of 1880, George Seward acknowledged that "the highest officials of the [Qing] Empire feel keenly the fact that we despise their people, and impose upon them restrictions which we do not place upon others," for "they are proud of their stock and of their country, as they have much right to be, and, like Shakespeare's Jew, they will resent unfriendliness" (1882: 575). In New York, the Reverend James Brand told the American Missionary Association, "I plead for China because of the wrongs she has suffered at nominally Christian hands, and especially at the hands of the United States government," in which "the anti-Chinese bill is a violation of treaty, a violation of the spirit of impartial justice to foreigners . . . China must be affronted" (1882: 381–82). The draconian 1882 legislation was, in Seward's eyes, "a policy . . . at variance with the practices of civilized states generally, and which will militate against real interests on our own soil and the interests of our people engaged in commerce. We have yielded to the cry from the sand-lots" (577). In retrospect, Cohn and Lee considered its effects "devastating" (2003: 2).

However, despite such pleas and perhaps exacerbated by the Chinese Exclusion Act, anti-Chinese attacks continued, peaking in 1885 with assaults along the Pacific coast at Seattle, Tacoma, and Wyoming in the "forgotten

war against Chinese Americans” (Pfaelzer 2007). Outraged Chinese migrants sent a *Memorial* on September 18, 1885, to their consul in New York, detailing the atrocities and wondering how the Chinese, “the subjects of a nation entitled by treaty to the rights and privileges of the most favoured nation could, in a country so highly civilized like this [the United States], so unexpectedly suffer the cruelty and wrong of being unjustly out to death” (Wu 1972: 159). Again this was something of an international affair, as retaliatory action was threatened in China against Americans, a Chinese investigation team was sent out to the United States, and some financial compensation was obtained from the American government. Zhang Yinhuan, China’s Minister to the United States, could tell San Francisco’s Chinese community, on his arrival on April 10, 1886, that “I have received Imperial orders to come all this way to protect Chinese merchants and people,” in a situation where the Americans “plotted to expel the Chinese. Recently they have been burning, pillaging, robbing, and killing. Their vicious cruelty is unbearable” (Arkush and Lee 1993: 73). The only legislative change was the passage of the 1888 Scott Act, which further restricted Chinese entry, canceling certificates already held by Chinese laborers.

Similar trends were apparent elsewhere in North America, in adjacent “white” Canada. Canadian debates were conducted in a comparative vein. John Macdonald, the Canadian Prime Minister, told his parliament on May 12, 1882, that “I share very much the feeling of the people of the United States, and the Australian colonies, against a Mongolian or Chinese population in our country,” for the Chinese were “an inferior race . . . a foreign and alien race” (Canada 1882: 1477). They were seen as a threat in varied ways, the “John Chinaman” verses of 1886 lamenting, “No good you’ve wrought but ill, John / In this once happy place. / You’ve come like hordes of locusts, John / And spread o-er all the land. . . . And vengeance sure is coming, John, / If here you longer stay, / Be warned and pack your baskets, John / And quickly get away” (Roy 1989: 64). The outcome of such Canadian debates was similar, namely, closing the doors with the 1885 Chinese Immigration Act. In turn, Canadian legislation brought Chinese diplomatic protests to London. Such cross-Pacific perceptions were facilitated by trade and commercial flow, and movement of white traders and migrants between Australasia and North America. All this reflected the “Great White Walls” (C. Price 1974) that were being erected around the Pacific Rim in Australia, New Zealand, California, and Canada.

By that time, in the United States, images of the Chinese had long since gone from Benjamin Franklin’s wise Oriental. Instead it was the lurid and rather dangerous Chinatown, full of opium dens and strange “unmentionable” practices that had become established, where “the slant-eyed villain always ‘insidious’ or ‘sinister’ was second only to the savage of the American West as a standard of adventure fiction” (R. A. Hart 1976: 17). In turn, such “Yellow

Peril theories provided a more scholarly type of dread—based on population statistics, their projection, and their power potential should China awake and pull itself together,” against which “there was some comfort in ‘Darwinism’ . . . applied to the struggle of men in society and relations in the world. By the 1890s they had become a popular method of explaining international relations” (17), and for legitimating Western white power on and across the Pacific. Darwinian undertones informed American domestic and foreign policy, part of the wider “rising tide” (Lauren 1989: 44–75) of racial fears that were widespread. The Reverend Lee wrote in the *Portland Daily News*, on February 13, 1886, that as “a thoughtful Christian living on the Pacific Coast” he felt in “the great struggle now before us” that “the Chinese must go,” given that “the Chinese are unclean and immoral . . . unclean and immoral stench of Chinese corruption . . . the sink of pagan abominations.” In Washington Territory, Eugene Semple’s *Governor’s Report* of 1887 bluntly judged that “the antagonisms between the Americans and the Chinese are inherent and incurable,” for “nowhere in the nature of the two races can be found anything in common, wherever they meet on the surface of the earth, the question must be which will prevail over the other” (Wynne 1978: 295).

Typical of this amalgam of Social Darwinism, Christian exclusivism, and imperial legitimization was the Reverend Josiah Strong’s *Our Country*: “God . . . preparing in our Anglo-Saxon civilization the die to which to stamp the peoples of the earth . . . the highest civilization” (1885: 165) manifested in America. The Orient was lifeless in its own right, “the dry bones of Asia . . . her ribs of death . . . to be Christianized” (14). Racial imagery was explicit in this widely read book: “God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world’s future . . . a new stage of its history—the *final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled*” (174–75). In a chilling precursor to subsequent twentieth-century events, he concluded, “And can any one doubt that the results of this competition of races will be the survival of the fittest? . . . God’s plan to people the world with better and finer material? . . . the extinction of inferior races before the advancing Anglo-Saxon . . . God’s final and complete solution of the dark problem of heathenism among many inferior peoples” (175, 177). This provided the ideological underpinning for American political projection, imperialism in the Orient.

Union organizations were agitated over the Chinese question. For the San Francisco-based Working Men’s Party of California, there was “a great danger which seems to us imminent . . . this heathen invasion which so plainly threatened the destruction of the white population of the coast . . . the Chinese must go” (1888: 2–3). Thomas Magee’s tract *China’s Menace to the World* was written for the Knights of Labor. Magee argued, “outside of China, beyond all questions, the Chinese must find room for themselves . . . the world, in its turn, may build an anti-Chinese legal wall against the

entrance of her innumerable industrial armies,” but “the world does not know much about China yet . . . she is emerging into the daylight of progress, and toward an activity such as the modern world has never seen . . . with advantages in her favor that cannot well be surpassed” (1890: 9). Major General James Wilson acknowledged that “China as a country has made substantial progress” since the 1860s and that “they are now so numerous and so vital that any race brought in close contact with them must either dominate them or become swallowed up like drops of rain by the sea” (1888: 409). In Wilson’s mind, “the Marquis Tsang [Zeng Jize] . . . says China is awakening from the slumber of ages . . . there is some truth in this” (430), unfortunately for him.

The Qing Empire was ready to take offense over the treatment of its citizens. As John Young put it, “We have . . . when the Exclusion Bill was passed, gone out of our way to offend a nation with whom we were on terms of peculiar friendship, with abuse” (1890: 196), by “an appeal to that curious phase of political emotional insanity supposed to pervade the Pacific States in regard to the Chinese” (199), bringing with it “the insult to China implied in a legislative measure” (200). In China, the Zongli Yamen called the immigration issue “a Gordian knot” (Tsai 1985: 81) in Sino-American relations. Charles Denby’s recollections of his time as American Minister to China from 1885 to 1898 were that “I rarely went to the [Zongli] Yamen, to see Li Hung Chang [Li Hongzhang], that I was not told that we had violated our [earlier Burlingame-derived] treaties” (1906: 2.99). Denby acknowledged that “they hate us almost universally” (2.89) and that Western intrusions within China had gone too far. However, he was adamant on the need for curbing Chinese emigration across the Pacific. In his words, “the fight is a racial one” (107) in which the “the enormous number of the Chinese” (111) represented “a permanent menace to our civilization . . . they resist everything which pertains to good government, public hygiene . . . the Pacific slope would be submerged, and its civilization would be wrecked. The ‘yellow peril’ would attack our institutions” (110–11).

Paradoxically, American internal restrictions on Chinese immigration went hand in hand with its external diplomatic support for China’s attempts to avoid partition at the hands of European Powers. For Hyde Clarke, despite “the irritation in China against the [humiliating] treatment of Chinamen in California and Australia . . . China may submit to restrictions of immigration in California, if she has the assurance of support from the [United] States for the integrity of her empire” (1890: 279). However, the further tightening of immigration curbs did impact on U.S.-China diplomatic relations. For Paulsen, strict American enforcement of its Exclusion Acts were “the most important issue” (1971: 457) between China and the United States during 1892–1904.

At the 1893 World Parliament of Religions, John Barrows introduced Pung Kwang Yu, from the Chinese Legation in Washington, “as the representative of an empire toward which America had not been just” (Barrows

1893: 112–13). Not surprisingly, this Chinese representative delicately raised race relations issues: "I have a favour to ask of all the religious people of America, and that is that they will, hereafter treat all my countrymen just as they have treated me . . . the majority of my countrymen in this country are honest and law-abiding" (Barrows 1893: 374) and did not deserve the ongoing discrimination that had been their lot. Although Barrows announced he would pass this plea on to the government, hoping the Chinese Exclusion Act would be reversed, instead it was tightened, immigration being prohibited for another ten years under Article 1 of the 1894 treaty. Californians were vociferous on this issue. Charles Felton told his fellow senators, on April 21, 1892, that "the question is political, social and economic. It is a question of civilization, and we of the Pacific coast would preserve ours, the Western type, and not submit to the Eastern" (Felton 1892: 3). Similarly, Samuel Hilborn asserted in the House of Representatives, on October 14, 1893, that the Chinese "could overrun us like a plague of locusts" (Hilborn 1893: 4), that "it is a contest between two civilizations—the oriental civilization (if it can be called that) and our own" (3). Geoculture was again in play.

Yet American concerns over China were not just restricted to its own Pacific coast; they went out into the Pacific Ocean. One voice was that of Rear Admiral Alfred Mahan, rapidly emerging as a leading and influential geopolitical figure in the 1890s and a confidante of politicians like Theodore Roosevelt. In a letter to the *New York Times* on January 30, 1893, Mahan talked of climactic encounters between the West and the Orient: The day was approaching "when the vast mass of China—now inert—might yield to one of those impulses which in the past buried civilization under a wave of barbaric invasion . . . [to] burst her barriers eastwards as well as westwards, toward the Pacific." There, he wondered if Hawaii "shall in the future be an outpost of European civilization or of the comparative barbarism of China." Underpinning this was the basic power potential of China, its size, population, and resources—typified by Lorrin Thurston, a member of the Provisional Government of Hawaii, asking when "China wakes up to the possibilities of her military, manufacturing and commercial powers, what living man can predict the results or where the end will be?" (1895: 455).

RUSSIAN RESPONSES TO CHINA

In Russia, China became a high-profile issue for policy makers and strategists in the 1880s. Commentators were picking up on the reassertion of Qing power in Central Asia. At the Russian capital, Zeng Zize negotiated the return of Kulja, reversing the losses seen in the Treaty of Livadia two years before (I. Hsu 1965). The Russian retreat from its hold on the Ili Valley was in part due to the retaking of Xinjiang by Zuo Zongtang, which showed a Chinese military capability able to pose a further threat to the Russian borderlands. Indeed,

Zuo was outraged over the initial Chinese concessions to Russia in 1879, advising the court that “we shall first confront them [the Russians] with arguments . . . and then settle it on the battlefields” (I. Hsu 1980: 93). Chinese forces were mobilized along the coast, in Manchuria, and above all in Xinjiang, ready to take the offensive into Ili and, indeed, elsewhere onto Russian soil. The Shanghai Press published *China and Russia: Important Memorial to the Throne, Warlike Attitude of China*, a translation of widely read war-leaning advice circulating at the imperial court from Zhang Zhidong (Shanghai Courier 1880). In it Zhang argued that “military preparations must be made, whether the treaty can be re-negotiated or not” (I. Hsu 1965: 72). From his vantage point at China’s Imperial Maritime Custom Service, Robert Hart was not too impressed by China’s actual power; reckoning on September 26, 1880, that “the outlook here is very serious. If Russia attempts coercion, China will fight, and, if not materially aided by foreigners, will be thrashed,” for China was “ignorant of Russia’s strength and full of conceited belief in their own superiority” (1976: 339). Yet China had the greater numbers. IR constructivism is applicable. The “spirited pronouncements of the Chinese war advocates and the confidence they manifested created the unmistakable picture of a country determined to defend its territory and honour,” and, crucially and instrumentally, “such an image could not have failed to make an impression on the Russian legation in Peking and the government in St. Petersburg” (I. Hsu 1965: 190). Zuo Zongtang was clear on this to the Zongli Yamen on August 11, 1880: “If officers on the frontiers can hold firm, our envoy may have something to lean on and may thus be enabled to speak a few more strong words” (I. Hsu 1965: 97).

Russian figures had been well aware of this emerging Chinese military credibility, and that the Chinese knew of this. This was shown clearly in the correspondence between Aleksandr Zhomini, senior counsellor at the Russian Foreign Ministry, and N. K. Giers, effectively the Russian foreign minister. They were closely involved in the negotiations with Zeng Zize in Saint Petersburg. Zhomini recognized, on October 12, 1880, “il n’y a plus d’illusions à se faire sur ces messieurs les Chinois. Ils sont très fiers [proud] et très au courant de la politique général” (Jomini and Giers 1959: 121). With such sensitivities, “dans tous cas, c’est un devoir de songer à l’avenir [the future] qui deviant très menaçant pour nous dans ces contrées et le sera de plus en plus à mesure que les Chinoise progresseront dans leur préparatifs militaires” and for which “il faut absolument avoir des forces navales *défensives* à Vladivostok et asseoir notre situation militaire sur toute la frontière sibérienne” (122) against China. Giers’ lament to Zhomini, on October 18, 1880, was that “plus nous nous montrerons conciliants et polis envers lui—plus il [Zeng] deviendra arrogant” (Jomini and Giers 1959: 154), based on Zeng’s awareness of China’s relative strength and Russia’s relative weakness as they faced each other along their frontiers. China’s revival was apparent and worrying for

Zhomini, who wrote on October 25, 1880: "Nous ne pouvons pas nous faire d'illusion sure les Chinois. Ils sont entrés dans le mouvement politique général et y apporteront la finesse qui les caractérises" (Jomini and Giers 1959: 130). Geopolitics came into the equation for Zhomini, shaping Russia and "notre immense frontière, vis-à-vis de voisins [neighbours] qui sortent peu à peu de leur isolement . . . nous n'aurons avec la Chine qu'une paix précaire. Il faudra continuer à nous metre en défense" against a possible Chinese military offensive (130).

Consequently, at Saint Petersburg, the Minister of War, Dmitrii Mil-iukin, worried in 1881 about this Chinese recovery, that "China is already not what it was [i.e. weak] fifteen years ago and who knows what it will be fifteen years hence" (Paine 1996: 178). Zeng Zize had some military credibility to bargain with—an ability to treat the prospects of war with some equanimity—telling the Russians, "The Chinese can endure difficulties imposed by others and work long hours. Even if China were not to win the first battle, as China is the largest country [in the world], were it to go on for a decade or more, they could still endure it" (Paine 1996: 160). The 1881 Treaty of Saint Petersburg, which returned the Ili Valley to China, was "generally considered a Chinese diplomatic victory" (I. Hsu 1980: 96), though its very success perhaps encouraged not only Chinese self-confidence but also a degree of conservative chauvinistic complacency.

Russian opinion remained split over China. Some figures within the Russian establishment were wary of China's strength. Within the Russian General Staff, Colonel Ia. F. Barabash sounded a concerned note in an 1882 memorandum, wondering "when [Chinese] Manchurian troops are finally reorganized, rearmed, and sufficiently trained in the European manner. This time is not far off . . . we shall acquire an adversary deserving serious attention, especially since it will share a common frontier with us" (Bilof 1982: 70). *Vostochniki* (Asianists) like Prince Esper Ukhtomski argued for Russia's shared Oriental affinities with China and the East, a perspective used to argue that Russian expansionism was morally better than the expansionism of other Western powers (Oye 2001: 42–60). However, more prevalent was a relatively overt "conquistador imperialism" (21–40), which considered China ripe for conquest and in which "Przhevalsky made a particularly strong impression on the Russian psyche" (40). In 1883, Przhevalsky still dismissed any Chinese modernization, even "if China could actually produce ordnances by the thousands and modern rifles by their millions and if China could actually supply every last one of its soldiers" (Bilof 1982: 71). Przhevalsky still felt it would not change anything: "Those soldiers would still remain the same opium smokers, the same unending, unenergetic and immoral people, the same cowards, as before" (71). Przhevalsky's secret memorandum to the General Staff in 1886, *New Thoughts about War with China*, was confident on Russian troops marching "like a threatening cloud" (Oye 2001: 33–34) across the Gobi to Beijing,

and with further territorial gains to be made in Xinjiang, Mongolia, and around the Amur. Sympathies with De Gobineau's classifications of racial superiority and with Social Darwinism led Przhevalsky to consider in 1888 that "the Chinese people are a nation long past its prime" (Oye 2001: 35).

Amid the swirl of diplomacy and military planning, the Qing Empire had been successfully accelerating migration into Manchuria in 1878 as a way of strategically anchoring the region to China, in contrast to Russia's comparative failures in its own frontier zones, "and this became an important deterrent to Russian expansion" (Paine 1996: 181). Such Sinification spilled over to some extent into the Amur basin that had been lost to Russia only twenty years before. Moreover, the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway brought an "overflowing of the Chinese into Siberia" (Lansdell 1882: 713–14), and after 1878 the Chinese "trickle became a torrent" (Stephan 1994: 71) in the Russian Far East. By 1882 there were around 14,500 Chinese facing 41,500 Russians in the Amur region, a growth sparking forced expulsions of Chinese after 1886. Francis Younghusband's visit to the border area in 1886 had him noticing on the one hand "the Chinese colonist on their side of the border" but on the other hand how "the Russians want population" and where "Colonel Sokolowski told me that his government were extremely anxious to have all eastern Siberia colonised by Russians" (Younghusband 1896: 40). Edward Parker's official *Report on the Chinese Question*, of December 15, 1888, reckoned that "the Russians are in a peculiar position; the territory of Primorsk, filched from the Chinese in 1860, is sparsely inhabited, and the Cossacks cannot arrive by sea so quickly as the Chinese settlers by land," so "it is very doubtful, indeed, whether the Russians in that part of the world do not fear the Chinese as much as the Chinese do the Russians" (B DFA 1994c: 127). Perceptions of a "China threat" were reflected in the apocalyptic warning of Vladimir Solovev, who saw China as "an alien, hostile world that threatens us more and more . . . a dark cloud approaching from the Far East" (Oye 2001: 83). Like Przhevalsky, Solovev had a low opinion of Chinese culture. Solovev's 1890 tract *Kitai i Evropa* ("China and Europe") reckoned that China "has given the world neither a single important idea nor any priceless creations. The Chinese nation may be big but it is not great" (Oye 2001: 83; see also Simons 1999) in terms of civilizational merit.

Consequently, Russian military planners worked on various military scenarios during the 1880s involving demographic factors around the numerical build-up of Chinese troops in the region. Russian strategists believed, perhaps rightly, that their relative qualitative and technological edge over the Chinese would enable Russian victory even when outnumbered five to one. However, the build-up, in 1882 to 1887, of China's Manchurian forces had meant they could outnumber the Russian forces about 200,000 to 20,000, a Chinese ten-to-one superiority that Barabash considered too high a ratio for Russia to handle, with the Far Eastern Ussuri region being particularly vul-

nerable. China's demographic weight continued to loom large for Russians. As China slid into war with Japan, the *Vestnik Evropy* warned its Russian readers in September 1894 that "with its innumerable masses China gravely threatens Europe . . . the sooner the European nations are delivered from this nightmare, the better" (Oye 2001: 121). Vladivostok's overall population virtually doubled from 14,466 in 1890 to 28,933 in 1897, but the Chinese element more than tripled, from 4,193 to 12,577.

AN ANGLO-CHINESE ALLIANCE?

Perceptions of the Chinese revival, and bad relations with Russia, made China a potential ally for Britain, amid Britain's own Great Game rivalry with Russia. Robert Hart had been very direct there in his advice to Lord Salisbury, on September 27, 1885: "My knowledge of China has convinced me of two things . . . China will very soon be a very powerful state" and "the safety of England's Indian Empire will eventually hinge upon England's relations with China" (B DFA 1994b: 305). For Hart, "change is slowly but surely transforming China, and in a few years the Chinese army and navy, drawn from a hardy and tractable population of 300,000,000 people" and "backed by the resources of provinces abounding in wealth of every description, [China] will be formidable beyond belief" (305). The recent Franco-China war was testimony to China's "feeling of growing strength" (306). Amid proposals for guaranteeing each other's territories, pledging military assistance to the other if attacked, exchange stationing of troops, training for China's fledgling navy, and contingency planning, Hart argued that "nothing would serve the interests of both England and China better than such an alliance," which "would be effective. England and China acting together will render Russia's aims in Asia hopeless" (306).

In Australia there were widespread, and worried, assumptions on such Anglo-Chinese convergence. Hodgkinson reckoned that "the very existence of the Imperial [British] Empire depended to a great extent upon their preserving friendly relations with the Chinese Empire" (Queensland 1888: 723). The reason for this was that in any future struggle with Russia, "the only chance that Great Britain had of dealing a blow at Russia would be through the aid of the Chinese" (723). In particular, "an attack by Russia upon India must be met by the assistance of the Chinese," and "it was for that purpose that European officers had been sent to China, and vessels had been built with a view of cultivating intimate relations between the Imperial Government [in London] and the Chinese" (723). Britain considered that Chinese sensibilities were important: "It was necessary to cultivate China as a counterbalance to the Russian threat to British India" (Trainor 1994: 85).

While no formal public alliance was ever concluded, and Salisbury seems to have advised Hart not to push his proposals, there was a widespread belief

in Britain and Europe that an agreement probably had been forged (Kiernan 1970: 304–05). The *Asiatic Quarterly Review* saw the Foreign Office as considering “the certainty of a Chinese alliance,” though “too delicate to mention” (1892). For Alexander Michie, British India and China had the same neighboring geographical enemy—Russia; “so obvious indeed is this, that an alliance, offensive and defensive between the two empires . . . the idea seems more or less to have taken possession of British statesmen and even soldiers” (1892: 2). Twelve months later, Michie felt “it is no longer a speculative opinion that the interests of the two greatest human aggregations on the earth are, for practical political purposes identical” (1893: 278), with a shared geopolitical imperative in blocking Russia. Demetrius Boulger saw it, in 1893, as a “tacit understanding between the two great empires of England and China in Asia, which must in time constitute an effective alliance against any common danger in that continent, and the aggressive policy of Russia” (1900c: 506). Henry Norman’s widely read *The Peoples and Politics of the Far East* recognized existing images in the West of “China as the great bulwark in Asia against the Russian advance, and suggestions of an Anglo-Chinese alliance were the commonplaces of diplomatic conversation” (1895: 261) in the early 1890s. This was behind Colonel Dmitrii Putiata’s 1895 comment to the Russian General Staff that, “left to its own devices, China will never be a dangerous neighbor to Russia. Under the charge of foreign agents, furnished with their weapons, instructors and strategic plans, in league with the West—for this kind of China we would have to be on our guard” (Oye 2000: 60).

China’s military and diplomatic presence seemed to be making her an effective partner for Britain. As to the actual merit and weight of an Anglo-Chinese alliance, Michie was qualified, recognizing that “the excellent raw material of [China’s] armies strikes every observer” (1892: 11), given her “muscular population” (12). Current diplomacy continued to give China some credibility in discussions of international politics. Boulger reckoned, on April 28, 1893, that “as China has now fairly taken her place in the family of nations . . . circumstances are bringing every day more clearly into play the important part that China must play in the changes that have become imminent in Asia, and that will affect the security of our position and empire in that continent” (1900c, preface). Consequently, “a good understanding with China should be the first article of our eastern policy, for not only in Central Asia [against Russia], but also in Indo-China [against France] . . . her interests coincide with ours and furnish the sound basis of a fruitful alliance” (preface). Michie also commented on “a noteworthy reawakening of China during the past twelve months,” with China pushing back into the Pamirs and Manchuria, and blocking French dismemberment of Siam, where “China showed her teeth and brought up unpleasant reminders of the campaign of 1884–85” (1893: 278) with France.

Elsewhere, the Greek-born American writer Lafcadio Hearn’s residence in Japan led to him becoming a regular and prolific interpreter of the East. At

the start of 1894, Hearn speculated on the potential of China, where "the future is for the Far East—not for the Far West. At least I believe so as far as China is concerned" (1894). As to China's military power, Hearn saw the country as "preparing herself for war. Threatened by Russia she [China] found a friend in England. England is pledged to help China against Russia. China is pledged in return to help England to defend India against Russia." On the ground, "English officers are teaching the military arts of the West to China. Chinese factories are already manufacturing the best kind of rifles. The Chinese can call out 1,200,000 soldiers already," and "when these shall have all been armed and disciplined like Western troops, no power dare attack China" (1894). Similarly, for General A. MacMahon, "China within quite recent times has achieved a remarkable position the great strength of which . . . she fully realises . . . she has the means of increasing enormously the number of her trained soldiers, the supply of which is practically inexhaustible" (1894: 284), and which was "proof of the potentialities of China as a belligerent nation" (285). Chinese diplomatic successes were noted vis-à-vis Russia in the Pamirs, Britain in Burma, and France in Siam, who "consequently have been obliged to modify their diplomacy when dealing with the Celestials" (285) and "obliged to recognise the power of a country they had hitherto treated as dead, but which as the Marquis [Zeng Jize] proves, was only sleeping" (286). Given her awakening, "our diplomatists therefore should earnestly strive to keep on good terms with China" (287), since given her "fighting capacity . . . it is far better for us to have her as a friend than as an enemy" (285). Others were more taken with the prospect of China as an enemy.

THE "MARCH OF THE MONGOL" AND "THE CHINESE QUESTION"

A trenchant strong observer of China and the Chinese was Rudyard Kipling, the Apostle of Empire, who referred to what he called "The Chinese Question" (1900: 1.247, 1.267) at various points in his travels through the Pacific region in 1889. Kipling was more analytical in his concerns over the structural effects of "the stimulants of the West" (1.294), for "what will happen when China really wakes up . . . starts another line of imperial Yellow Flag immigrant steamers, and really works and controls her own gun-factories and arsenals?" (1.294–5). In part, Kipling was emotive, "frightened" (1.246) at Hong Kong and "afraid" (1.306) at Canton of the Chinese themselves. In his own words, "I hate Chinamen" (1.304). He called the Chinese "yellow devils" at Hong Kong (1.310) and Portland (2.35), a "people . . . so many and so unhuman" (1.305) at Canton, wrapped up in images of the "swarming Chinamen" (1.255) at Singapore. Military imagery was forthcoming at Penang, where, "I found a large army of Chinese . . . encamped in spacious streets and houses, some of them sending block-tin to Singapur, some driving fine carriages, others making shoes,

chairs, clothes, and every other thing that a large town desires” (1.245). In effect, they “they were the first army corps on the march of the Mongol. The scouts are at Calcutta, and a flying column at Rangoon. Here begins the main body, some hundred thousand strong, so they say,” complete with “their inhumaneness and their inscrutability” (1.245). At Hong Kong, “the March of the Mongol is a pretty thing to write about in magazines,” but “hear it once in the gloom of an ancient curio shop, where nameless devils of the Chinese creed make mouths at you from back-shelves, where brazen dragons, revelations of uncleanness, all catch your feet as you stumble across the floor” and “hear the tramp of the feet . . . and the breaking wave of human speech, that is not human! Watch the yellow faces that glare at you . . . and you will be afraid, as I was afraid” (1.305–06).

Kipling was referring here to William Dunlop’s widely read profile “The March of the Mongol,” which had just appeared in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. In the wake of China’s performance against France in 1885, Dunlop’s judgment was that “the Chinese army is now a very different organization from what it was in 1860, when along with the French, we indulged in a promenade to Peking and sacked the Summer Palace” (1889: 41). In part this reflected China’s underlying demographics, “her calm determination . . . Chinese indomitable persistency” that would allow the country to “hurl millions more” (41) into any fray. It also reflected China’s modernization, “hovering on the verge of the energetic development of her incalculable resources” (40). Consequently, “the vast army of China is being gradually supplied with weapons of the latest and most deadly design” and aided by its “huge arsenals” (37). As a result, “there is no room to doubt as to what is to be the dominating power of the future in the Far East of Asia. The Chinese possess in a marvellous degree the power of crushing and supplanting the rival populations of East Asia” (44). The moral of this was not to forget China in power calculations, “a warning to all foreign powers not recklessly to endanger their friendly relations with the Peking Government” (38). For Britain, it meant “a close Anglo-Chinese alliance” (41) to block Russia. At the macro-scale of things was a “vision” of China, “awe-inspiring and sublime,” of “hundreds of millions” of Chinese rising “from weakness into power” to “the grand and ever increasingly startling strains of the mighty March of the Mongol” (45).

In the wake of this virulent sociocultural unease and imagery at play over Chinese immigration, and of continuing awareness of the potential power of a reawakened China, “Yellow Peril” literary figures appeared around the globe. These literary perceptions were embedded in the wider geocultural and geopolitical currents of the day, which “suddenly and magically strings together disconnected fears . . . and hatreds, and displays them in a single significance” (Druce 1998: 159; see also W. Wu 1982). Thus, 1892 saw the publication of “Tom Edison Jr.’s Electric Sea Spider, or, The Wizard of the Submarine World” (Reade 1892) in the *Nugget Library* magazine. The story

featured a character named Kiang Ho, a Harvard-educated warlord and pirate who controlled a port in China, from which he prowled the seas using a fleet of ships and a super-submarine to capture and sink all Western shipping, before being stopped and killed by the hero, Tom Edison. The next year, William Crane's (1893) essay "The Year 1899" saw a further nuance, with China portrayed leading an Asiatic confederacy of Japanese, Indians, and others against the United States and Europe by land and sea.

John Young's *New Life in China* followed a familiar enough line in depicting "the shadow of the Great White Czar [Russia], moving towards a destiny ominous to China" (1891: 425), and pointing to America's Pacific interests. As to the general Western presence in China, the book paraded Western prowess through official naval presentations "on board the man-of-war, men at general quarters, a drill, an inspection of the ship. Thus, we would show something of our naval armaments, what discipline could do, what China perhaps might have to fear in the event of war" (429). However, Young was surprised when he was given an inspection of Chinese troops at Ningbo, where "nothing seemed more perfect as a bit of mechanism, alertness, skill, obedience, intelligence—a human machine, as the drilled battalion should be" (430). Young then extrapolated, "but what imagination dare conceive to what this Chinese unit might grow from the infinite resources of this prodigious empire?" (430). His "imagination" evoked the medieval Mongols, where "some of the possibilities of this military unit, as we saw it, may be understood when we remember the part the ancestors of these soldiers have played in the affairs of men," for "they were of the seed from which had come the harvest of terror, conquest, and rapine. The soldiers whose bearing and drill excited the wonder of an American admiral were of the race which had marched from Peking to the Danube" (430) in Genghis Khan's military machine.

After having portrayed colorful imagery from the past, Young's sober calculation of these Chinese troops at Ningbo was, "behind them were over four hundred millions [the Chinese population] . . . power that could well become greater than that of combined Europe" (1891: 430). At this point the challenge might not be just for European colonialists. The United States and the West, again in shades of Huntington's thesis in *Clash of Civilizations*, might also be involved, since "the coming question will be Asiatic. It belongs to the next generation . . . the oldest and the youngest of civilizations, face to face, America and China" (431). The future was doubtful: "No one could have stood in that quadrangle at Ningpo without feeling that again, as before, Europe might anticipate from Asia another of those movements which have changed the face of empires and menaced the dignity of civilization" (431). Civilization was, of course, taken to be Western.

Another literary figure who used this military imagery was Kenneth Mackay. His 1895 novel *The Yellow Wave* recounted the story of a successful invasion of Australia by a Chinese military expedition. This reflected China's

revival: “China is not to be [militarily] despised” (2003: 48) in the wake of “the reorganization of the Chinese army” (80) led by “the younger or up to date party, educated abroad and filled with the ambitions of the Western world, hold possession of the Emperor’s ear, and have filled him with a desire to revive the glorious traditions of Genghis Khan” (79). A “Chinese fleet, the dragon standard waving” (166) was depicted by Mackay as successfully landing about thirty thousand soldiers and cavalry in Queensland. Thousands of Chinese troops were disembarked by Commissioner Wang, all “armed with the latest types of rifles . . . the men, both in physique and discipline, utterly belied the popular idea of Chinese soldiery. With the miserable market gardener and fossiker known to Australia, these warriors had little in common” (164). Chinese military forces were portrayed as sweeping into Queensland “rapacious as wolves, they had shaken off their death-like stupor and again taken up the glorious traditions of the past,” in which “strong as ever in their belief in their absolute superiority to all mankind, and armed with the very weapons that had brought about their humiliations, they were coming under the old banners of blood and fire to avenge past insults” and “win new possessions” (160). Classic ambivalence toward China and the Chinese was present as “the Celestial warriors toiled with that dogged endurance which has made their race hated, and was yet to make it feared” (163).

A civilizational clash underpinned *The Yellow Wave*. The equation with older images was maintained by Mackay; the Chinese invaders “were Mongols, possessing the same physical strength for endurance that made their ancestors the most formidable soldiery in the world” (2003: 164). This was no idle comparison. Instead the link was pounded in for the reader. The Chinese forces were described as speaking “in a tongue that was old before the Western world rose out of the chaos, and in response men with broad yellow faces and course black hair of those fierce nomads who followed Genghis Khan sprang to obey,” and where “the lights, falling on them as they worked, lit up their features with ghastly distinctiveness. From their cruel lips flowed a song, discordant, fear-compelling, which, as it floated out over the sea, filled all the air with its awful cadences” (160). China’s past was invoked, for the future—the Chinese “after a sleep of centuries had arisen at last . . . strong as ever in their belief in their absolute superiority to all mankind, and armed with the very weapons which in the past had brought about their humiliations,” from which “they were coming under the old banners of blood and fire to avenge past insults and win new possessions” (160). Typical Orientalist images were present, with the “the butcheries which he knew must accompany the march of these Mongol invaders” (174), its talk of “the chinkies” (173) and the “yellow dogs” (173), its portrayal of General “Wang with an Asiatic officials’ inherent love of cruelty” (291), and its evocation of white Australia’s “pride of the race” (281). This was the Yellow Peril in action, with the novel portraying an impersonal dehumanized threat from the East, in which “the Chinese

troops form an amorphous mass, terrifying in its sheer unknowability. This is the terror of the alien" (Enstice and Webb 2003: xvii)—*Orientalism's Other*.

A widely read and cited vision of China, as a threat with colonizing power, military power, and trading power was advanced in Charles Pearson's widely read *National Life and Character. A Forecast* (1893). Pearson had published the book after a long career in Australian politics where he had been a cabinet minister in Victoria during 1880–1881 and 1886–1890, and had featured in the immigration furor of 1888. Pearson argued in *National Life and Character* that "we are well aware that China can swamp us with a single year's surplus of population," so much that "we shall awake to find ourselves elbowed and hustled out and perhaps even thrust aside by peoples who we looked down upon as servile . . . belonging to an inferior race" (1893: 83). Demography underpinned China's situation, "as year by year the population of the Celestial Empire increases, and its rulers adopt the aggressive policy of the West" (16), and "no one supposes that the extreme limits of her possible increase have been reached" (66). Demographic expansion intertwined with territorial and military expansion, where "so great a people as the Chinese, and possessed of such enormous natural resources will sooner or later overflow their borders, and spread over new territory, and submerge weaker races" (50–51). China's reawakening "may make them a State which no Power in Europe will dare to disregard; with an army which could march by fixed stages across Asia and a fleet which could hold its own against any that the strongest of European Power could afford to keep permanently in Chinese waters" (112). This was backed up by demographics, "the most populous country must ultimately be the most powerful, and the preponderance of China over any rival—even over the United States—is likely to be overwhelming" (130).

Admittedly, one prominent British figure who was sceptical about China's status in the world was George Curzon, Under-Secretary for India from 1891 to 1892 and for Foreign Affairs from 1895 to 1898, Viceroy of India from 1899 to 1904, and Foreign Secretary from 1919 to 1924. In *Problems of the Far East* (1894), reflecting in part his own travels of 1887–1888 and 1892–1893, he specifically rejected Pearson's "triple future" threat from China amid a general scepticism about what he termed "the so-called awakening of China" (1894: 336). While acknowledging the real presence of migratory patterns, "In this movement I detect no seed of empire, and I foresee no ultimate peril for the White Race" (417). As for China, he considered that "politically speaking, her star is a waning and not a rising orb" (371). China was "a monstrous but mighty anachronism" (399). However, many observers had been impressed by the level of threat discerned by Pearson, Young, and Kipling. Zenone Volticelli had considered the preceding years as having "been fashionable among writers on the Far East to lay stress on the mysterious and awe-striking process which threatened the world in a near future, the 'Awakening of China'" (1896: 8).

CHINESE VOICES ON “CHINA’S AWAKENING”

One figure closely involved in this Chinese resurgence was Zeng Guofan’s son, Zeng Jize, known to the West as the Marquis Tseng. In retrospect, he was something of a Zhou Enlai of his times, with diplomatic postings in Britain, France, and Russia from 1878 to 1885. In his efforts, Zeng Jize emphasized China’s sovereignty (*zhuquan*) and national salvation (L. Chiu 1971). Zeng’s 1887 profile, “China, the Sleep, and the Awakening,” was widely noticed in the West. It was first published in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* before being republished later that year in the *London and China News* and the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, and was quickly commented on in the *New York Times* on February 18, 1887. Zeng admitted that previously China had been “sleeping in the vacuous vortex of the storm of forces wildly whirling about her” (1887: 3). But as evidence that China was being revived, Zeng pointed to “the awakening of 300 millions to a consciousness of their strength” (4), given “the toiling millions that stay at home to provide the sinews of war. The soldiers are but the outer crust, the mailed armour of a nation” (8). Sir Henry Norman may have dismissed Zeng’s portrayal of a “cautious but irresistible march” by China as a “mass of rubbish,” but he also sadly noted its impact where “the civilised world has been deceived” (Norman 1895: 262) by Zeng’s article. Zeng portrayed a reviving China, where “though China may not yet have attained a position of perfect [military] security, she is rapidly approaching it. Great efforts are being made to fortify her coast, and create a stronger and really efficient navy” (1887: 7). Migration policies were advocated so as to consolidate China’s grip around the periphery areas of Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Manchuria—of concern to Russian strategists with regard to further drift over the border into their Far Eastern province. The wider aim was to regain “the place which China holds as a great Asiatic Power” (9). As to the West, Zeng denounced “the outrageous treatment which Chinese subjects have received . . . where legislation seems only to be a scrounge for their especial benefit” (5). For China “the general line of China’s foreign policy” included “the amelioration of the condition of her subjects residing in foreign parts,” over which an “interest in the welfare of its foreign-going subjects” had meant “a Commission has recently been appointed to visit and report on the condition of Chinese subjects in foreign countries” (8–9) like Australia and elsewhere.

Chen Jitong, China’s military attaché in Paris, was one of the “self-strengtheners” advocating reforms to enable China to stand up to the West. In 1888, he was quite blunt in telling a Parisian audience that “we will get from you everything we need, all the technology of your intellectual and material culture, but we will adopt not one element of your faith, not one of your ideas or even one of your tastes” for “you are yourselves providing the means whereby we will vanquish you” (Oye 2001: 83).

Xue Fucheng, having risen to diplomatic service in the European capitals during the early 1890s, saw Zeng Jize's "Awakening" processes as evidence in 1892 of China trying to reverse "the humiliating terms of unfair treaties after disastrous defeats, which subsequently brought forth further humiliation from the foreign powers" (Xue Fucheng 1993: 128). China's awakening was through "industrial technology . . . major world powers of the world depend solely on the application of newfound technology . . . it is time now for us Chinese to embark on such pursuits . . . The results may astonish all the people in the West" (21). He could see the benefits of Chinese emigration, in "building a new China outside of Chinese territory so that our people may prosper in years to come. This move will strengthen our nation, feed our people, reduce our national deficit, increase our productivity and change our national image" (65). Conversely the state should work to protect them. For Xue, China's self-strengthening was working, since "improving relations with China has become a favourite subject of conversation among British and French officials," who "no longer regard China with utter contempt, which was the Western attitude of earlier years and . . . finally realized that China is not a backward country" (35). In such a vein, 1892 saw Xue Fucheng "convinced that the sages of future generations will one day take control of the five continents on this earth. Moreover, I have no doubt that Confucianism will inherit the earth" (106–07)—perhaps an example of IR soft power.

China's attempts to increase military production, cited in the Australian debates of the late 1880s, were maintained with the setting up of the Hanyang Arsenal in 1892. Under the aegis of Zhang Zhidong, governor-general in the Hubei and Hunan provinces, this represented a drive for "strategic industrialization" (T. Kennedy 1973) in a more protected inland position. In reality the Hanyang Arsenal may have suffered from divisions between demands for industrial ironwork and military naval activity, from different geopolitical calls concerning Japan in Korea and Li Hongzhang's Northern Fleet, and from damaging fires in summer 1894, but that did not stop it from feeding into an image of some Chinese strength.

Chinese figures in the diaspora were well aware of such trends. In the United States, Lee Yan Phou was proud that "in the last fifteen years the Chinese Government . . . has built arsenals and navy-yards, established schools and colleges on Western models, disciplined an army that whipped the Russians, created a navy that would put the American navy to shame" (1889: 479). Alongside such military hard power was economic hard power; the government had "put up thousands of miles of telegraph wires; and it is now busily opening up mines, building railroads, and availing itself of American capital and experience to put up telephones and establish a national bank" (479). One Chinese figure who was keen to stress China's revival was a young, relatively unknown, radical, Sun Yat-sen. After meeting with Wang Tao in Shanghai, Sun sent a lengthy memorandum in June 1894 to Li

Hongzhang, China's prominent statesman, analyzing "the factors behind . . . international relations" (Sun Yat-sen 1994: 3). On the one hand, "the Westerners are ready to pounce like tigers . . . they bully China" (11). On the other hand, Sun wrote, "I have observed the state's vigorous efforts to chart a course to enrich and strengthen the nation. I have also seen the new advances that accompany each succeeding day and the concerted energies directed at achieving them" (3). With such progress, "it has become obvious that we will soon gallop abreast of the European nations" (3), since "now, we too possess the swift battleships, the flying trains, the telegraphs, the ammunition, and the guns with which they once intimidated us . . . China has reached a turning point in its efforts to become strong" (14). While impressive, Sun went on to argue that such technological and military buildup was insufficient; if "we merely concentrate on building strong ships and powerful guns, we will be ignoring the root and seeking the flower" (4). Deeper social, economic, and political transformation was needed to unlock China's underlying manpower and economic resources. Economics was politics: "National defense cannot function without money" (11).

Japan provided an example for Sun Yat-sen. In his eyes, "military expenditure and commercial wealth are interdependent . . . with China's population and its material strength, if it were to imitate the West and adopt reforms it could match and surpass Europe within twenty years. Consider Japan" (Sun Yat-sen 1994: 13). However, in considering Japan as a reforming model to emulate, what Sun had not envisaged was the conflict between China and Japan that broke out in July 1894. On its eve, the *North China Herald*, on July 20, 1894, still held that China was the "only great Asiatic State that really commands the respect of the Great Powers of the World." In reality it was to bring fresh humiliations for China.

FIVE

China's Further Humiliations

*In no period of China's history
has there arisen an emergency like the present . . .
the Chinese receive insult . . . shame . . .
the impotency of the mandarins in war . . .
the foreigners will suck our blood . . .
the weakness of China have been clearly demonstrated to us.*

—Zhang Zhidong, 1900

*The collapse of China was only the last act in a long drama of decadence,
. . . the utter incapacity of China either to reform or to defend itself
. . . China had systematically fooled both Governments and public alike,
who shared the same illusions as to her power.*

—Leroy-Beaulieu, 1900

THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1894–1895

CURZON'S CAUTION IN 1894 over China's military prowess was proved correct later that year as China unexpectedly lost the Sino-Japanese War, in which Paine considered "perceptions, power, and primacy" (2002) to be at stake. The anonymous "Chinese Official" may have hoped at its onset that "the proper course . . . which Oriental countries should follow, is to unite against all foreign encroachments" (1894: 264). Instead China was swept aside by Japan. Chinese forces were defeated in Korea by the end of July 1894. Japanese troops crossed the Yalu into Manchuria in September, marched into the Liaodong peninsula, and landed on the Shandong peninsula, with destruction of the main Chinese naval forces achieved in January 1895. Peace conditions were imposed on China at the Treaty of Shimonoseki in April 1895.

Most opinion considered China the weightier military force in 1894, although Ernst Oppert had insisted at the onset of war that most of China's military forces were ramshackle, and no match for Japan, describing them as "Chinese hordes, undisciplined, badly armed and worse officered" (1894: 277). Nevertheless, Jean-Pierre Val d'Eremao still thought, like many, that "the eventual triumph is still very probable . . . what is Japan compared with the inexhaustible resources, the vast population, the intense nationality, the giant strength and enormous staying powers of China?" (1894: 282). Sir Robert Hart, while acknowledging Japan's initial "dash and victories," considered on July 8 that China's "stay and numbers begin to turn the scale" (1976: 975) against Japan. Such sentiments were repeated on August 5: "If the war lasts long enough we must win, Chinese grit, physique and numbers will beat Japanese dash, drill and leadership" (981). George Morrison's travels across western China in spring 1894 gave him a picture of a "stationary," backward-looking army, living in the past with obsolete weapons "unfitted for conducting the warfare of today" (1895: 272). Nevertheless, he still acknowledged how China's "potential strength is stupendous," especially in demographic terms, where initial "victories such as Japan has won over China . . . are trifling and insignificant in their effect upon the giant mass of China," for "suppose China has lost 20,000 men in this war, in one day there will be 20,000 births in the Empire" (271–72). In reality the scales went down even more against China.

In the war, China's defeat was clear-cut and unrecoverable on the battlefield. For the Sheffield MP Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, Japan had "utterly smashed the military power of the Chinese empire, that vast Colossus with its feet of clay," a defeat that was "contrary to the predictions and expectations of almost every newspaper and authority in this country" (1895: 1). In retrospect, Christensen argued that "in China's Century of Humiliation . . . no event was more demeaning than the 1895 defeat at the hands of Japan" (1997: 45). Comparative context was the key: "For the traditional Chinese state, it was degrading enough to be vanquished by 'barbarians' from far-off lands like Britain and France," but "given China's historical superiority to its tributary neighbours, succumbing to a local power was a much greater blow" (45).

At the time, the Reverend Rosewell Graves considered the war "very humiliating to China" (1895: 186). As to "what effect is this war to have on China," he felt "one cannot help feeling that there is some important Providential Design in this eventual conflict" (187). Geoculture was in play, since "it is certainly a most striking effect that in the end of this century our Christian civilization should . . . come into clash with the Oriental heathen form of civilization on the Western shores of the Pacific" (187). Graves' missionary hopes were that "with all her vast population, with all her mighty possibilities, with all her rich past and all her capacities for a glorious future," China would turn to Christianity; "the renaissance . . . of China, regenerated by the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . purified and fitted for a place

among the Christian nations of the earth" (316). However, problematic issues were also noticed. At the personal level, he acknowledged the questionable impact of Westerners on China: "Anglo-Saxons never seem to forget that they belong to a conquering race . . . overbearing and aggressive manners do not commend western civilization to the Chinese" (304–05). Greater structural issues were at stake, though, for Graves, since "it can hardly be doubted that great changes are impending in China," for "either she will yield to the force of the shock and her gates to progress and Christianity, or she will sullenly and stubbornly cling to her idols and perish through disintegration and European intervention and the division of her territory" (187). Meanwhile, there was a warning for Japan not to make too severe demands in victory: "China's resources are so much greater that if she be led to cherish feelings of revenge she will make preparations through long years to resent the humiliation inflicted upon her. China moves slowly but surely" (187). The question remained, how slowly?

Zenone Volticelli also commented on the "unexpected successes" (1896: 4) enjoyed by Japan in the war. This was not surprising for him; China's strategic culture made her a nonthreatening force: "That country, throughout her long history, has seldom been remarkable for military success . . . the education of the Chinese people and public opinion all tend to discourage any latent warlike tendency of the nation" (5). Geoculturally, Volticelli considered it a war "between Western civilisation [Japan] and a sporadic survival of the worn-out Eastern civilisation" (7). The shifting spectrum can be seen from the perspective of another observer, Robert Hart. That summer, on August 26, 1894, he highlighted wider patterns at play: "A big question at stake—the civilisation of the east . . . I believe to be thrashed by Japan will get the wheels of progress out of the mud of antiquity and free China to march in the right direction" (1976: 983–84). By October 28, he was pleading on China's behalf that "she is a big sick man convalescing very slowly from the sickening effects of peaceful centuries, and is being jumped on when down by this agile, healthy, well-armed Jap—will no one pull him off?" (993). Peace negotiations were such as "to reduce China to the most pitiable extremity" (998). Indeed, Hart posed the question, on December 2, "fancy what the next century would have to deal with in the shape of a Japan-ised China" (999). As to the peace treaty, he considered, on April 7, 1895, "the peace conditions have come—they are killing . . . China will shudder" (1014). By the Treaty of Shimonoseki, China was forced to cede Taiwan to Japan, and give up her paramount status over Korea. Relations between China and Japan had been decisively changed.

EASTERN PERSPECTIVES ON THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR

Japanese modernizers tried to justify Japanese expansionism as bringing progress to China. Yukichi Fukuzawa, for example, argued that a Japanese

victory in the war would be good for China, helping rouse it from its slumber and set it on the road to becoming a modern nation. A variation on this theme was that China was a threat to civilization and progress, and therefore Japan's war effort was good for all of East Asia and indeed for the world. According to a Japanese wartime song, "China long ago was the land / Of the teachings of the sages, / But as dynasties changed and the years passed / She gradually has fallen behind in progress. / She prides herself on being the Middle Flowery Land," but "Unless we destroy her ignorance, / The night of the East will never dawn" (Keene 1971: 273). One of the Japanese negotiators at the Treaty of Shimonoseki was Munemitsu Mutsu. In Mutsu's eyes, Japan "represents Western civilization while the other [China] remains the guardian of the outworn practices of East Asia . . . now, we look down upon China as a bigoted and ignorant colossus of conservatism" (1983: 27–28). Thus, the war was "a collision between the new civilization of the West [represented by Japan] and civilization of East Asia [represented by China]" (28). With victory, radical Japanese nationalists could look forward to wider involvement in the region. Soho Tokutomi felt, on February 8, 1896, that "the countries of the Far East falling prey to the great powers of Europe is something that our nation will not stand for. East Asia becoming a mire of disorder is something that our nation will not tolerate" for "we have a duty to radiate the light of civilization beyond our shores and bring the benefits of civilization to our neighbors" (De Bary et al. 2005: 805).

The attempts at Shimonoseki by China's negotiator, the elder statesman Li Hongzhang, to shape Sino-Japanese cooperation against the West came to nought, as did Li's plea to the Japanese envoy Hirobumi Ito that "we ought vigorously to maintain the general stability of Asia, and establish perpetual peace and harmony between ourselves, so that our Asiatic yellow race will not be encroached upon by the white race of Europe" (CRW 1979: 126). This suggestion was rather brushed away by Ito. Li Hongzhang seemed relatively unconcerned about China's loss of Taiwan, arguing in an 1897 analysis for the throne that "the island is unsavoury in history . . . in the ceding of Formosa [Taiwan] to the Japanese, China has not really lost anything of value" (1913: 276). In structural terms, Japan did not seem the biggest threat to China, "for balance of power in Eastern waters I would much prefer to see the island in possession of the Japanese" (277) than any other external power. As for Japan itself, acquisition of such territory was setting it on the road to imperial expansion. At the time, on July 23, 1894, Soho Tokutomi had argued that "to wage war on China . . . is a golden opportunity for expansionist Japan to engage in expansionist activities" (Mayo 1970: 65). Its victories there laid the base for subsequent Japanese expansion. As Tokutomi put it, in a 1916 tract on the future of the Japanese Empire, "the Sino-Japanese war was the time of Japan's imperialist awakening. After two turbulent decades we Japanese had just begun to know our power. To know

ourselves was to know our power" (Mayo 1970: 64). The same challenge had been faced by China, but with different results.

Japan's rise was appearing at China's expense and, ultimately, its fall. Defeat at the hands of smaller and younger Japan "suddenly and profoundly disgraced" China, and so was a "deep psychological shock" (Laitinen 1990: 40). In China, the young reformer Kang Youwei judged it "the greatest humiliation in more than two hundred years since the advent of the Manchu dynasty and [it] aroused the indignation of all the officials and people of the country" (Hu Sheng 1955: 121). For Kang the humiliation of defeat by Japan was doubly sad, the immediate defeat compounded by the way "the humiliation . . . opened the way to the partition of China by the powers . . . the danger of total disintegration . . . the danger facing our country has never been as great as it is today" (Hu Sheng 1955: 121) in 1895. Huang Zunxian penned emotive poems. Similarly, Ko Taw also saw it as "humiliation by Japan," which "brought her into a contemptible position in the family of nations" (1897: 273; also Ko Taw 1898). For Yung Wing this was not just a defeat, but a "humiliating defeat" (1909: 229). Diaspora Chinese communities across the Pacific were highly sensitive to China's worsening international situation, and were themselves an engine for political change back in China.

Sun Yat-sen's sojourn in American Hawaii (Lum and Lum 1999), where he founded the *Xingzhonghui* (Revive China Society) in November 1894, was but one example of this diaspora dynamics. The *Xingzhonghui* analysis was stark; externally, "we are surrounded by foreign powers on all sides. They, like greedy tigers and hawks, covet our country . . . now the country is facing an imminent danger of dismemberment and disintegration" (Shieh 1970: 1). Consequently, "for a long time, China has been a weak nation . . . China, once a mighty nation, is now looked down upon the family of nations. Our culture and institutions are held in contempt by foreigners" (1). The situation was described in 1895 by the Society's sister lodge in Hong Kong: "Nationals of the Great Powers look down upon the Chinese people and subject them to all sorts of indignities and humiliations" (4). This was all the more rankling for the Society, as "with a population of 400 million and a rich land of hundreds and thousands, our country can be invincible in the world if we are determined to make it strong" (1). Unfortunately for China, and for such nationalists, the Sino-Japanese War had shown the opposite.

Within China, questions of imbalance lay behind Zhang Zhidong's *Memorial* of August 1895, which argued that, "to save the critical situation of today," a now weaker China should be "allying with a distant country to attack an enemy nearby. With regard to the Sino-Japanese situation today, this policy is even more suitable. China's power today can never oppose simultaneously all the nations in the East [i.e. Japan] and West" (CRW 1979: 128). The upshot of this was the secret Russo-China Treaty of Mutual Assistance of June 1896, negotiated by Li Hongzhang in the Russian capital. This

was aimed at blocking Japanese threats to the Russian Far East, Manchuria, and Korea. Both China and Russia pledged movements of troops, ships, and armaments to support each other, but with China giving concessions in Manchuria to the Russians. This probably showed China's continuing weakness within the international system, in the immediate term getting the military agreement they desired but at the price of strategic, if not indeed territorial, concessions for the future.

WESTERN PERSPECTIVES ON THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR

American commentators, along with those in Britain and most other European states apart from Russia, generally had seen Japan in a more favorable light, where "in stark contrast Chinese seemed primitive, superstitious, corrupt, unprogressive, and the antithesis of their East Asian neighbour" (Dorwart 1975: 95).

At the state level, the Sino-Japanese War changed perceptions of the Yellow Peril. The *Atlantic Monthly* recognized that the "expansion of Japan . . . seized the press and politicians . . . The Yellow Peril bogey was transferred [from China] to Japan" (1899: 276–77). Similarly, across the Pacific in Australia, such a transference was also recognized by the *Sydney Bulletin*, on April 27, 1895, where "the Chinese bogey died about two months ago, and before it was decently interred the Japanese bogey arose in its stead." However, underlying unease about China did not disappear. As Dower points out, the rise of Japan as a world power "did not . . . simply shift the focus of Yellow Peril fears from China to Japan. Rather, it multiplied those fears," for "while sensational writings imagining Japan's conquest of the United States or the world now appeared on the scene, the great bogey of the menace from China remained alive and well in the popular consciousness" (1986: 156).

In American circles, China's credibility collapsed: "When Oriental met Oriental in 1894, the bubble of China burst, its measure was taken, and the huge Humpty-Dumpty of the Far East, General Wilson's 'boneless giant' fell" (Scidmore 1900: 4). Denby, then American Minister to China, considered, "She [China] stood at last before the world a huge giant filled with wind. The nations of the world had learned the lesson that she could not fight" (1906: 2.147–48). The war "demonstrated the absolute incapacity of China to carry on any foreign war successfully. She stood before the powers humiliated and powerless" (2.57), as "she came out of it humiliated and disgraced" (2.147). China's defeat by another Asian power was why "worst of all, she had lost her prestige,—what the Chinese call 'face'" (2.47). Admittedly, Hilary Herbert, American Secretary of the Navy, still retained some respect for China's capacity, "though the Chinese have suffered a disastrous and overwhelming defeat, . . . there is no reason to suppose them under favoring conditions to be incapable as soldiers" (1895: 688). Certain fundamentals remained for

him, in particular China's large geopolitical location dominating the Asian mainland: "Her strength lies in three hundred and fifty million of people, singularly patient, wonderfully industrious and capable in a remarkable degree of enduring hunger and colds. United they could achieve almost any result" (697). However, in the immediate term, China's reputation had crumbled. The Chief of the Bureau of Statistics in Washington recognized that the existence of "a wave of Mongolian [i.e. Chinese] invasion forms one of the stock cards of European alarmists," but he concluded that, given "the sharp and severe lesson which Japan has imposed" (Ford 1895: 70) on China, "it is useless to talk of the terrors of a Mongolian invasion" (71).

Some American voices were still ready to acknowledge China's ongoing potential, as perhaps being hastened by Japan's example of Meiji modernization. Thomas Jernigan, American Consul-General at Shanghai, thought in 1896 that "the awakening of China need no longer be doubted" because "the treaty of Shimonoseki opened wider than ever the gates of China, and legalized the admission of new forces of civilization whose restless energy will not permit the empire to sleep again in her wonted sleep" (1896: 444). China's longer-term potential was still there, and with it "the value of China's commercial future when she arrays herself in the garb of a new civilization. When China is developed, what will prevent her being as colossal in influence as she is in size and natural resources?" (446). Similarly, for the *Living Age*, with regard to "the all-important question of population," alongside the Anglo-American and Russian blocs came "China with a probable population of some five hundred million," which remained "undoubtedly the darkhorse in the race, for, in spite of the disastrous result of her recent struggle with Japan, which of course has greatly discredited her for the time, she has many or most of the elements of possible future power" (1896: 4).

In Europe China's defeat had been noticed mainly with surprise, and it fostered a change in British strategic thinking. As Valentine Chirol put it, "The theory of China's latest resources as a fighting power, upon which our Asiatic policy for some time past has been largely built up was violently shattered" (1896: 3). Consequently, China presented Britain with the "hopeless spectacle of fatuous imbecility, made up of equal parts of arrogance and helplessness" (9). Similarly, Henry Norman judged that Japan's victory had exposed the "hollowness of Chinese claims" (1895: 261), had "pricked the bubble of the 'Awakening of China' and has exhibited the Chinese government as the imposture it really is" (316). Instead, Norman judged, "the sooner we learn to look for our Eastern alliance elsewhere than in China, the better" (275).

China's whole general prestige and strategic credibility crumbled. The *North China Herald*, of April 10, 1896, reflecting Western business opinion at Shanghai, told the incoming British Minister to China about "the fiction that China was a Great Power whose territory could not be infringed with

impunity . . . the pricking of this gigantic bubble by Japan has thrown everything into confusion.” Samuel Wells Williams’s son, Frederick, contented himself with pointing out the “hopeless incapacity of her [China’s] statesmen” (1904, vi), in which “they show since their discomfiture by Japan . . . abject fear . . . spasms of abasement . . . closely bordering on imbecility” (vi). For the anonymous “Senex,” “prior to the war with Japan, the general tendency everywhere was to overestimate the coming strength and the fighting capacity of the Chinese,” so that, consequently, “we had a whole series of articles, it will be remembered, in the English and American Reviews, with such titles as ‘Will China Rule the World?’” (1899: 322). Consequently, but erroneously for Senex, “the only question then seemed to be, not whether China was a vast reservoir of potential power, which was universally admitted, but whether this future power would be sufficient to endanger Western civilization” (322). Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu was scathing about the “absolute surprise created by the unexpected results of the Chino-Japanese War” (1900: 242), where “China’s decrepitude . . . the collapse of China was only the last act in a long drama of decadence, but it revealed to astonished Europe the utter incapacity of China either to reform or to defend itself,” and in which “China had systematically fooled both Governments and public alike, who shared the same illusions as to her power” (242–43).

One result of the war had been to heighten British expectations of further Western advances into, and onto, China. Sir Thomas Wade, the British Minister to China, argued that China’s signs of defeat showed “it is impossible that all the different powers interested should leave China to anarchy. It is merely a question who should step in and when” (1894: 614). There, “who shall have the governing and drilling of these great masses of hardy obedient, and most governable people” mattered, since “even one slice of China, with its millions of potential soldiers, would give any of one European powers an enormously preponderant weight in the councils of the world” (615). Consequently, “the crucial question for the future will be . . . which Western nation will absorb China. For whichever among the great Powers has the Chinese to serve him, is in a fair way to devour all the rest” (624). China was not an actor *in* the international system; instead she was to be acted upon *by* the international system. Race underpinned foreign policy for Boulger, since “the regeneration of China from within is beyond the bounds of hope” (1895: 822); for “our true and best allies in maintaining our premier place in the Far East we should look to men of our own race, to that Australian nation which in the course of years will constitute the new and perhaps the predominating influence over the China seas” (825). Yet China’s future still continued to worry some, in the longer term. As Senex put it, “China is the dark horse of the race,” for “in spite of the disastrous result of their recent struggles with Japan, which has of course discredited her for the time, she has many or most of the elements of possible future power” (762).

This meant “the gravest matter of all is [still] the possible or probable result of the awakening of China” (762).

However, fears had quickly arisen of China's potential resources being used by Japan in the shorter term. The scenario was quickly advanced in the *St. James Gazette*. Its image, on October 6, 1894, was of a “Japanned China,” where “an army and a navy, an organization by land and sea, would grow up under the hand of the Mikado.” Looking ahead, “in ten or fifteen years’ time a Chino-Japanese government would have an army of two millions of men armed with European weapons. In twenty-five years the available force might be five times as great.” Against that combined power, the *St. James Gazette* asked, “what could resist? Nothing at present in Asia, not even Russia, could stand against it, and it might knock at the door of Europe.” In language matching the colorful evocations of invasion novelists, it warned “the combined Western powers might resist the first shock,—might overcome the first five millions of Chinese riflemen and Tartar cavalry,” but “behind that would come other five millions, army after army, until Europe itself was exhausted and its resources drained.” Its conclusion, typically reflecting the common corpus of materials from which images of China were being carved, was that “the dreams of the supremacy of the yellow race . . . to which Dr. Pearson and others have given expression, would be no longer mere nightmares.”

One Western observer in Japan remained Lafcadio Hearn. In “considering the question of future race competition in the Far East” (Hearn 1896: 457) at issue in the Sino-Japanese War, he saw it as one of those deeper oceanic “surges, which break thrones or wreck civilizations . . . [whereby] the vast tidal wave of Occidental civilization, rolling round the world, had lifted Japan and hurled her against China; with the result that the Chinese Empire is now a hopeless wreck” (451). Japan “tore away that military scarecrow of Western manufacture, which China had purchased at so great a cost” and “exposed the enormous impotence, which it had so long shielded. The spectacle of the power of Japan and the helplessness of China startled the Western world like the discovery of a danger” (451).

Hearn considered China somewhat doomed to disintegration. Since China was “hemmed in by a steadily closing ring of foreign enemies: Russia north and west, France and England south, and all the sea power of the world threatening her coast”; “that she will be dominated is practically certain; the doubt is, how and by whom” (1896: 461). As such, outside control was likely to bring further economic penetration of China and a longer-term challenge, where Hearn thought “the future danger from China will be industrial” (1896: 454). Technological transfer would augment China's innate economic skills, which “all Europe may have cause to fear before the close of the next century [by 2000!]”; since “once China has been penetrated by the forces of Western civilization, her population will begin to display new activities, and to expand in all possible directions. Chinese competition will have to be

faced” (458). For Hearn, “will not the Chinaman of the year 2000 resemble in all things the familiar Chinaman of to-day . . . [where] the [yellow] peril reveals itself,” through “trade, to industry, to commerce or speculation . . . a source of power” (461).

Despite China’s defeat, Yellow Peril images remained in play. John Stoddard’s trip to China brought out the persistent demographic image of China, Canton as “swarming with nearly two million beings . . . ants in a giant ant-hill” (1897: 71), but also brought recognition that “the unjust opium war with England, the recent territorial war with France, the stories told them of the treatment of their countrymen in America” (57–58) would be enough to make them hostile to the West. Some commentators picked up on Chinese hopes for renewal. For Senex, “the present state of China presents a very sorry and pitiful spectacle,” with the outside powers “surrounding the helpless Chinese Empire like a set of hungry sharks attacking a dying whale” (1898: 163). Nevertheless, “China will assuredly have her revenge . . . the tables will be turned . . . It will take the form of an industrial and economic revolution, fraught with disaster to the sharks . . . China might easily become the workshop of the world” (165).

In Russia, China could appear as a threat in some ways while paradoxically still seeming an area for czarist imperial expansion. Demographic issues remained an underlying concern in Russian circles, where Charles Pearson had reckoned that “naturally still, China might first people and then occupy the provinces along the lower course of the Amoor, which she ceded very reluctantly under pressure” (1893: 50). Russian policy, not surprisingly, during the 1890s emphasized Russian peasant settlement of the East to out-populate the Chinese presence, a “White Mission” to combat a “Yellow Peril,” and thereby form “a bulwark against the ‘Yellow Hordes’” (Stolberg 2004: 167). For Russians like Anatolii Kulomzin (1904: 43–44) such policies were necessary to save Russian civilization in the sweep of world history.

Aleksandr Maksimov’s 1894 study *Nashi Zadachi na Tikhom Okeane* (Our Tasks in the Pacific Ocean) contained various clichés, images, and predictions. He welcomed Japan’s emerging victory as something Russia should have done itself. Maksimov was no friend of China. Of the Chinese he wrote, it “should be remembered that they are a serious, persistent, patient, energetic, hypocritical, as well as wicked and rancorous” (Lukin 2003: 52) people. While the Manchu dynasty might be tottering to ruin, China itself was undergoing modernization, “a new, young, fresh tree is growing on his ashes” (52). In a look forward, he considered that after “a quarter of a century passes [the 1920s] and this tree becomes strong and powerful . . . if we fail to cut its young branches in time, they [the Chinese] will spread over Amur and cast a shadow on our possessions in Central Asia” (52). The Chinese trunk may have been in China, but its branches were already inside the Russian Empire. Chinese fifth columnist migrants were “creating a strong basis for a future

attack against Russia, the Chinese already enjoy serious and strong support for their military operations in the best corner of our dominion in the distant East," with "the South Ussuri region . . . known to be virtually flooded by migrants from China on Russia who know every path, every ravine and stream—[and] are dangerous enemies of Russians" (58).

Like Solovev, Maksimov felt that Russia should stand ready "to repulse the Chinese hordes" and "constantly to show the steadfast firmness of the mighty monarchy and keep a strong fleet and a sufficient land force in the Far East" (Lukin 2003: 53). As to the future, China "never abandoned and never will abandon the territories that it once possessed and is only waiting for a good chance to get them back . . . Its attitude toward Russia is getting more and more threatening each year" (52). Russia represented wider interests of Western civilization, with Huntington-style sentiments where "the Chinese race will clash with the white population of Europe and America on the fundamental questions of civilization and this inevitable clash will impede the progress of humanity for a more or less lengthy period of time" (53).

Stephen Bonsal's own visits to the area left him with a sense of the underlying unease felt in Russian circles, where "the Yellow Peril has many phases, and they are not all imaginary. The Russian Government has grave fears on this subject . . . as I had an opportunity to learn during my visit to Eastern Siberia and the Amoor provinces in 1896" (1900: 431). There he had become aware of the demographic dynamics along the Amur, "'yellow' spots, as they are called . . . which line the north bank of the river. The Russians regard them as an illustration of the sinister power which a compact family of four hundred million people exert" (432). The paradox of Russian military power was juxtaposed with China's future potential, "with arms in hand, the Russians rather underestimate the Yellow Peril; but they seem to fear—and not without reason, I think—the Chinese policy of assimilation that comes with peace" (432).

REFORMIST ANALYSIS AND IMPERIAL LEADERSHIP

The question of who would control China's resources remained a moot question. Reformers were adamant about China's plight in the world, on the linkage between weakness in the international system and domestic problems. Tan Sitong felt in 1897 that "China, courting its own downfall, is despised by foreigners . . . with everything under foreign control, the four hundred million people of the yellow race will become slaves of the white race" (Hu Sheng 1955: 125). Wang Kangnien, who had set up the reformist newspaper *Shih-wu pao* (Current Affairs) in Shanghai, argued that "considering the national situation in which we find ourselves today . . . weak and easily controlled by foreigners . . . China desires to oppose the foreigners, her power is insufficient" (CRW 1979: 163). Popular participation was needed in and

behind the government so that the state would be stronger, “then our sovereignty will be respected and our national position consolidated” (164). Chinese perceptions of Russia as the biggest threat to China’s territorial integrity were high in the 1890s. There was frequent recognition among Chinese reformers of Russian “ambitions and rapacity” (D. Price 1974: 68), denounced by Wang Tao in 1896 as a “predatory” (D. Price 1974: 67) neighbor. Liang Qichao’s sense was that “Russia is more desirous than any other country to partition China, as everyone knows; and hence she does want China to become strong. But if China is to be prevented from becoming strong, it is necessary to prevent reform” (D. Price 1974: 97)

Domestic reform was seen, then, as something to make China strong in the international system. Huang Zunxian had already told the young emperor Guangxu in 1896 that “the strength of Europe is entirely due to reforms” (CRW 1979: 149). Amid considerations of “the rise and fall of other countries,” Tan Sitong argued in 1897 that “China has wasted several decades” (CRW 1979: 159) and needed complete modernization. The following year, Zhang Zhidong was expressing resentment against “foreigners for cheating and encroaching on us, at the generals for being unable to fight, at the great officials for not carrying out reforms . . . nowadays China is indeed neither impressive nor powerful” (CRW 1979: 166) and needed a “policy of strengthening China to resist foreign countries” (168).

The most prominent of the reformers, Kang Youwei, was particularly vociferous, warning in 1895 that “the Russians are spying on us in the north and the English are peeping at us on the west; the French are staring at us in the south and the Japanese are watching us in the east” (CRW 1979: 152). In such a situation, “living in the midst of these four strong neighbours, and being the Middle Kingdom, China is in imminent peril . . . our enfeebled China has been lying in the midst of a group of strong powers and soundly sleeping on the top of a pile of kindling” (152). The Sino-Japanese War, in showing China’s continuing military-political shortcomings at the hands of Japan, had merely fed further European expansionism at the expense of China.

Bilateral military defeat could in turn point to wider multilateral intervention, again, to China’s detriment. As Kang noted in 1897, “Foreign newspapers all talk about the partition of China. It is just like the arrow in a drawn bow, which may be shot at any moment . . . there is every indication of an imminent partition of this country” (Hu Sheng 1955: 122). As the general scramble for concessions was erupting, Kang stressed on January 29, 1898, “The extreme national disgrace” (Schrecker 1969: 48) of extraterritoriality, and how “though we are called a country, we are losing control of our land, railroads, steamships, commerce and banks . . . we have perished” (49). Kang’s urgent pleas in June 1898 to the emperor for reform were informed by the external crisis facing China, “the four barbarians [Britain, France, Russia,

Germany] are all invading us and their attempted partition is gradually being carried out; China will soon perish" (CRW 1979: 177).

Within this swirl, the reformers applied "Western theories of international relations and international law . . . as the fundamental perspective from which to view China's place in the world" (Schrecker 1969: 45) and so stressed the "preservation and strengthening of China's sovereignty" (44). Reform of the legal system was mooted precisely because it "would permit the eradication of extraterritoriality, the cornerstone of the system of unequal treaties and the greatest blemish on Chinese sovereignty" (48). This reflected "the idea that China's status should in no way be inferior to that of any other nation in the international community" in which reformers were vehement against any fetters which "violated and insulted China's sovereignty" (45). Sovereignty was essential for reformers like Kang Youwei, for "a modern China and a New World" (Hsiao 1975: 41–96). In its full legal and economic sense, sovereignty was crucial for China, rationally but also emotionally—indeed, some reformers saw China's regeneration as being accomplished more readily through her defeat by Japan.

Other Chinese and Qing figures were forthright on China's situation. Ko Taw reckoned, "the spirit of reform has really been awakened," within which "German military officers are now engaged in drilling the Chinese troops . . . the navy too is about to be organized by officers deputed by the British Admiralty . . . the regeneration of China will soon be an accomplished fact" (1897: 265–66). As such, "it is becoming to be recognised that China is the real pivotal point of the world. He who commands her resources and her teeming millions must have a preponderating influence in the counsels of the world" (270). However, this talk of "regeneration" of China being an "accomplished fact" in 1897 had waned by the following year for Ko. He acknowledged that "circumstances however, have altered very much since the time of the Marquis ["Tseng," Zeng Jize]" (Ko 1898: 71). Instead, Ko sadly lamented, "China is no longer an independent Power, respected by foreign nations, but a *quantité négligeable* [a phrase coined by Jules Ferry] to be buffeted about and treated with contumely and humiliation . . . at the present time, she [China] cannot be said to have any foreign policy at all" and "is liable to coercion" (71) from the outside powers. It was in this context that Major A. Cavendish, a British military attaché in China, considered the armed strength of China in early 1898. China's "maladministration" was hindering it, but "under European tutelage" they could "prove themselves . . . the 'Yellow Terror' may not be a mere figment of the superheated brain" (Cavendish 1898: 723).

Racial conflict was in the air. Ko asserted how "if there is to be any struggle for racial supremacy in the coming ages, it must apparently be between the white and the yellow races" (1898: 78). Racial friction also appeared in Princess Ling's recollection of "the overbearing attitude of the German minister" Kutschmidt, who had told her father, You Geng, the Chinese ambassador

in Japan, “you Orientals are just plain beasts,” comments which for her unfortunately reflected “the assumed superiority of the Westerner, who regards the Oriental as scum, beneath his notice” (D. Ling 1930: 246). Zhang Binglin, a supporter of Kang Youwei, focused in 1899 on the “peril of the yellow race” (K. Chow 1997: 37) from the white West.

Such political challenges to China’s integrity formed a crucial context in Chinese literature, the late Qing angst, the “feeling of near despair” where “late Ch’ing fiction evinced a more strident tone of urgency, and a more sombre mood of a catastrophe,” in which “it was difficult to see hope for a country” (L. Lee 1983: 458, 459) so beset with outside pressures. Such angst could be juxtaposed with utopian “political fantasies” (459), an “obsession with the fate of China—and a romantic escape from the problems of the contemporary scene” (460). Thus, Lu-sheng’s “An Idiot’s Dream Tale” ended with a dream of a future Shanghai no longer patrolled by foreigners, foreign policemen, foreign signs, or foreign debts but instead an abundance of railways and schools built by Chinese (L. Lee 1983: 459). Such sentiments and literature were picked up in political circles. Liang Qichao’s unfinished novel *The Future of a New China* was set fifty years after the founding of a utopian Chinese republic. Both types of material reflected frustrations over China’s weakness in the current international system as the nineteenth century reached its end, a century of increasing humiliations for China.

Such reformist analysis was matched by imperial leadership from the throne. Between June and September 1898, the young Chinese emperor, Guangxu, announced dramatic, wide-ranging educational, economic, and administrative changes in the Hundred Days Reforms. He acknowledged, “compared with other countries we soon see how weak we are . . . We must substitute modern arms and western organization for our old regime; we must select our military officers according to western methods of military education” (Guangxu 1898). Similar comparisons and logic had been made by Kang Youwei in a *Memorial* submitted to the throne at the beginning of the year, in which “a survey of all the states in the world will show that those states that undertook reform became strong while those states that clung to the past perished,” and “in an age of competition between states . . . take the Meiji reform of Japan as the model for our reform . . . her success is manifest, her example can be easily followed” (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 269–70). Foreign pressures were a key element in this new strand. Kang Youwei’s recollection of his meetings with the emperor had Guangxu lamenting, “I hated the idea of losing Annam [to France]. Again I was indignant at being shorn of Manchuria [to Russia] and Formosa [to Japan], and a third time I was indignant at being shorn of Kiachow [to Germany] and Port Arthur [to Russia] . . . I cherished indignation” and “veiled myself in shame” (Y. Kang 1899: 183). Kang understood that “at this time the emperor considered the chief thing was to preserve the country from being lost to foreign nations,” with China

“about to become like India, or Anam, or Burmah—a dependent of another Power . . . to fall to such a depth!” (184).

Reformist calls for renewal, backed from the top, seemed as if they would be finally realized. Kang's audience with the emperor on June 16, 1898, saw him painting a picture of mass educational and railway networks enabling a new China to “train a citizen army of a million men, purchase a hundred ironclad warships . . . and build naval academies and shipyards . . . China is a large land with bountiful resources” (Y. Kang 1976: 98). Time was needed: “Our China being large and populous would require three years of reform before she could stand on her own,” but then “China would gradually become as strong and as wealthy as other countries in the world” (96).

Such imperial leadership was noticed in the West. For Judson Smith, “The edicts of reform issued within the year by the Emperor are perhaps the most striking evidence of the reality and character of the awakening that is abroad in the land” (1899: 234), for “after the sleep of centuries . . . the old order is changing . . . a new life is rising in the land of seeming stagnation and death” (230–31). As a Christian minister, he could hope for rosy Christian prospects. Yet there were wider geopolitical implications for “this remarkable country—its vast extent, its enormous resources, its imperial position; and the people themselves—so numerous, so capable, so industrious, so fitted for great deeds, with a history prolonged through three thousand years” (239). Given such underlying potential, any realization of it had much wider implications for the international system: “The spectacle of China's awakening, which is an open fact, commands the eyes and thoughts of Europe and America . . . world-wide interest . . . fascinated as the destiny of this great land and people unfolds before our very eyes” (230), for “no drama of deeper meaning or wider interest has ever been enacted on the great stage of the world's history, and in so few has the stake of other nations been so great” (231).

Zhang Zhidong welcomed these changes, given the “impending perils which threaten the Empire . . . in no period of China's history has there arisen an emergency like the present. It is a time of change” (1900: 19; also Bays 1978). Position-wise, “the Conservatives fail to see the utility of modern military methods and benefits of successful change . . . do not understand what international intercourse means,” while “the Progressionist, zealous without knowledge, look with contempt on our widespread doctrines of Confucius” (20). Psychologically and emotively, the context was that “the Chinese receive insult . . . shame” (95), with the juxtaposition of “insults offered to us by foreigners, the impotency of the mandarins in war” (55). Politically, “today the foreigners are harassing China . . . the Chinese are unmercifully abused. We are compared with drunkards and rotten stuff. The partition of our country by foreigners, and the question of who can seize the largest portion, are freely discussed” (119, 85); indeed, “the foreigners will suck our blood and, worse than this, pare the flesh from our bones. To end the tragedy

they will swallow us down, body and soul, at one great mouthful, and gloat over the deed” (85). Historically, “China has been for these fifty years proved herself almost irreclaimably stupid and not awake” (51); so that “the strength of foreign countries and the weakness of China have been clearly demonstrated to us in the past three years” (87).

In Zhang Zhidong’s eyes, such power imbalances meant for China that “there are many who place the most implicit confidence in International Law,” but “what has International Law to do with fighting issues when one country is strong and another weak? . . . China is not on an equal footing with the West” (1900: 143). Double standards were evident for him: “Merchants engaged in business abroad are subject to the laws of the country in which they reside. Not so in China [i.e. extraterritoriality] . . . the murder of a foreigner by a Chinese is a very serious matter, but the killing of a ‘Chinaman’ by a foreigner is a trivial thing” (143). Consequently, “China is not really in the comity of nations, and it is useless to prate about International Law . . . there is nothing for it but to seek help in ourselves” (143). This was no blinkered obscurantism. Instead, “in order to render China powerful, and at the same time preserve our own institutions, it is absolutely necessary thither we should utilize Western knowledge” (62), on top of a renewed Confucianism. With reinvigoration, “if we maintain an army, the weak countries will fear us and the strong will respect us” (141). In diplomatic terms, “if we ally ourselves with Europe, then Europe will win; if with Asia, Asia will win. We would be in a position to redress our wrong” and “under these conditions, Japan will side with China, Europe will retire, and the Far East will be at rest” (141). The goal was a Middle Kingdom system in effect restored, with China at its center.

However, by the time Zhang Zhidong’s commentaries had been translated and published, September 1898 had already ushered in the reassertion of conservatism, the resumption of power by the Empress Dowager Cixi. The emperor Guangxu was put under house detention. His radical advisers were either executed or, in the case of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, going into exile. As Robert Hart succinctly summed up, on November 20, 1898, Cixi’s “reappearance knocked the bottom of the Emperor’s Reform bucket to pieces” (1976: 1177). For Kang Youwei, “all reforms were reversed” and “all the Empire became dumb, and dared not speak about Western ways . . . China is thus bound to old ways more than ever. It only leans on Russia, and in this way allows itself to be easily divided up and ruined. Alas!” (1899: 198).

“SLICED LIKE A WATER-MELON”

Western racial arrogance toward Chinese migrants had been backed by Western military-political power toward China. As Robert Hart saw it, on July 13, 1897, “helpless and hopeless is China now” (1976: 1122). Its actual and per-

ceived weakness had already opened the way to French territorial gains in southern China during 1896, and Germany's forthright occupation of Qingdao and Jiaozhou Bay in 1897. For Hart, writing on November 28, 1897, "We are in the grip of the Germans and China will come out second best . . . I can't tell you how vexed I am at this hour to find China weaker than ever" (1144). This in turn triggered Britain, France, and Russia, respectively, to take Weihai, Guangzhouwan (Kwang-chow wan), and Port Arthur at the start of 1898. The *Living Age* report "The Yellow Peril" considered, "All have been convinced by the result of the Japanese war that China is moribund . . . no active resistance to any aggression is to be expected from her citizens, her statesmen, or her imperial house" (1898: 124), with the outside powers "hacking at the great whale with a full conviction that it is dying" (125). China's weakness was the more apparent. Hart worried, on February 6, 1898, that "China seems drifting more helplessly than ever . . . into the future . . . and far greater dangers than before" (1976: 1150). For China, this represented "a new and climatic stage" of outside pressure, where China was "threatened with imminent dismemberment. An unprecedented atmosphere of crisis was created" amid "a pervasive fear" (Hao 1980: 274) of collapse and partition. Li Hongzhang saw it as being "sliced like a water-melon" (1913: 211). Reformers like Liang Qichao argued that China's conservative dynastic structure was doomed to failure and "could not maintain China as a viable state in the modern world of imperialist aggression and international competition . . . the Darwinian image of a world dominated by relentless international rivalry and struggle" (Hao 1980: 296).

Ironically, the events of 1897–1898 were the spur for the appearance of the Yellow Peril character Yen How in Matthew Shiel's *The Yellow Danger*. It was reprinted ten times between 1898 and 1901 and was a classic Yellow Peril production (Mellor 2001: 11–12). Readers were able to immediately recognize the current European Scramble for Concessions in Shiel's opening chapter, which explicitly brought in the European annexations of 1898, and ponderings among Chinese officials like Li Hongzhang over how to deal with the West. Shiel's serial cleverly incorporated the previous week's current headlines into each successive weekly chapter. Consequently, the story presented the figure of a half-Japanese, half-Chinese warlord who connived his way to power in China, united China and Japan, manipulated the European Great Powers into warring with each other, and then unleashed the masses of China on the West. William Stead acknowledged the "great and sensational success of the book" (1898: 194), but decried its "race hatred" (196). On this he felt that "what is not excusable is the deliberate effort which he [Shiel] has made throughout to represent the Chinaman as fiends incarnate" since "impressions are often created in this way which influence action hereafter" (196), a true enough linkage between perceptions and policy. In such a vein, Stead reckoned that Shiel's book would have an impact "in the political

sphere . . . to remind those who are so busy in disposing of the carcass of the Chinese dragon that the dragon himself is by no means defunct, and may yet emerge as a fire-breathing monster to terrify the world” (196).

However, China was seen by most commentators and politicians as increasingly defunct. The British embassy at Saint Petersburg judged, on March 3, 1898, that “the semi-disintegration of China . . . has already . . . commenced” (BDOW 1927: 16). In the autumn, following the collapse of Guangxu’s Hundred Days reform program, the geographer Elisée Reclus wrote about the “vivisection of China” (1898), wondering, “what is to become of China herself, in this squabble of nations about her territory,” for it is “quite evident that the four hundred millions of the ‘children of Han’ do not constitute a ‘yellow peril,’ in the sense lately given to that term by certain pessimistic prophets . . . they will never again invade Europe in independent hordes” (337). Instead, the real issue was the “larger human question, the shock of navies in the Chinese seas; annexations of territory” (338).

Some paradoxes surrounding China’s image in the West had been highlighted by General James Wilson’s profile in the spring of 1898. On the one hand, he noted how “it is becoming the fashion to designate them as the ‘Yellow Peril’ . . . when they shall learn their power and sally forth for rapine and conquest . . . they will yet dominate the earth by force of arms or ruin it by competition in commerce” (J. Wilson 1898: 130). On the other hand, he was not convinced by such images. Like Curzon, Wilson was sceptical for the immediate future: “The Chinese were “docile . . . with no indications of ever having been aggressive and warlike in temper . . . about as much of a menace to the rest of the world as the lamb in the fable was to the wolf” (J. Wilson 1898: 130). Indeed, “obviously, this [Yellow] ‘Peril,’ be it great or small, may be dismissed for the present if the Chinese cannot defend themselves from a few thousand Japanese ‘wojem’ (or dwarfs), a still smaller number of Russians, or a couple of German cruisers,” a lowly position from which “they can hardly hope for several generations to be able to menace seriously the rest of the world as conquerors” (130). “Several generations” would take China to the end of the twentieth century and with it the China Threat fears posed by the People’s Republic of China (Scott 2007: 116–20), but that is another story. For the moment, China was palpably weak in 1898. Boulger, like many, considered “there is not the remotest chance of China being able to save herself” (1898: 754) and was instead in danger of passing “under the thrall of those who will know how to turn her ponderous strength to the subjugation of the civilized world” (760).

That same month, May 1898, China was in effect dismissed at the highest levels in British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury’s famous “Dying Nations” speech about the Far Eastern situation. In the speech, Salisbury argued that “the living nations [of the West] will gradually encroach on the territory of the dying [China]” a trend that in itself could be “causes of conflict among

civilised nations" (*Times* May 5, 1898). Indeed, Salisbury had already judged, on January 25, 1898, that "the two Empires of China and Turkey are so weak" (BDOW 1927: 9) that he had already instructed the British ambassador in Russia to speak to his counterpart at St. Petersburg, to "ask Monsieur Witte whether it is possible that England and Russia should work together . . . we should come to an understanding" (BDOW 1927: 5). Such an "understanding" was one of Britain recognizing Russian primacy in northern China and Russia recognizing British primacy in the center along the Yangzi Valley. Nicholas-Roderick O'Connor, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Russian court, in turn reported to Salisbury on January 30, 1898, about Witte's expectations in China: "The provinces of Chili, Shansi, Shensi, and Kansuh . . . that sooner or later Russia would absorb all this territory" (BDOW 1927: 8). It was in this setting that Zhang Zhidong's 1898 reformist tract *Quanxue pian* (Exhortation to Learn) stressed, "At present China is indeed not imposing or powerful . . . we must preserve the state and the race . . . if the empire does not prosper, the Chinese race will not be respected" (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 246–47). Lack of respect for China the state, indeed, effected the respect given, or rather not given, to the Chinese in China and to Chinese communities outside China.

Race and immigration continued to affect Pacific politics outside China during the 1890s. In the United States, the 1882 Exclusion Act was renewed for another ten years in 1892. In Canada, the 1895 Provincial Elections Act of British Columbia formally disenfranchised any "Chinaman." In Australia, George Reid managed to get his 1897 Exclusion of Inferior Races bill passed through the New South Wales parliament. Admittedly, the British governor delayed signing it, instead forwarding it to Downing Street. There, the British government ruled that it would infringe on Britain's trading treaties with China, and might even endanger the holding of Hong Kong. Consequently, on the advice of the British government, Queen Victoria refused her Royal Assent. Reid returned to the attack, and passed another bill, again aimed at Chinese immigrants, which authorized the New South Wales immigration authorities to apply a dictation test to any intending immigrant. At the bigger level, the China factor loomed large in the establishment of the Australian Federation in 1901, which was "held together not by the 'Australasia' idea but by anti-Asianism" (Broinowski 1992: 4) represented by the established threat from China. Its first major legislation was the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 barring Chinese immigration.

Archibald Colquhoun's widely read and widely cited *China in Transformation* considered "the grand international problem presented by the affairs of China" (1898: vii). Some of the established motifs of the China threat, often cited in Californian and Australian debates, were still apparent in his talk of how "the slumbering factors of an immense industrial production all exist in China" (58), capable, once developed, of "flooding the markets of the

world with the products of cheap Chinese labour” (252). However, the more immediate danger lay in Russia’s “eye southwards on China,—on the rich plains, the commanding seaports, and the inexhaustible resources of her sleeping and unconscious neighbour” (363–64). At the time, in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War, Russian influence rode high in Beijing, and had been reflected in the secret military-diplomatic undertakings of the Cassini Convention, so that Russia “to all intents and purposes dominates China at and from Peking” (335).

Colquhoun saw such a position as a threat to the British grip on its “jewel in the crown,” “this domination of China would seriously affect British rule in India, and might even create a grave danger for the [British] Empire” (1898: 335–36) as a whole. Russian domination at Beijing could “mean the utilisation of China as an industrial and political force to be equipped and used for our destruction” amid “the possibility of having those [Chinese] masses organised and wield against us” through “the rise of Asiatic Russia, a rival Power utilising the resources of China” (337). Here, Colquhoun stressed that “what the utilisation of China [by Russia] would mean can only be realised by a full appreciation of the extraordinary resources of that country,” for China “has the men to create armies and navies; the mineral resources—the greatest perhaps in the whole world . . . the extent of China’s population . . . the immense vitality of the people . . . the Chinese are destined to dominate the whole of Eastern Asia” and “maybe to play a leading part in the affairs of the world” (357), albeit under Russian direction. Similar arguments were made by Mayo Hazeltine (1900).

In France, the traveler Edmund Plauchut similarly reckoned that “one thing alone is certain” (1899: 261): “China will be the battle ground of the future, and the yellow peril, about which so much has been prophesied, will assume many an unexpected form before the century just about to begin in its turn nears its close” (261). However, China was itself not in a state to direct events: “The Celestial Empire finds herself compelled to awake from her long stupor, and to arouse herself to action of some kind. With no real army, no longer an efficient fleet, however, what can she do?” (263). Plauchut judged that “Russia alone will obtain real political control of the Celestial Empire as a whole,” since “there remains no hope that the disintegrating forces at work in the once powerful nation will be arrested from within . . . the saving force [for China] must come from without” (265). Under such Russian preeminence, “when once more there is a strong hand directed by a strong brain at the head of affairs, the country will be found to be practically inexhaustible. With a prolific soil, vast mineral wealth, and a teachable population, there is no limit to what China . . . may become” (265–66).

Although H. G. Wells’s 1899 story “When the Sleeper Awakes” noted the contemporary “dread . . . the yellow peril . . . the Chinese spectre” (2000: 231), China as yet was far from being able to threaten the West. Eliza Scid-

more, for one, was dismissive of Chinese military prowess at Nanjing's military establishment, where "German instructors vainly tried to teach the Chinese how to shoot and march . . . Yet we read and we read of the Yellow Peril," of "the inexhaustible recruiting ground that China offers, of the millions, of the masses of raw material of armies that wait only for foreign leadership" (1899: 549). Geoculture was involved for Francis Younghusband, with the West representing "new and higher centres of civilization by which the superior races have effected a control over inferior . . . is China to follow the rest, and be brought within the pale of the higher civilization?" (1898: 457). Geopolitics was also involved, since "if she [China] is unable to stand, to take her place among the civilized nations of the earth . . . then she must take the consequences" (471), in which case "the struggle of nations, resulting, as it has, in the absorption of the weaker by the stronger, of the lower by the higher, means for China, if she is incapable as she seems of pulling herself together, absorption by one or more of the European Powers" (464). The idea of China being absorbed into Russia led to visions of "the Yellow Terror of Chinamen, organized by Russian leaders, sweeping through India and devastating Europe" (472).

However, other observers remained sensitive to China's potential. James Johnston's *China and Its Future* decried "those who talk lightly of the partition of China among the Powers of Europe, as if it were the abode of barbarous tribes or of a bankrupt civilization" (1899: viii). Threats were still seen from the Chinese, since "if broken up, they may inundate the lands of their conquerors with their swarming population, disorganizing the labour markets, and upsetting the costly enterprise of Western commerce by their industry, economy, and intelligence" (viii). However, Johnston was relatively optimistic about China's survival, holding that China was "still possessed of great recuperative power" (ix), given its size, depth of civilization, and talented population. Initially, China's "awakening may not yet be complete; it may take some more shaking by external powers, perhaps even some blows from the 'mailed fist.' A giant who has slept for centuries takes time to stretch itself and rub his eyes," but "when thoroughly aroused, his march will be to the front of Asiatic progress in the future, as it has been for thousands of years in the past" (154). Demography could again be an understated theme since "they [the Chinese] are only now awakening from the sleep of centuries. They are slow to move, but will have a momentum proportionated to their vast numbers" (viii). In the meantime, though, China was soon to face a "mailed fist" from outside.

China's likely disintegration rather than any expansionism was the theme for others as well as the century came to a close. Harold Gorst considered there was "a consensus of opinion as to the political future of China. She presents to the general eye the melancholy spectacle of an ancient and venerable empire on the verge of dissolution" (1899: 3). It seemed "the dismemberment

of China is an inevitable prospect which will sooner or later have to be faced by all parties” (3), given that “the army in China is little more than a disorganized rabble” (195). Robert Hart judged, on April 23, 1899, that “the condition of China is so limp, helpless, and hopeless . . . ruin is impending and hope of betterment gone,” for “if Powers would leave China alone she’d hold together as before, but they are all pegging away in one direction or another and it all tends to loosen and disintegrate” (1976: 1194). China could be dismissed at all levels at the end of the nineteenth century: “China was an object rather than a subject of international relations,” in which “people thought and scholars wrote of the policies of Britain, France, the United States, Russia, Japan, or ‘The Powers’ in China; but they did not think or write of the policy of China itself” (Q. Wright 1948: 51). China “seemed on the verge of becoming a geographical expression, an unorganized population, or a traditional culture—perhaps destined to be so disintegrated and so divided among the Powers” (51)—a nonstate.

There was a palpable sense that China’s final moment had come. In his interestingly, and revealingly, titled *The White Man’s Burden in China*, Senex wondered if the outside Powers would “one and all, [surround] the helpless Chinese Empire like a set of hungry sharks attacking a dying whale? Each shark vies with his neighbors in biting out a choice mouthful for himself” (1899: 275). This was the immediate setting for Robert Hart’s fin-de-siècle summation from the ground, that China had “no navy . . . no proper military organization . . . the debacle can’t be far. It is not China that is falling to pieces; it is the Powers that are pulling her to pieces” (1976: 1190). Whether supported or not, it was indeed true that “the partition of China” was a “sinister phrase . . . now in men’s mouths” (Little 1899: 58). One widely cited book was by Charles Beresford, a rear-admiral, MP for York, and frequent visitor to China, where he represented the Associated Chambers of Commerce. The title of Beresford’s 1899 book *The Break-up of China* starkly summed up the situation. Alexis Krausse’s *China in Decay*, in its first edition, asserted, “To put it plainly, China is doomed to become absorbed by a foreign power” (1898: 371), and “to believe in the recuperative power of China is mere waste faith” (372). His original 1898 subtitle, “A Handbook to the Far Eastern Question,” was changed to “The Story of a Disappearing Empire” in its 1900 third edition. In the United States, in a general sense, commentators could consider “The Break-up of China and Our Interest In It” in a volume of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1899. Indeed, the *Atlantic Monthly* speculated and hoped that China “in its present form of government may disappear, and the people come under the government of other nations” (1900: 76) ready for its “effete civilization” to be renewed through the “vital truths of the Christian revelation” (84).

Admittedly, as European imperialists explicitly speculated and moved toward annexing China, the United States could see its “Open Door”

announcements during September 1899 to Britain, Germany, and Russia, as well as during November 1899 to Japan, Italy, and France, as helping China against European imperialists. In reality, the announcements were irrelevant. Not only did the other powers refuse to commit themselves in advance, but the American announcements were not particularly aimed at restoring Chinese sovereignty. Instead, the Open Door was an attempt to keep China open to the West, an attempt to maintain American “open” economic penetration of China. Consequently, the American announcements emphasized that existing economic rights and privileges—in its words “commerce and navigation”—were to be kept open, alongside general Unequal Treaties features like extraterritoriality, Treaty Ports, and “spheres of influence”—referred to euphemistically as the existing “vested interests” of outside nations in China.

Macro-cultural frameworks were common as the nineteenth century came to an end. The eminent geopolitical naval advocate and presidential confidante (Turk 1987) Alfred Mahan warned about China in his essay “A Twentieth-Century Outlook,” composed in May 1897, in shades (Iriye 1997) of Huntington’s later *Clash of Civilizations* thesis. Mahan argued, “We stand at the opening of a period when the question is to be settled decisively, though the issue may be long delayed, whether Eastern or Western civilization is to dominate throughout the earth and to control its future” (1897: 243), among “the commonwealth of peoples to which we racially belong” (263). There was an emerging challenge in “the stirring of the East” (235) and with it “the immense latent force of the Chinese character” (236). In his eyes, China’s defeat by Japan in 1895 “has not altered the fact that the raw material so miserably utilized [by China] is, in point of strength, of the best; that it is abundant, racially homogeneous, and is multiplying rapidly” (236). Thus, looking ahead to the twentieth century, his outlook was that China’s underlying demographic power “may be counted upon in the future to insure a substantial unity of impulse which, combined with its mass, will give tremendous import to any movement common to the whole” (237). China on the move would shake the world by innate demographic weight, “the flood of numbers” (253). For Mahan, geoculture led to geopolitics: “The great task now before the world of civilized Christianity, its great mission, which it must fulfil or perish, is to receive into its own bosom and raise to its own ideals those ancient and different . . . the civilizations at the head of which stand China” (243). Geocultural assumptions were present at the highest political levels. The American Minister to China, Edwin Conger, cabled Secretary of State John Hay on November 3, 1898, that “Orientalism must effectually give way to Occidentalism . . . the sooner it comes, the better for China” (Griswold 1938: 59).

From Washington, Scidmore’s prognosis in March 1900 was simple: China “Has been dying of old age and senile decay for all of this century; its vitality running low, heart-stilling and soul-benumbing, slowly ossifying for

this hundred years,” in which “during this wonderful century of Western progress it has swung slowly to a standstill, to a state of arrested existence, then retrograded, and the world, watches now for the last symptoms and extinction” (1900: 1). The Chinese would survive dynastic shifts, but even this was a charged issue: “Their very numbers and sameness appal one, the frightful likeness of any one individual to all the other three hundred odd millions of his own people” with “the same yellow skin . . . and repetition of life, character, and incident, that offend one almost to resentment” (5). Looking at a map, she felt that “everywhere on their tenth of the globe, from the edge of Siberia to the end of Cochin China, the same ignoble queue this fifth of the human race is sunk in dirt and disorder, decadent, degenerate” and “indifferent to a fallen estate” (6); these were the sorts of comments that had also been bandied about regarding the Chinese migrants in Australasia and North America.

Later on that year, in the *Literary Digest* of July 14, 1900, Conger was still adamant that “Orientalism must effectually give way to Occidentalism. In my judgement this is bound to occur” and “the sooner it comes, the better for China,” but also “as well as for . . . the trade which will follow.” Meanwhile, Mahan told Theodore Roosevelt that he considered *The Problems of Asia*, published in 1900, to be “my swan’s song on contemporary politics” (Roosevelt-Mahan 1967: 128). In the book, Mahan, again felt that “the chief center of interest, because of its extent and present unsettled state, is China” (1900a: 124). Mahan considered China to be a “carcass” that was inevitably going to be devoured by “eagles” from the developed world as part of the “onward movement of the world” (15). President Theodore Roosevelt’s estimation of the book was high; he told Mahan on March 18, 1901, “Yes, I have read with the greatest interest your Asiatic problems, and in the main, with entire agreement” (Roosevelt-Mahan 1967: 129). External partition was also explicitly considered. Mahan told Roosevelt, on March 12, 1901, that Anglo-American naval power had to be exerted in the Yangzi Valley against Russian expansionism: “The true counter-check,” which would “humanize and strengthen China” (Roosevelt-Mahan 1967: 128). Roosevelt was taken with this picture, replying to Mahan on March 18, 1901, that American-British “co-operation and the effective use of sea power on behalf of civilization and progress which this co-operation would mean in the valley of the Yangtse Kiang [Yangzi], is of the utmost importance for the future of Asia, and therefore of the world” (Roosevelt-Mahan 1967: 129). In the longer term, Mahan could wonder about “the remoter future result upon Asiatics of the impressions they may receive in absorbing and assimilating European civilization,” and ask, “will they, from the effects thus wrought upon them, enter its community, spiritually as equals, as inferiors, or as superiors? Politically, as absorbing, or absorbed?” (1900a: 124).

In Beijing, the president of the International Institute of China, the Reverend Gilbert Reid openly treated the subject in *The Powers and the Par-*

tition of China, which presented the international context as one where “the dismemberment of China is very much ‘in the air’ (1900: 638), in which “the destiny of China seems to depend on action taken in London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Paris and Tokyo” (634). China was a global problem; “a scramble for conquest, possessions, sovereignty, in China would endanger the peace of the whole world” (641). Racial dynamics entered into the picture—“the average American has less respect for the Chinese as a race than have most of the European peoples . . . We hear much of the obligation of the Chinese to observe the treaties, but very little of American obligations in relation to China and the Chinese” (640). The only saving feature for China was that “through mutual jealousies of the nations, China may be held together, as each nation, while anxious for more influence, is opposed to the increased influence of any other nation” (641). IR multipolar dynamics might save China?

Predictions by commentators on China's fate were still clouded by uncertainties: “Public opinion gives, as its unanimous opinion, that the Chinaman is a profound conundrum whether studied from a commercial, political, or religious stand-point” (Stevens 1899: 271), an interesting trilogy and order. Amid such uncertainty, “in this nineteenth century he [the Chinaman] has loomed upon our horizon from the depths of antiquity and his dress, language and customs could not be more strange had we chanced to meet him on another planet” (271). Contemporary events impinged onto such reflections by Stevens: “The colossal fabric, the Chinese empire . . . now hangs in the balance” (275). However, unlike others, he felt that “politically, China may seem to be on the verge of a collapse from which she will never recover,” but remember, “though you cut up the country into slices, or establish spheres of influence, or exercise a protectorate,” there “remains 250,000,000 of people . . . a people who will be a mighty factor in the history of to-morrow” (277).

Paul Reinsch, a future American Minister to China, considered these shifts in his book *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century as Influenced by the Oriental Situation*, which appeared in April 1900. The “vision of a ‘Yellow Terror,’ which was to sweep the older civilizations from the globe when the full possibilities of the Chinese race should come to be realized” was something that Reinsch saw as “extreme” and “distorted” (1900a: 86). However, China's underlying resources were such that “there are, to be sure, in the Chinese people elements of strength which, if coordinated and developed, will make China and the Chinese nation the centre of the industrial world” (87), so much so that it could be “predicted with absolute certainty that the coal and general mineral wealth of China, taken in connection with the vast and highly trained, frugal, and capable population, will, during the coming century, make China the industrial centre of the world” (111). Looking from the past to the future, “there is little room for doubt that, when the industrial forces of this region have once been set in motion, China will in truth

become the ‘realm of the centre’” (248) and China’s Middle Kingdom pre-eminence would be restored.

In that setting, a new, cheaper, and more widely selling edition of Shiel’s 1898 *The Yellow Danger* was republished in 1900. In it were the images and stereotypes of “the Heathen Chinese” (Shiel 1900: 10) first penned by Harte in 1870: “It is impossible for the vilest European to conceive the dark and hideous instincts of the Chinese race” (Shiel 1900: 109). Politicians were there; Li Hongzhang “haunted as the old statesmen had always been by the vision of dismemberment and downfall which overhung China” (Shiel 1900: 16), and told by Yen How that “China has it in her power to turn Europe into an exhausted waste . . . the trump card is in the hands of China” (Shiel 1900: 14,17). The situation was still one where “that phrase ‘The Yellow Danger’ had become quite common in everyone’s ears . . . the idea of ‘The Yellow Danger’ was no new one to European statesmen,” for “again and again had the more keen-eyed of politicians pointed Eastward, and said to Europe, ‘The Yellow Danger! the Yellow Danger!’” (108).

European politicians were still being cited. Lord Beresford’s supposed speech at Hull was reproduced by Shiel: “The cloud at present may seem only the size of a man’s hand—but it is there—but it is there; and its seemingly small size is due merely to its remoteness, not to its intrinsic smallness,” for “what appalling fate would be that of Europe, of the yellow races, in their hundreds of millions, organised a westward march” (Shiel 1900: 108). In Shiel’s story, “China began to flow in earnest” (267). Europe faced “the yellow wave” (256), where “the yellow conquest meant naturally that wherever it passed, the very memory of the white races it encountered would disappear forever” (256), a “savage China” (260), “for China on the whole a religious mania in connection with this very race-instinct” (261), “the yellow terror” (264), “the race-instinct and race-hatred and race-ambition of the Chinaman” (271), “the Chinese cataclysm” (272), “a locust host” (332). Shiel’s story had General Saussier, as Paris fell to Chinese forces, lamenting, “Chinese are being mown down by thousands but still they come” (285). This Chinese invasion of Europe was only concluded by the British hero deliberately spreading plague among the Chinese invaders, killing some 150 million Chinese!

Yellow Peril fears were noticeable in Russian circles, where Russian state expansionism against China was mixed, conversely, with underlying fears of Chinese demographic expansion back into Russian territories. The 1897 census recorded just over 213,000 Russians living in the Amur and Maritime regions, alongside about 43,000 Chinese and 26,000 Koreans. Across the border lay the province of Manchuria with its millions of Chinese. Aleksei Kuropatkin’s appointment as minister for war in 1897 brought in someone for whom the Yellow Peril faced in the East by Russia was no mirage (Oye 2001: 82–103); instead “its specter haunted him” (210). For Kuropatkin, China’s threat was demographic rather than military; he used euphemisms like “yel-

low floodwaters” and “yellow tidal waves.” His strategic review *Memorandum* of March 1900, concerning Russia’s frontiers, warned about “an inrush of Chinese into the Prim Amur district . . . the Amur and Ussuri districts, which now are only thinly populated by Russians, and our weak colonies would be swamped by the flowing tide of yellow. Eastern Siberia would become quite un-Russian” (1909: 1.71). Consequently, he advised the czar on February 8, 1900, that “it is horrifying to contemplate what will become of Russia . . . the rivers of blood that will flow . . . if we are taken on by 400 million Chinese . . . Russians only number 18 million on this populous continent” (Oye 2001: 90). Ironically, part of this situation had been caused by Russia’s own extension southward into Manchuria and the control there of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which in turn facilitated the Chinese migration into the Russian Far East, a process leading Kuropatkin to advocate restraint in occupying any more swathes of Chinese-populated territory, since “it would bring Manchuria’s huge population within our borders” and then the “small Russian population [in eastern Siberia] would drown in the onrushing tidal wave of the yellow race” (Oye 2001: 101).

Such perceptions of a “tidal wave” composed of the “yellow race” were also prominent in Vladimir Solovev’s apocalyptic *Short Tale of the Anti-Christ*, which centered on how, aligned with Japan, “the Chinese saw the delightful lure of Pan-Mongolism . . . to drive out all the white devils from . . . Asia but, also, to conquer their own lands and establish the true Middle Kingdom over the whole world” (1900). Here, “the immense population of China . . . provided a sufficient supply of good fighting material” to sweep into Southeast Asia. A generation later and there would be “an army four million strong in Chinese Turkestan” that “suddenly invaded Russian Central Asia . . . rapidly crossed the Ural Mountains, overrunning Eastern and Central Russia . . . within a year, all the European States submitted as vassals to the domination of the Chinese Emperor” who then returned east “to organize naval expeditions against America and Australia” (Solovev 1900).

THE BOXER REVOLT

Such talk about longer-term economic potentialities and Yellow Peril scenarios for the future were overshadowed by the confrontation opening up between China and the West. Geocultural nuances were apparent in this confrontation, reflecting Reinsch’s “cultural factors” (1900b). Religious factors were at play in rising attacks on missionaries and their converts in the Shandong region. Esherick’s retrospective analysis emphasized the failure of the Qing Empire vis-à-vis outside imperialists: “If the Chinese state was incapable of resisting the ceaseless demands of the Christians and their foreign supporters, sooner or later the ‘heathen’ would form an organization of their own to fight back. And they did” (1992: 95). The collapse of Emperor

Guangxu's reformist program and the accelerated European manoeuvrings in China during 1897–1898, left the field open to the growth in China of more xenophobia and outright rejection of the West. The anti-Western Boxer movement, which had formed in 1898 in the Shandong province, started targeting Christian converts who had been supported by the German presence established across the province in what Esherick considered a wider "Imperialism for Christ's sake" (1992: 68–95). Consequently, a "religious war" (P. Cohen 2003) was evident on both sides. Robert Hart was uncertain over events, writing on June 10, 1900, "We can manage them [the Boxers]—a rabble armed with spears . . . but not the Peking Field force with its Krupps, Maxims, repeating Rifles and organization and numbering 30,000!" (1976: 1232). There was the "possibility of great and avert nasty danger; but it is a *Chinoiserie* and just as likely to collapse in fiasco as astonish the world as tragedy—history has not yet recorded the destruction of a whole diplomatic corps!" (1233).

As events spiralled out of control, Edward Parker's comments on June 4, 1900, were initially robust: "Christian unity is easily realized when it is brought into contrast with the 'yellow corpse,'" and that "nothing could be more fatuous or fatal than for this or that Power to 'believe in' China and to bolster her against the demands of the other Powers" (1903: 44). Simultaneous penetration from all corners was the path to take: "Here we have work cut out for all; and starting from these bases, there is no reason why we [Britain, Russia, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan] should not each steadily advance year by year into our respective Hinterlands, and gradually turn the [Chinese] corpse into healthy meat" (46). Boulger's response to the rising tension was to argue that a "scramble for China" was inevitable, in part because of tensions and rivalries, but also because, "in dealing with the Chinese problem, far larger issues, more or less affecting the whole world, cannot be ignored," for "the Yellow Peril, with all its possible consequences in labor as well as in political matters cannot be pronounced a myth, and no single country in the world could hope to cope with it single handed" (1900a: 7). China's partition was desirable if done by mutual agreement, with the result being that "the formidable Yellow problem will be rendered easier to handle and solve by being broken up into separate parts" (7).

In such an interventionist vein, a small multinational force had been dispatched on June 13, but it was turned back. The focus switched back to Beijing, where the German Minister, Baron Clemens von Ketteler, and the Japanese Secretary, Akira Sugiyama, were killed by Qing soldiers, with the various foreign legations coming under attack from Qing and Boxer forces on June 21, 1899. Religious, cultural, and political nuances were apparent. Boxer verses proclaimed, "It is because the foreign devils disturb the Middle Kingdom / Urging the people to join their religion" (Savage-Landor 1901: 1.15) that resistance was needed; from which "The great France / Will fall cold and

down-hearted / The English and Russians will certainly disperse / Let the various foreign devils all be killed” and “May the whole elegant / Empire of the great / Ching dynasty be ever prosperous” (1.16). Disenchantment with the West was apparent at the highest levels. The Empress Dowager Cixi praised the Boxers on June 21, 1900, holding that “the foreigners have been aggressive towards us, infringed our territorial integrity, and trampled our people under their feet . . . thus it is that the brave followers of the Boxers have been burning churches and killing Christians” (Spence 1990: 233–34). Fighting not only broke out around the legations in Beijing, but also in the rural areas against missionaries and Chinese converts to Christianity, the “fire and the sword” (E. Edwards 1903). The Boxer “catastrophe” (Tan 1955) that “shook the world” (Preston 2000; also Xiang Lanxin 2003, Sharf and Harrington 2000) had started.

Some Chinese argued against confrontation. Li Hongzhang wrote on June 22, 1900, against supporting the Boxers: “The whole Christian world will unite against us, and reach for the neck of China as a farmer grabs the feast-goose in the pen” (1913: 243), but he was ignored. This is not to say that Li did not want China’s position regarding the West to be changed. In a memorial sent to the throne, dated July 23, 1900, he admitted, “needless for me to say how greatly I would rejoice were it possible for China to enter upon a glorious and triumphant war; it would be the joy of my closing days to see the barbarian nations subjugated at last in submissive allegiance respectfully making obeisance to the Dragon Throne” (250), as in the days of the Middle Kingdom. Nevertheless, IR hard power distribution was against such hopes: “Unfortunately, however, I cannot but recognise the melancholy fact that China is unequal to any such enterprise, and that our forces are in no way competent to undertake it” (250). Faced with “the fleets of the Allied Powers,” he asked the key question, “Has China the forces to meet them” (251), the answer to which was negative: She did not. Again, such advice by Li was ignored by the Imperial Court. Xu Qingzheng argued on July 28, 1900, against support for the Boxers: “War has broken out, disaster has occurred. The whole globe is involved . . . and will result in catastrophe . . . the Boxers are not patriotic . . . we should not carelessly challenge all foreign countries” (CRW 1979: 192–93). Xu’s reward was execution for treason!

William Martin was caught up in the events, reckoning with outrage in *The Siege In Peking: China against the World* that “by making war on all who hold to principles of human progress, it [China] has placed itself beyond the pale of civilization, and forfeited the respectable position which it formerly occupied among the nations of the earth” (1900: 15). One could, of course, wonder how far China had been afforded a “respectable position” by the West, but certainly the geocultural undertones were seen in the general Western outrage. The *Times*, on July 11, 1900, agreed that “all Western civilization must arm for vengeance. The Chinese must be treated as cannibals

and Peking razed to the ground.” Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* could in effect be evoked in George Lynch’s *The War of the Civilizations: Being the Record of a “Foreign Devil’s” Experience with the Allies in China* (1901; also, in geocultural retrospect, Elliot 2002). The Empress Dowager was demonized by William Martin as the one who “made war . . . wholly unjustifiable, on all nations of the civilized world. Allying herself with the powers of darkness, she entered into a diabolical conspiracy, and sanctioned unheard-of atrocities” (1901a: 16). William Stead’s *The Revolt of the Yellow Man* warned that “today the worm [China] has turned. And behold, we are discovering that it is no worm, but a veritable dragon, breathing fiery death” (1900: 35), a “slumbering kraken” (41) that had now awoken, complete with dramatic images and commentary across countries.

Racial imagery was frequently evoked, as in Robert Coltman’s *Beleaguered in Peking. The Boxer’s War against the Foreigner; the Yellow Crime* (1901). Such was the power seen in the Boxer movement, and the underlying potential of truly aroused Chinese masses, that Commander Charles Napier Robinson could graphically write his *China of Today or The Yellow Peril* (1900). For James Miller it was *China. The Yellow Peril at War with the World* (1900). Consequently, “in the West, in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Boxers were widely reviewed as ‘the Yellow Peril personified’” (P. Cohen 1997: xii; also 1992).

The media were vociferous over the events during the summer of 1900. *Leslie’s Weekly* styled it the “yellow terror” on July 28, and the “yellow horror” on August 25. The *New York Evening Journal*, of July 17, ran a cartoon called “The Yellow Devil,” which showed the Chinese holding a dripping sword labeled “Murder” being swept away by the broom of the “Allied Powers.” Here technological changes had not just transformed the military side of warfare, to China’s detriment; it had also changed the media side of warfare, again to China’s detriment. There had been a globalization of news, cross-Pacific cables and all. Consequently, “the enormous expansion of media coverage” radically and “fundamentally altered reception and understanding of Chinese history in Europe, North America, and in China itself. By 1900, wholly new mechanisms of information processing were in place to exploit the story on a scale that had been unimaginable in 1860” (Hevia 2003: 187). The Boxer Revolt also generated sensationalist novels of little literary merit but reflecting stereotypes and images of the dangerous currents erupting in China, such as Forman’s “Peking plots” (1999).

Information and misinformation fed into the feverish reactions of Western statesmen, with Bishop Favier, from the Chinese capital, advising the French government that “the Boxers are a truly diabolical sect . . . instruments of the devil” (1901: 8). John Foord noted the role of media imagery, with its summer “interval of chaos, filled with direful forebodings and horrible invitations to feed the journalistic maw withal,” before then wondering

“whether a pacified and reformed China shall lend a new impetus to human progress, or a disturbed and reactionary one stand as a menace to the world’s peace” (1900: 401). In the eyes of the *American Missionary*, “what the outcome of this insane uprising and mad onslaught involving substantial war against the civilized nations of the world will be, no prophet of modern times can foretell” (1900: 98). The outcome was soon to be shown as the outside world, the international system, mobilized against China, a confrontation seen in Allen Will’s *World Crisis in China* (1900).

A second multinational relief force was organized from around the world. Given the murder of their diplomats, Germany’s and Japan’s national honor were immediately involved, though wider nuances were evident. The Kaiser, in dispatching German troops on July 2, 1900, asserted, “The Chinese have dared to overturn a thousand year old international law and to make a mockery of the sanctity of the diplomat . . . The case is unprecedented in world history . . . see from this what a culture not based on Christianity comes to” (Wilhelm 1900). Consequently, “when you come upon the enemy, smite him . . . make the name German remembered in China for a thousand years so that no Chinaman will ever again dare to *even squint at a German!*” (Wilhelm 1900). Geopolitics was interwoven with image, “the German reaction” as “a nation impatient for an opportunity to flex her muscles as a world power” (Esherick 1992: 127) at the expense of a weaker China.

Another nation flexing its muscles at China’s expense was Japan, which contributed more than half of the troops, 12,000 out of 23,000 in total. Geocultural arguments were used by Japan. The Chinese “must be punished for their ignorance and folly. The duty of enlightening a population of 400,000,000 souls rests entirely with the governments of the Powers concerned. The work is that of civilization . . . force must be employed” (Japanese Diplomat 1900: 200–01) by the civilized great powers of the West, with whom Japan aligned itself. Geopolitical arguments were also present, with Komuro Jutarō, the Japanese Minister to Russia, stressing on June 26, 1900, that “our country must always have a military and naval force equal at least to the strongest power in China so that we will not be left out of the united European group at the time of the final solution of the incident” (Mayo 1970: 79).

At the time, in Russia, the Orientalist painter Vasily Vereshchagin considered the events of July 1900 to be “the coming to life of ‘the yellow spectre . . . the dragon’s first blows’” (Oye 2001: 207–08). He warned that “the danger of a new assault from the East is very great and virtually inevitable in the future . . . a multimillion yellow faced army . . . the Asiatic hordes” (208). Even as Western forces were moving into Beijing, Vereshchagin was still concerned about the longer-term military implications of the demographic imbalance between the two empires, where “killing 20,000, 50,000, or even 1000,000 of them is literally a drop in the ocean. With their philosophical

indifference to death, they will just keep coming at our cannon and our rifles. They will march in the hundreds of thousands, in the millions!" (207). Ukhtomski's 1900 essay "K Sobytiyam v Kitai" (On the Events in China) also saw longer-term challenges from China since "finally humiliated people . . . are bound to be roused and rise in all their mass" and "entire regions will be on fire" (Lukin 2003: 30). Moreover, Western technology introduced into China could be turned against the West, with Chinese workers likely "to be the most dangerous competitor for those [in the West] who now, gritting their teeth, carry the burden of capitalism" (30). In Ukhtomski's view, Western technology allied to Western expansionism "will artificially rouse . . . the normally good-natured giant [China] . . . to secure some power, glory, and wealth, to enjoy success and status among other nations, and domination of the Pacific Ocean" (30).

Britain sent troops as well. Admittedly, Edward Parker's comments in July-August 1900 were much more critical of the West than those in early June, recommending that the Western powers "pack up our traps and clear out of Kia Chou, Port Arthur, Talién Wan, Wei-hai Wei, and Kwang-chou Wan, leaving the hoary old Empire of China one more chance of regaining its dignity" (1903: 57). Ethically the West's position was questionable: "The whole leasehold or 'sphere' business is, as the lawyers say, vitiated by a sour of initial fraud" and "it is this sense of elementary justice denied to it by powerful foes that has nerved up the venerable old carcass to run amuck" and "make one desperate final bid for unfettered and independent existence in the shocking way we now see" (57). Moreover, "it is the monstrous combination of extraterritorial jurisdiction with [aggressive missionary] religion which so rankles in the Chinese mind" and "unless we temper our militant zeal with plain common-sense humanity, we men of European race will continue for ever abhorrent in the eyes of one-third of our kind" (79). Evoking Chinese perspectives, with "America and Australia driving the Chinese from their shores . . . can it be wondered that their [China's] gorge . . . now rises at the spectacle of so much one-sidedness, unfairness, and bullying . . . we have no right to whimper and talk about 'treachery'" (70–71). However, sentiment for intervention was stronger. In the United States, Boulger's paper "America's Share in a Partition of China" felt "the anti-foreign sentiments of the Chinese masses . . . will leave no practical alternative. The world will have to uphold the common interests of humanity and civilization," in which "the continued existence of a Chinese Empire is not necessary" (1900b: 171). Consequently, "the states of the world can themselves come to a mutual understanding . . . [over] the division of the responsibilities of the defunct Chinese Empire," namely, to "to treat the Chinese question as a common interest, and to take timely steps to prevent the Yellow Peril from becoming a menace to them all" (181).

Naval operations were attempted by Britain, at Tianjin and along the Yangzi, although their limitations were soon apparent. Old-style "naval impe-

rialism," "gunboat diplomacy," in other words, from afar was insufficient, as Chinese resistance on the ground was "beyond . . . even the most spirited cutlass-wielding midshipman" (Ion 2005: 55). Ground forces were needed. Nevertheless, despite the limitations of naval forces, it was significant that naval contingents from Britain's Australian dependents were involved as well, from Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia. As one Australian politician put it, "It is because we are the outlying frontier of the white race upon this continent of yellow barbarism that the particular duty is cast upon us of doing all we can to stem the awful danger that is now before . . . the whole white population of the world" (Strahan 1996: 164).

The United States also lent troops, though somewhat uneasily along the more blatant imperialist and annexationist tendencies of its "allies," for whom the U.S. Open Door, hands-off policy enunciated in 1899 was already somewhat tattered (M. Young 1968). Mark Dunnell emphasized Western rights in China: "China is not a full sovereign state. The treaties which were forced upon her by war materially limit her sovereignty and make her, in a very real sense, the ward of the Western powers" and "a menace to the peace of the world by reason of her weakness" (1900: 274). This was a paradoxical situation whereby "the present anti-foreign outbreak is certain to mark a new era in our relations with China . . . The peril was common to all foreigners, and could be effectively met only by joint action," in which "when order is restored a conference of the powers will undoubtedly be called to determine the future international status of China . . . under foreign direction and control so that she may discharge her international obligations" (275). China would be the object of international discussions, rather than an equal participatory member in such discussions.

Dunnell's "rights" could slide into John Barrett's "duty," with similar consequences. Barrett's *America's Duty in China* drew a picture of Social Darwinism, "in the competition of nations, in a struggle where the principle of the survival of the fittest has its stern and cruel application," as "China and the allied nations of the world are in deadly struggle . . . our Anglo-Saxon race, our Anglo-Saxon religions, our Anglo-Saxon systems of society and government are at stake" (1900: 146). The U.S. role was crucial, though, in this struggle. He thought this would be no great problem, since "toward what country has China the most friendly feeling? Without doubt, America. For a long time she has recognized us as the only country desiring none of her territory, and wishing to maintain only and always the most amicable relations with her" (148). As for emigration issues, Barrett felt that "even the Chinese Exclusion Act [of 1892] has cut little figure in Chinese-American relations, for its operation has been felt only by a small portion of Chinese in the southern part of the Empire" (148).

Amid "all the confusion of the present and the mystery of the future" there seemed, for Barrett, two "dominant considerations" (1900: 148). First,

“America is the logical arbiter of China’s future” (148). Second, “if there is a Yellow Peril threatening the White World, America, more than any other Power, can lead the way to rendering it colorless and innocuous,” because “the United States is the one nation, from its remarkable strength of position, that can exercise the vigorous moral influence and leadership in the coming negotiations of the Powers” (148). Such negotiations “will assure the settlement of the present crisis” in two ways: “First, with strict justice and honor to all nations concerned, and, second, with no selfish scramble for territory that will lead to the violent break-up of The Empire and the ultimate shutting of the Open Door” (148). Whether the United States really had such a great moral position, given its immigration policies, is of course a moot point.

The Boxer uprising was crushed as the international relief force reached Beijing on August 14, 1900, amid much paraphernalia. Its forces were drawn from Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the United States, as well as token units from Austria-Hungary, Belgium, and Italy. As politicians settled down to draw up a longer-term settlement, the Allied Intervening Powers’ Joint Note bluntly talked of how “crimes unprecedented in human history—crimes against the law of nations, against the laws of humanity, and against civilization—were committed under particularly odious circumstances” (Rockhill 1904: 293) by China. Such sentiments were the lever for deliberate draconian measures toward China, in Tang Liangli’s memory “the Attilian vengefulness and the barbaric excesses of the Allied forces in Peking” (1928: 217). William Manning’s judgment, ten years later from the point of view of international law, was that Allied measures were “the culmination of a series of national humiliations that humbled China’s proud spirit to the dust and finally broke down the resistance which had for centuries withstood the efforts of Western civilization to gain an entrance” (1910: 848). For the moment, as the multinational forces patrolled Beijing, China’s humiliation was complete. William Martin’s description, from the occupied capital, was explicit over how the inhabitants had been “effectively cowed . . . the proud city, the Babylon of the East, is brought down to dust” (1900: 138) with a “triumphal march into the penetralia of the Forbidden City, in order to impress the Chinese Court with a sense of humiliation, and convince the Chinese people of the victory of the foreign forces” (139). As troops fanned across Beijing and the region, in the aftermath of the direct fighting came what Hevia called “symbolic warfare . . . another kind of warfare, an assault on what they understood as important symbols of Chinese sovereignty . . . activities that profaned the sacred space of China and humiliated the Chinese emperor” (1992: 304), and humiliated China itself.

Such punitive psychological and actual retribution was denounced in some Western circles. Robert Hart was quick to lift the lid on the behavior by interventionist troops (1976: 1240–41). *Guardian* reporter Harry Thomson’s account detailed among interventionist troops “a kind of frenzy, in which all sense of right and wrong was obliterated . . . a blind desire for

vengeance and slaughter . . . the mad lust for blood . . . and the brutal deeds” (1902: 124), so that “Peking after the assault was a sight not soon to be forgotten” (125). There, “every Chinaman who could do so had fled, and for the first few days the city was a regular Golgotha, an abomination of desolation . . . few cared how much the Chinese suffered” (125). William Stead talked of “Christendom the Criminal” (1901a: 43), and its associated “‘Christian’ Rape . . . a crusade of lust” (43–44). From the *Daily Telegraph*, Emil Dillon’s visit through northern China painted a similar picture of “harrowing tragedy” (1901: 1), the “dire sights . . . the doings of some of the apostles of culture were so heinous” (8), inflicted on China by outside “bloodshed, rapine, and rape” (21) and “abominations” (23). In a reflective vein, Dillon also pointed out that “China has never meddled in European affairs, never given the Powers any just cause of complaint. In fact her chief sin consists in her obstinate refusal to put herself in a state to do either,” for “she is not encroaching upon the territory of others, although her population has become too numerous for her own” (31). As to consequences, only time would tell as “the policy of the Powers is a sowing of the wind, and the harvest reaped will surely be a whirlwind. But that belongs to ‘the music of the future’” (31).

Under the imposed Protocols of Beijing of September 1901, Chinese forts were demolished, foreign troops were given stationing rights in northern China and in Beijing itself, restrictions were placed on China’s further armaments and a heavy indemnity was imposed of 450,000 taels to be paid over the next thirty-nine years, with interest! China had reached something of a nadir within the international system. As William Martin put it, China “finds herself completely under the power of the eight mightiest nations of the globe. They are in the saddle, with their bit in the ass’s [China’s] mouth” (1901b: 20). Geoculture lurked in his mind the “heathen darkness” represented by China, “the dragon, who has now been cast down before the Soldiers of the Cross” (30).

AUTUMNAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE BOXER REVOLT

As the occupation forces settled down and the Protocols of Beijing were being drafted, autumnal perspectives emerged on the summer events. Religious factors were crucial for the Reverend Francis Clark. He dismissed China, reckoning that it was in a “pitiable state of weakness and decay . . . China is the Empire of the Dead. It is ruled by a Dead Hand. Its glories are all in the past” (1900: 376). As to the future, “the missionary is opening the Chinaman’s eyes to the folly of his old superstitions. The missionary is unsealing the Chinaman’s ears, that he may hear the tramp of the advancing nations of the twentieth century,” for “the brighter day may be long in coming to distracted China, but it is on the way” (388).

Other commentators were more materialistic about China. Alleyne Ireland's article on the Yellow Peril evoked China's population "in the coming struggle for race supremacy" (1900: 399). There, "a glance at the map shows that the natural outlet for Chinese expansion is in Thibet, Burmah, Cochin-China and Siam" (398). Indeed, even as the intervention forces from the West and Japan were marching into the Chinese capital, a longer-term Chinese prospect was envisaged by Ireland, whereby "the allies have encountered with surprise a military China very different from the one engaged in the Chino-Japanese war of 1894–1895," and "it is reasonably certain that recent experiences will be followed by an enormous increase of the naval and military forces of the [Qing] Empire" (400). Again it was a basic question of China's demographic weight: "With 400,000,000 people to draw from, with the revenue which a reformed Administration could procure from such a population, and with unlimited natural resources of the country at her disposal," such that "China could easily make herself the dominant power of the Far East" (400). Not only was China a potential long-term security threat, she was also a potential economic rival: "The industrial development which may be expected to follow even a moderate degree of internal reform, if accompanied by the adoption of Western industrial methods, will soon set China at work seeking foreign markets" (388). However, "if she finds her goods shut out from Japan, from Russia and French Asia, from the Philippines, and from the Dutch East Indies, China may be forced to follow the example of Great Britain and occupy large tracts of land for trade purposes," with "a powerful and united China, driven, through the narrow commercial policy of the more civilized Powers, into a fight for markets" (400).

Amid the furor of Western denunciations of Chinese barbarism, the *China Review's* profile of "Chinese as Warriors" argued that "the Chinese are a peace-loving people, averse to fighting," an aversion "found in the teachings of the sages" (1900: 80) like Confucius and Mencius. Since "the warlike spirit, then, is distinctly condemned by the sages; it has never been fostered by imperial attention; and so, as a national trait it is almost distinct" (82). This talk, in effect, was to be echoed almost a century later (A. Johnston 1995; Scobell 2005), in debate over the Confucian-Mencian tradition generating a Chinese strategic culture that continued to be averse to offensive war inclinations. The immediate implications were that "this being so, there is no reasonable fear that China will ever become a war-loving people, or exercise any appreciable influence on the balance of power among the nations of the world" (*China Review* 1900: 82).

From a Japanese perspective, Yukio Ozaki considered that "the Sick Man of the Far East [China] is much nearer dissolution than the Ottoman Empire is, or ever has been. China's malady is mortal . . . the hour-glass is running down apace" (1900: 574). In an IR realism-realpolitik frame of mind, Ozaki suggested that "as long as there is an abundance of meat, even dogs refrain

from snarling and fighting, and nations should surely be wiser than dogs" (574) through cooperating in a carve up of China! Yet international norms had been bandied about by James Angell, who had considered that under international law "the attack upon the legations . . . was the most stupendous and audacious crime of that kind recorded in history" (1900: 434). Nevertheless, he still noted that the "Chinese have special grievances . . . the imposition of obnoxious treaties on them by force," where "the Western man regards his civilization as so far superior to that of the eastern man that he looks down with a certain contempt on him" (435).

In retrospect, Mahan's analysis, "Asiatic Conditions and International Policies," was also significant for looking at internal conditions and external implications for the region. On the one hand were Mahan's immediate post-Boxer comments, that "during the summer just past, a common insult and the common danger of a great calamity, have forced upon the nations of European civilization [in which he specifically included Japan] the recognition of their solidarity of interest as towards Asia" (1900b: 609). On the other hand were his continuing geopolitical comments on the importance of maritime power across the Pacific and into China itself. Mahan considered that American projection was crucial to retain open commerce routes and to avert China falling under the sway of any one outside power, especially Russia and Japan. He also felt that "the close approach and contact of Eastern and Western civilization, and the resultant mutual effects, are matters which can no longer be disregarded or postponed . . . Contact and interaction have begun; the process can neither be turned back nor arrested" (615). Iriye's framework of "international relations as intercultural relations" was in effect being foreshadowed by this hard-bitten geopolitical strategist.

By the end of the year, Vladimir Lenin was commenting in "The War in China" on how "at the present time, the press is conducting a campaign against the Chinese; it is howling about the savage yellow race . . . straining every nerve to rouse the hatred of the people against China" (1900: 376). However, Lenin's own trenchant perspective was "how can the Chinese not hate those [imperialists] who have come to China solely for the sake of gain; who have utilised their vaunted civilisation solely for the purpose of deception, plunder, and violence," and "who have waged wars against China in order to win the right to trade in opium with which to drug the people . . . and who hypocritically carried their policy of plunder under the guise of spreading Christianity?" (373). Consequently, "one after another the European governments began feverishly to loot, or, as they put it, to 'rent' Chinese territory, giving good grounds for the talk of the partition of China," in which "they began to rob China as ghouls rob corpses, and when the seeming corpse attempted to resist, they flung themselves upon it like savage beasts" (374). The language was typically emotive, but pointing to a structurally humiliating situation that was perceived as such in China.

Equally damning, and more widely heard, was Mark Twain's famous caustic blast against interventionist claims, in his 1901 tract "To the Person Sitting in the Darkness," in which he portrayed the Boxers as "traded patriots" trying to defend a China with "a better civilization than ours, and holier and higher and nobler" (1901: 5–6). Conversely, Twain denounced Western intervention as "rapacity . . . extortion . . . the elephant's assault upon the field-mice . . . a massacre . . . all swimming in Chinese blood . . . yet another Civilized Power, with its banner of the Prince of Peace in one hand and its loot-basket and its butcher-knife in the other" (5–6). It was a one-sided application of power by the international system against, and onto, China.

CHINESE PERSPECTIVES

Chinese voices were, not surprisingly, bitter when heard. One sort of "Chinese" voice was heard in *Letters from John Chinaman*, actually penned by the Cambridge academic Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, though many took him to be Chinese on account of the authentic ring of his comments. Dickinson pointed out the double standards involved in the intervention, amid the "looting, wanton destruction, cold-blooded murder and rape" of "ill-disciplined troops" (1901: 18). For him, the Boxer upsurge "serves only to prove how intense must have been the provocation" (41), as the West "humiliated the proudest nation in the world" (44) in its various interventions in China during the nineteenth century. As to the future, despite the outside triumph, "the whirlwind of war may ruffle the surface of the sea, may fleck with foam its superficial currents, it will never shake or trouble the clear unfathomable deep which is the still and brooding soul of China" (29). Instead, Dickinson's Chinese creation John Chinaman could tell, or perhaps threaten, the West that "it is the nations of Christendom who have come to us to teach us by fire and words that Right in this world is powerless unless it is supported by Might! . . . we have learnt the lesson! And woe to Europe," for "you are arming a nation of four hundred millions! . . . In the name of Christ you have sounded the call to arms! In the name of Confucius, we respond" (40).

Authentic Chinese voices were of course present, though often drowned out by the vociferous West. Nevertheless, macro-clashes were perceived by Ko Taw Sein: "The terror of the 'Yellow Peril' is confronted by that of the 'White Peril'" (Ko 1901: 77). Gam Jee brought up "the bitter feelings aroused by the greedy grabbing of Chinese territory by the different Powers," with Gam asking, "Does any one wonder that the Chinese felt harsh toward the foreigners? If anyone has any doubt in this regard, let him just put himself in a Chinaman's place and he will know it at once" (1900: 171). One legacy for the Chinese psyche was the subsequent designation of the signing of the post-Boxer Protocols of Beijing as National Humiliation Day, some-

thing for Chinese patriots to commemorate as a stain from the past, something to be reversed in the future.

From a Chinese point of view, the Boxer Movement could be seen as internal national resistance to external national humiliation. One such point of view came in Wen Ching's *The Chinese Crisis from Within*. Wen felt "that it is absolutely essential that the people of Europe should know something of the claims, the grievances and the hardships which have driven a section of a long suffering nation to declare war against the rest of the world" (1901: 285). Some of the grievances came from the Chinese against their domestic Manchu overlords, but they were also against the external oppression from the West, where "the 'Yellow Peril' has for some time been a spectre in the European imagination" (287). Wen noted hypocrisy from the West: "While the white men were shutting the doors of their different colonies or settlements against the Chinese, they were claiming unheard of rights in the native land of the very people to whom they had denied rights and privileges" (288). On the one hand, through "the anomalous conditions of 'extraterritoriality,' the European and American subjects claim the right of residence in China for various purposes." Yet, on the other hand, "the American and Australian Governments, forbid Chinese subjects, under heavy penalties, even from entry into their respective countries" (288). On the one hand, "the dangers which the White Man's presence involve [in China] are more terrible than those of the Yellow Peril" (326), while, on the other hand, "with their native industry, their inborn frugality, their dogged perseverance . . . the unfortunate Chinese have been made the object of calumny and ridicule, and they have been shut out from the place where they could seriously compete with white labourers" (327).

REEMERGENCE OF A CHINA THREAT PERCEPTION

Despite being crushed by the Allied intervention and the terms of the Protocols of Beijing, China could emerge as a threat for the West in various ways, with race perceptions not far from the surface. Carlos Closson's "race patriotism" in the international system led him to view the Chinese as "a population uniformly hardy and industrious, but uniformly devoid of any talent of the faculty of initiating progress . . . without the presence of men of pioneering genius and high talents such as leaven the masses among the Europeans" (1900: 88). In such a vein, American restrictions were a reasonable enough process in "protecting [U.S.] citizens and their standard of living against further Chinese immigration," against "the infiltration of inferior races" from the "land of the dragon" (77). Though considering the Chinese inferior to Americans, he also reckoned that "the Chinese are probably destined to be the great colonizers of the tropics" where "their enormous fecundity will force them to expand" (88). All in all, there was "the danger of future domination

of the world by a Pan-Chinese alliance. Once established amid the vast resources of the tropics, the Coolie [Chinese] population would probably double about every twenty years” (92). Consequently, “the yellow peril prophesied by various Cassandras—some of whom, like, for example, Sir Robert Hart, no one will accuse of hysteria—would begin to loom up with vastly greater proportions than as at presently discerned” (92). It is worth noting the way in which the opinions of authorities like Robert Hart were bandied about by others and helped shape widespread images of China.

Closson’s evocation of Hart, head of China’s Imperial Maritime Customs Service and a resident of China for almost half a century, was deliberate. Hart’s insider-outsider observations were far-reaching. For Hart, on November 15, 1900, “the fact will remain that China will go along a new road to gather strength and that foreign invasion will be met in another way next time” (1976: 1247), in which “the arming of the people . . . will be taken in hand more seriously and the future will have a different China to deal with” (1248). The following month, Hart argued “that the future will have a ‘Yellow’ question—perhaps a ‘yellow peril’—to deal with, is as certain as that the sun will shine tomorrow” (1900: 136). These were the sorts of comments used by Closson and others. The following year, Hart speculated about “the Boxers of the future,” who would again be “armed, drilled, disciplined, and animated by patriotism—if mistaken motives” (1901: 54). They would “make residence in China impossible for foreigners . . . take back from foreigners everything foreigners have taken from them and pay off old grudges with interest” (54); and “they will carry the Chinese flag and Chinese armies into many a place that even fancy will not suggest today, thus preparing for the future, upheavals and disasters never even dreamt of” (55).

Extended treatment of China’s role in the international system came in John Hobson’s analysis *Imperialism*, which was trenchant enough in its immediate criticisms but also thoughtful on longer-term possibilities. On the one hand was his sense of China’s weakness in the international system, faced as it was by “the series of forceful moves by which France, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, and Japan have fastened their political and economic fangs into some special portion of the body of China” (1902: 327). However, given “the ferocious reprisals of the recent war [Boxer Revolt of 1900] . . . it is now hardly possible for anyone who has carefully followed recent events to speak of Europe undertaking a ‘mission of civilisation’ in China without his tongue in cheek” (328). China’s immediate military threat was negligible, “unless China can be roused quickly from the sleep of countless centuries of peace and can transform herself into a powerful military nation, she cannot escape the pressure of the external powers” (329). Such external constraints were reinforced by internal constraints: “The whole genius of the Chinese peoples, so far as it is understood, is opposed to militant patriotism and to the strongly centralised government required to give effect to such a policy” (330)—

strategic culture, in other words. Consequently, “the notion of China organising an army of six millions under some great general, and driving ‘the foreign devil’ out of the country, or even entering herself upon a career of invasion and conquest, ignores the chief psychological and social factors of Chinese life” (329), her pacifist strategic culture.

On the other hand, in the economic arena China loomed large. Initially for Hobson, “China seems to offer a unique opportunity to the Western business man. A population of some four hundred millions . . . opens up dazzling prospects of profitable exploitation” (327, 328), for “establishing vast new market for Western investors” (337). However, in the longer term, Hobson considered that “the real drama will begin when the forces of international capitalism, claiming to represent the civilisation of united Christendom, are brought to bear on the peaceful opening up of China. It is then that the real ‘yellow peril’ will begin” (333). The peril was that China, “quickly assimilating what they [the West] have to give, may re-establish her own economic independence, finding out of her own resources the capital and organising skill required for the machine industries” (336). From such a base, a rejuvenated China “may quickly launch herself upon the world-market as the biggest and most effective competitor, taking to herself first the trade of Asia and the Pacific, and then swamping the free markets of the West” (336). Such economic considerations were to reemerge a hundred years later.

China also remained as a longer-term threat for some other observers. In Arthur Smith’s *China in Convulsion*, the Boxer uprising and Western intervention had exposed “those Chinese pretensions which have never been and are not yet abandoned . . . the humiliation of China before the Powers . . . great issues hang upon the outcome, both for China and the World” (1901: 2.734). Not surprisingly, having been a missionary in China for twenty-nine years, Smith saw the future as needing “the wide diffusion of Christianity in its best form . . . to convert China into the friendliest of friendly powers” (2.738). Otherwise, “unless China is essentially altered she will continue to ‘imperil the world’s future’” (2.739). Other figures discerned China’s potentiality. Although China had been defeated, Charles Denby judged that “the [Boxer] riots of 1900, too, have contributed to change the situation,” for “things are not as they were before. An immense power has been developed to do harm and injury” (1902: 2.238–39). Consequently, “whatever China may be, she is not what she was generally called,—‘a sleepy Colossus.’ She has shown that she can be very wide awake indeed,” although “her strength [is] controlled and directed by some more advanced power” (2.238–39).

Arthur Moule offered some comfort to China. In part this was over the Boxer events, where “savage as the Boxer outbreak was in many places,” it “may be regarded in some true sense as a patriotic movement, suggested and stimulated in its recent outbreak by the glaring aggressions, and ever-growing territorial demands, of some Western powers” (1902: ix). Despite being

crushed by intervention troops, Moule still perceived a post-Boxer “China roused and rising” (iii–xvi). In part, this was through well established demographic images of how “old and reviving China has within her long-closed gates or gates ajar, a population so vast” (v); that “it is well for Russia to remember and for Europe to reflect that still more urgent necessities may compel China to overflow, and inundate neighbouring or more remote regions” (vii). Geodemographic nuances were still explicit: “Over-flowing with ever-increasing rapidity . . . the exigencies of population, and the dead weight of her enormous reserve strength, may make China before long” (7) a rising power. China could regain her old Middle Kingdom preeminence, could become “a leader and arbiter as well . . . in this new world of ours, as she held also in the old; guiding and governing those Eastern regions without the interfering touch of Western rule” (viii).

However, amid Moule’s macrotalk of global power balances, equally graphic images of Russia, “the gathering shadow of this northern colossus” (vii), were present. Moule wondered, “must, then, that gigantic northern power overshadow and then embrace in dark arms China,” or would the West “recognize in China one of the greatest and most important barriers against this slowly sliding avalanche of Northern [Russian] inroad?” (viii). It is to Russia that we now turn.

RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICS

Involvement in the Boxer Revolt not only saw Russia dispatch troops to Beijing, but also saw it tighten its grip in Manchuria. Around 170,000 Russian troops were deployed there against Boxer activities, in the overlooked Russo-Chinese War of 1900 (Lensen 1967). Russian “atrocities” at Harbin and Blagoveshchensk included “indiscriminate arson, plunder, rape and murder” (D. Price 1974: 171). Yet, for some Russians, China remained a paradoxical enigma. In Ukhtomski’s words, “This impenetrable whole of four hundred millions seems to us at the same time a living threat for the future, and yet in a certain sense a negligible quantity . . . a politically decrepit but economically youthful Celestial Empire” (1902: 788). As to the future: “Potentially the land of the Son of Heaven is something so immense and potent” (796) that “this great nation, now so unjustly treated will of its own accord demand a proportionate share of power, glory and wealth, of success and weight in the assembly of nations which flourish around the Pacific Ocean” (797). This was no mere cultural rebirth, for as China “grows strong, imperceptibly . . . she will certainly in time acquire a formidable fleet, and then the struggle for existence will follow its course with pitiless logic” (797). Yet again, international competition rooted in Social Darwinism was coupled with geopolitical trends.

More immediate ongoing demographic issues remained of concern to many Russian observers, though. Levitov’s *Zheltaia Rossiia* (Yellow Russia)

painted, in 1901, a picture of population shift: "The territory between the Baikal and the border with Manchuria, we can easily observe there is very little Russian there. The Russian element in that territory is an insignificant handful of people among the dominant mass of the yellow skinned" (Lukin 2003: 58). Economic issues overlapped with demographic and military-security issues. Russian debates referred to *Vopros o zheltom trude* (The Question of Yellow Labor), where "[Chinese] labour power was necessary, but their presence was a constant reminder of the yellow peril" (Siegelbaum 1978: 317–18). At a regional conference held at Khabarovsk in 1903, a dramatic picture was painted: "Every speech exhibited helplessness in resisting the impending [demographic-strategic] storm. Some of the members presented in the darkest colours the future calamity and insisted on drastic measures," in which "the Chinese should not be allowed to enter the frontiers of Russia, those who had settled down should be expelled—such was the keynote of the oratory" (VI 1903). Kuropatkin reiterated his own worries in 1903 about how "as northern Manchuria's inhabitants continue to grow, so does the danger that yellow floodwaters [Chinese immigrants] will inundate Priamuria's small Russian oases" (Oye 2001: 98). These fears were noticed outside Russia: "the Russians . . . have been alarmed of late, and with good reason, by the prospect that their East Siberian possessions may be overrun by Chinese, a catastrophe which they will certainly do their utmost to prevent" (A. Coolidge 1908: 77).

Traditional demographic fears were certainly evident in Stolypin's famous warning to the Russian Duma in 1908 about the Amur region, where "having a densely populated country [China] as our neighbor, this border territory will not stay deserted. The foreigner will penetrate it unless the Russian comes there before him" (Lukin 2002: 88). This was no hypothesis: "This [Chinese] penetration has already begun. If we are lethargic, the area will become saturated with alien saps and when we awake it may already be Russian in name only" (88). Sakhanskii's 1909 book on railway line construction in the Amur, a strategic as well as economic project, warned of how the border area was being "energetically settled by migrants from China" (Siegelbaum 1978: 322). On the one hand, he felt there were future dangers there of being "brought face to face with a powerful enemy, capable of equipping a million-man army and having in Manchuria an access route," while on the other hand advocating that "the sooner the Amur and maritime districts are settled [by Russians] the more solidly will the state strengthen its control over the Far Eastern region, and the less it will have to concern itself about the yellow peril" (322).

Russian imperialism could, however, continue to hope to use its more obvious military advantage. Russian fears of a potential future demographic threat from China were more than matched by Chinese concerns about actual present territorial threat from Russia: "Of all the nations which threatened and humiliated China from 1896 to 1911, Russia was, on balance, the

most conspicuous” (D. Price 1974: 165). The Port Arthur newspaper *Novyi Krai* (The New Land) looked forward in its January 1901 issue to “Russia’s Eastern Century”: China was “constrained . . . hemmed in by the Tsar’s realms on its western, northern, and northeastern borders” (Oye 2001: 198). From a position of apparent Russian geopolitical advantage, “heathen China offers untold opportunities for Christian missions and Russian enlightenment” (198). Such sentiments were apparent at the highest levels, with Sergei Witte telling the czar in July 1903 that the challenge for the West was “to obtain as large a share as possible of the inheritance of the outlived oriental states, especially of the Chinese Colossus . . . the absorption by Russia of a considerable part of the Chinese Empire is only a question of time” (Witte 1921: 122). However, such political opportunities in China were matched by demographic dangers from China, also highlighted to the czar by Witte in 1903, that “in order to be the victors in a possible future struggle with the Yellow race, we must establish a bulwark of Russian population along our frontier with China which would have sufficient strength as well as those of the Empire” (J. White 1964: 28).

While it was Russia that could seem an obvious inheritor of the Mongol mantle across Eurasia, it is also significant that Halford Mackinder’s seminal paper “The Geographical Pivot of History” did not just pinpoint the more immediate positions of potential dominance of Eurasia by Russia. Mackinder also alluded to possible longer-term geopolitical threats from China and Japan to the pivotal Eurasia region, “were the Chinese, for instance, organized by the Japanese, to overthrow the Russian Empire and conquer its territory, they might constitute the Yellow Peril to the world’s freedom,” because “they could add an oceanic frontage to the resources of the great continent, an advantage as yet denied to the Russian tenant of the pivot region” (1904: 437). Russian sources were also concerned about such a Sino-Japanese “yellow” alignment. Thus, the Russian ambassador Planzson warned his foreign minister, Lamzdorf, May 22, 1903, of “an alliance hostile to the Europeans among the yellow races under the aegis of Japan, that is, to a ‘yellow peril’ . . . for the civilized world . . . it is only certain that with the influence of Japan on China, we must even now give it serious consideration” (Paine 1996: 246).

Nevertheless, in the immediate term it was Russia’s grip on Manchuria that seemed more apparent. Lenin’s critique was that “the issue is ‘Yellow Russia,’ the issue is Manchuria . . . the new lands seized by the Russian Government,” where “[Russia] had promised all the other powers to preserve the inviolability of China, it had promised to return Manchuria to China not later than October 8, 1903, and it had failed to honour its promise” (1904: 112). Instead, “the tsarist government had so run away with itself in its policy of military adventures and plunder of its neighbours that it found no strength to go back,” where “in ‘Yellow Russia [Manchuria]’ it has built forti-

fications and ports, it has laid a railway line and has concentrated tens of thousands of troops" (112). In doing so it had come up against not only China in potential terms, but also Japan in actual terms.

XINZHENG REFORMS AND CHINESE NATIONALISM

Such talk of Japanese influences on China was wrapped up in final attempts at Qing state-led reform. The Empress Dowager Cixi's return to Beijing saw her chastened by the Boxer debacle, ready to "share in the national humiliation" (Bland and Blackhouse 1914: 259) and ready to present reform in the so-called *Xinzheng* (New Policies) program. Her Reform Edict, of January 29, 1901, was announced in terms that would have outraged the Boxers, as an attempt "to devote ourselves fully to China's revitalization . . . and to blend together the best of what is Chinese and what is foreign," for "the root of China's weakness lies in harmful habits too firmly entrenched . . . the ruin of our realm lies in one word *li*, or narrow precedent" (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 286). The West had to be engaged: "China has neglected the deeper dimensions of the West . . . if China disregards the essentials of Western learning and merely confines its studies to surface elements . . . how can it possibly achieve wealth and power" (286)? It concluded simply and starkly, "now things are at a crisis point where change must occur, to transform weakness into strength. Everything depends on how the change is effected" (287).

Zhang Zhidong was prominent in the ranks of the reformers. In a *Memoir*, of July 19, 1901, Zhang argued that reform was crucially connected with China's struggle in the world of "opposing humiliation and resisting aggression" (CRW 1976: 200). The stakes were high: "Foreign aggression is becoming daily more serious . . . the people admire the wealth of foreign countries and despise the poverty of the Middle Kingdom. Seeing the strength of foreign soldiers, they are sick of the timidity of their own government's troops" (199). Consequently, "our people believe in the foreign religions, merchants display foreign flags and schools register in the names of foreign nationals. All has resulted in a disunited and disillusioned national morale" (199). Foreign perceptions were important, "so that all countries may see China's determination to exert every effort to become strong, whereupon their habits of despising and insulting us may gradually die out" (205). All in all, "the weakness of China today is extreme. Great catastrophes have come in succession and foreign aggression daily press upon us. It is the moment for us to arise and exert ourselves" (206).

The actual domestic impact in China of the *Xinzheng* program is not the focus of this study, though suffice it to say it was probably too little, too late to save a still too "alien" non-Chinese Manchu dynasty (Ichiko 1980). It also revealed internal divisions, coming up against reformist-inclined local elites who saw it as impinging on their own turf—for Rankin, "a clash between the

continuing mobilization of core-area elites and a new attempt at aggressive state-building by the Qing government” (1986: 27). However, what is of particular significance here are two features. First, as initiated by the court, there was a sense of trying not just to retain dynastic power but also to try to make China a strong nation in the world. Second is the way in which reform at the state and intellectual levels was deeply connected with Japan, both a menace and example, objectively and subjectively.

Gordon Casserly’s profile of China as *The Land of the Boxers* was subtitled “China under the Allies,” an accurate enough gloss. Casserly pondered that China could still “reform and become a power too formidable to be lightly offended” (1903: 292). Indeed, “all that Japan has come, China may yet be. Nay, more,” since “the undeveloped [mineral] wealth of the latter is enormous . . . the soil is incredibly fertile, and her people are naturally intelligent” (293–94). Although “the Chinese soldier is regarded with universal contempt” (294) in the West, “in 1900 he first showed what splendid material he is . . . it is absurd to suppose that the Chinaman cannot learn the art of modern warfare” (296). As to the future, “why should he not become a more formidable fighting-man? . . . Think of a warlike army recruited from a population of 400,000,000; at its back a reformed China, its resources developed” (297), in which “filled with patriotic pride . . . signs of the Great Awakening are at hand” (298). The shock of the Boxer Revolt coupled with potential renewal was worrying for Marshall Broomhall. He judged that now “the tables are turned, and alarming visions of ‘the Yellow peril’ now haunt those who but as yesterday thought that China might be easily carved out among themselves” (Holcombe 1904: v). For Broomhall, it was not the past that was at issue; “it is the future of China which is now the real Chinese question . . . the future of an empire which contains one-fourth of the entire population of the world must materially affect every other country in the world” (Holcombe 1904: v). Reform remained the big issue, but reform of what—China’s international setting or its external restraints imposed under the Unequal Treaties and the international system? Reform, but reform leading where? As the profile “The Imperfect Sympathy of the East and West” run by the *North China Herald* on October 1, 1902, put it, “practically nothing has been done towards the real ‘settlement’ of the great, the pressing, the international question of the relation of the Chinese people to the Powers of the World. What is to be done is altogether a matter still in future tenses.”

Arthur Judson Brown’s 1904 *New Forces in Old China* was subtitled “An Inevitable Awakening.” Admittedly, in retrospect, there was a somewhat “apocalyptic tone” (Utley 1991: 120) to his work, with Brown “drawn to his topic as bystanders are drawn to a building on fire” (119). In Brown’s own words, there was something “fascinating and at the same time something appalling in the spectacle of a nation numbering nearly one-third of the human race slowly and majestically rousing itself from the torpor of ages

under the influence of new and powerful revolutionary forces" (1904: 1); for "no other movement of our age is so colossal, no other is more pregnant with meaning" (6). Despite Japan's more obvious rise, it was China's "possibilities of development that may in time make it a dominant factor in the future of the world" (17). Despite Japan's attempts to lead China, Brown reckoned, "It is not probable that so huge and virile a population as the Chinese will be permanently led by a foreign nation" (314). In the longer term lay "the vast latent forces of China . . . a coming power of the world" (310). There, "portentous possibilities are . . . conjured up by the contemplation of this mighty nation! . . . Give the 426,000,000 Chinese the results of modern discovery and invention, and imagination falters" (315). In structural terms, "They have the territory. They have the resources. They have the population and they are now acquiring the knowledge . . . The armies of China will soon be as well equipped as the armies of Europe" (315).

In that setting, and with specific regard to a discussion of the questionable existence of a Yellow Peril, Brown felt that "it is odd that any intelligent person should suppose that distance is an effectual barrier against an aroused and organized Asia," given that "it is no farther from China to Europe than from Europe to China, and Europe has not found the distance a barrier to its designs on China" (1904: 307). After all, "England, Germany, France, Russia, and even little Holland and Portugal . . . have all managed to send ships and troops to the Far East, to seize territory and to subjugate the inhabitants" (307). Thus, "why should it be deemed impossible for China, which alone is larger than all these nations combined, to do what they have done?" (307). In echoes of Kipling's uncertainties in his 1897 poem "Recessional," Brown also mused that "we observe the changing march of world powers . . . To-morrow, what? . . . some new Jenghiz Khan . . . with the weapons of modern warfare in his hands, and these uncounted [Chinese] millions at his command" (317). This was the widely envisaged nightmare, where "there is not a statesman in Europe to-day who is not troubled with dire forebodings regarding these teeming hordes, that appear to be just awakening from the torpor of ages" (318). Consequently, "all see that the next few decades are big with possibilities of peril . . . plainly, the overshadowing problem of the present age is the relation of China to the world's future" (318–19) and to the international system.

William Martin was struck by the potential implications of a Chinese awakening for the world. In his 1901 study *The Lore of Cathay*, it was a question that "for a long time the giant of the East has been rubbing his eyes. Each collision with foreign powers has had the effect of making him more conscious of his helpless condition and more ready to open his lids to the light of a new day" (1901: 7). By the time his volume *The Awakening of China* was published opening with a preface penned at Beijing on October 30, 1906, it was a question that "China is the theatre of the greatest movement now taking place on

the face of the globe” since “it promises nothing short of the complete renovation of the oldest, most populous, and most conservative of empires. Is there a people in either hemisphere that can afford to look on with indifference?” (1907: v). On the one hand, reform meant Westernization, “to seek new life by adopting the essentials of Western civilisation” (vi). Consequently, “their patriotism may indeed be tinged with hostility to foreigners,” but “will it not gain in breadth with growing intelligence . . . will they not come to perceive that their interests are inseparable from those of the great family [the international system] into which they are seeking admission?” (vi). On the other hand, other undertones were noticeable: “Yesterday the autumn manoeuvres of the grand army came to a close. They have shown that by the aid of her railways China is able to assemble a body of trained troops numbering 100,000 men” (vi). Indeed, “not content with this formidable land force, the Government has ordered the construction of the nucleus of a navy, to consist of eight armoured cruisers and two battleships. Five of these and three naval stations are to be equipped with the wireless telegraph” (vi).

Western missionary circles could see in such reforms openings for spreading Christianity. It was a leavening process, in the view of Hong Kong civil servant James Ball. “The little white stone of Western progress and Christianity have been cast into the well-nigh stagnant pool of Chinese thought . . . it is making itself felt at the heart of the nation” (Ball 1904: xi). Missionary hopes were on the rise, as with Arthur Smith’s *The Uplift of China* (1907b), Elliot Osgood’s *Breaking Down Chinese Walls* (1908), and Geo Bond’s *Our Share in China and What We Are Doing* (1909). As Arthur Smith put it for the American Baptist Missionary Union, “China is open! But who shall enter—Occidental civilization with her vices and materialism?—or the Church with her message of life and salvation? In this strategic period of transformation, shall not Christianity outstrip all other competitors?” (1907b: 19). He may have had his own geocultural religious assumptions, but there was also awareness of China’s wider potentiality, whereby “China is destined to play a leading part in the concert of nations” (19). This was because of size and location, classic geopolitics for China, for “with her two thousand miles of coast line facing the Pacific . . . with millions of cheap laborers and almost unlimited raw materials . . . with the peopling and development of the vast hinterland of Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet, and Turkestan,” he extrapolated, “Is it not reasonable to suppose that when the strongest race in the Orient is awakened, the mastery of the Pacific will be in the hands of the Chinese?” (19–20). Internal developments within China inherently affected the international system outside China: “The problem of China is to a large extent the problem of the world” (xiv).

One close observer of the Chinese *Xinzheng* reform announcements was Robert Hart. At its onset he wrote, on February 9, 1902, “It looks as though the era of change has really arrived,” for “the military spirit is awake and Yuan

Shih kai and men of his stamp will push it for all its worth; if Yuan lives thirty year, the China of 1932 will be very different indeed from that of 1902" (1976: 1301). As shall be seen, China in 1932 was under military threat from Japan, rather than posing its own threats. Announcements of military reforms in 1905, led by Yuan Shikai, were greeted with Hart's comments on October 22, 1905, that "with her immense population and resources the Chinese army of the future will count something in the world's doings," although "the Powers, in their Christian spirit, insisted on what has been inequality of treatment at every point, and the result is that China can't stand it and Mars [the god of war] is in the ascendant" (1483).

Australian voices remained acutely sensitive to envisaged threats from a rejuvenated China. The political debate in 1906 over an Australian Defense Force was partly, in the view of the Australian Defense League, because of the "recent awakening of China, with its 400,000,000 people in whom we can discern the beginnings of some military development and improved education, as well as the birth of national feeling" (DAIA 1977: 267-68). It was this potential of China that was the issue: "The danger in store [from China] for our half developed continent in the near future, unless we do our utmost to provide betimes an adequate system of defence, becomes apparent" (268).

Despite Japanese imperialism, Japan served as a model for the *Xinzheng* reformers, acting as a filter for Western influences and reflecting something of a "golden decade" (D. Reynolds 1993: 5; also Jensen 1980, Harrell 1993, Fogel 2004) in Sino-Japanese relations. In the light of Japanese expansionism against China, before and afterward, "it is noteworthy how Japan served as the incubator of revolution" (Schoppa 2006: 137) in China. In Shanghai, Timothy Richard considered such *Xinzheng* trends as fostering "the Renaissance of the East" (1903: 11). Within this process, he recognized "the effect of residence in Japan on those reformers who fled China immediately after the Chino-Japanese war, and the wide-spread Japanese propaganda in favour of an east Asian league" are "strong factors in the new China of today," in which "the Chinese factor is bound to have a large place in the future problems of the world" (11).

Talk of East Asian leagues raised the specter of Japan being able to use China's resources. German concerns over Japanese hegemony in China, using and thereby redirecting China's passive potential, were prominent for Kaiser Wilhelm II. On October 2, 1902, he warned, "Twenty to thirty million of trained Chinese . . . is a future to be contemplated not without anxiety; and not impossible. In fact it is the coming into reality of the 'Yellow Peril' which I depicted some years ago" (Wilhelm 1920: 90-91). Just over a year later he was warning Russia's Czar Nicholas II, October 4, 1903, of increasing military penetration of China by Japan: "The Japs are clandestinely arming the Chinese behind your and my backs against us . . . They are sure to

rouse Chinese hopes and inflame their hatred against the White Race in general and constitute a grave danger” (Wilhelm 1920: 100–01).

George Lynch described Japan’s “commercial invasion” and military training as indeed being the “Japanisation” (1903: 92) of China, “that underlying feeling that blood is thicker than water, that the community of colour and race and religion make them natural allies,” amid “the great dream, nebulous and yet unformed to definiteness—the dream of an awakened China” (100). New political forces were apparent: “That clever conspirator, Sen Yat Sen, said to me that once the Chinese made up their minds to change, they would effect in fifteen years as much as it has taken Japan thirty to accomplish,” with Lynch warning, “There are some men in the East who affect to regard this rapprochement between Japan and China with alarm, as carrying in its development the menace of a really genuine Yellow Peril” (1903: 106).

China’s immediate political weakness on the world arena was nevertheless still more noticeable for many. Petrie Watson was not frightened by suggestions of common Chinese-Japanese alignments against the West: “There is nothing so absurd as the yellow peril. Never was a bigger, emptier bogey” (1904: preface). Talk of Japan and China making common cause against the West, “an alliance of the yellow races” (307), was noticed but dismissed. Watson forecast China’s inevitable collapse in which “the members of the Alliance will have their portions . . . let us enter on a joint [Anglo-Japanese] or conterminous occupation of the great Yangtze Valley territory, from Tibet to the Sea” (327). Such a partition of China could block the danger posed by the Franco-Russian alignment to the south and north. Nevertheless, despite this immediate dismissal of China, in the longer term there still remained for Watson “an unrelenting, unappeasable, implacable . . . Asiatic conspiracy against Europe, which smoulders in China . . . in Asia, awaiting the decline of the European Age” (324–25).

In that arena of thought and hopes, the post-Boxer decade also saw the solidification of the concept of Chinese nationhood, of Chinese nationalism, and of China as a nation struggling and fighting in the world. *Zhonghua minzu* (The Chinese Nation) started to be bandied about as a phrase in revolutionary journals and among the intelligentsia, the response to the challenge of “the dangers of annihilation under western invasion at the turn of the twentieth century” (Zhao 2000: 4). All this reflected a situation where “how to save the country from the inroads of western imperialism was the great question of the last decade of the Ch’ing” and in which among nationalists, “fears of racial extinction . . . were a basic element in the reaction against the imperialism of another race” (Rankin 1971: 29).

Chinese reformers were certainly in a brooding mood, ready to beat the nationalist drum. Lin Shu linked treatment of Chinese immigrants in the United States with the wider crushing of China in the Boxer intervention. Race and power were entwined in his translation notes to the Chinese edi-

tion of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Western power posing the threat "of the imminent demise of the yellow race" (Lin Shu 1901: 78). American events were connected with the situation in China: "Our country is rich in natural resources, but they are underdeveloped . . . our country's power is weak, and our envoys are afraid of arguing with the Americans" (78), who are "threatening our race . . . our own nationals, though guiltless, are ignominiously being put into prison and wasting to death there . . . being dominated . . . our national prestige has been wounded" (79). Lin's cry was "reform the government . . . love our country . . . preserve our race" (80).

The backdrop for Liang Qichao was "the 'great stage' of world history onto which China had been thrown" (X. Tang 1996: 27). In his 1902 tract *Renovation of the People*, Liang described how "on the Asiatic continent there is located the largest country [China] with the most fertile territory, the most disorganized and weak people," but "as soon as the European race discovered our internal condition, they mobilized their national imperialisms as swarms of ants attach themselves to what is rank and foul and as a myriad of arrows concentrate on a target" (CRW 1979: 221). As to the future, "If we wish to oppose the national imperialism of all the powers today, and save China from great calamity and rescue our people, the only thing for us to do is to adopt our own nationalism," given that "our people have been established as a nation on the Asiatic continent for several thousand years, and we must have some characteristics which are grand, eminent, and perfect, and distinctly different from other races" (222). During his exile in Japan, Liang's ideas on race and nation had become sharper, and with them "competition between the races" (Harrison 2001: 103; also Dikotter 1992: 67–71). Geocultural perspectives were in play in Liang's adaptation of Darwinism and Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, that "in the end the superior will take power over the world and the inferior will be defeated," amid inevitable competition in which "if China does not enter the struggle between the races then the whole [Chinese] race will be destroyed" (Harrison 2001: 104).

Geopolitical concerns were also evident in Liang's 1903 trip across the United States. Liang was aware of and concerned about the developing Pacific thrust of the country, given its annexation of Hawaii and the Philippines in 1899. For Liang, "this trend is converging on China . . . no country is in a better position to utilize the Pacific in order to hold sway over the world than China," yet China "politely yields this position to others" (Arkush and Lee 1993: 89) like the United States and also Japan. Liang also expressed concerns over U.S. "imperialistic policy" and the "extremely aggressive posture" (Arkush and Lee 1993: 90) of Theodore Roosevelt, be it Big Stick diplomacy or Pacific Mahanist naval projection by an emerging United States. Geopolitical imperatives meant, for Liang, "I fear that there will soon be a successor to our Opium War with England, battle of Tonkin

Gulf with France, and battle of Kiaochow [Jiaozhou] with Germany” (90), in the shape of future Sino-American clashes.

Zou Rong’s celebrated pamphlet *Gemingjun* (The Revolutionary Army) was produced in April 1903 in the safe haven of Western-run Shanghai, an irony of imperialism (Spence 1982: 47–50). In this, it echoed the role of Shanghai in providing a safe haven for reformist outlets like *Shibao* (Eastern Times), set up in June 1904, in which Liang Qichao stressed the need for China to be “aware of the general world situation” (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 300) and be aware that “our nation can take the highest position among the nations of the world” (302) with the right policies. Zou Rong in looking at the world situation was sharply aware of racial dynamics.

As Zou analyzed world politics through the prism of race, he argued that “the yellow and white races . . . are fundamentally incapable of giving way to each other. Hence, glowering and poised for the fight, they have engaged in battle in the world of evolution,” the “great arena where strength and intelligence have clashed since earliest times, the great theatre where for so long natural selection and progress have been played out” (1968: 106). This clash was immediate, given that “there is a possibility that our country may be destroyed” by “England, Russia, Germany and France who are now making inroads into us and dividing us up with bated breath and flying claws” (65). China was “suffering under the heavy hand of the Powers . . . what with internal anarchy and external humiliations, the country may be annihilated within a decade and, our race within a century” (81–82). This clash was also far flung, including the Chinese diaspora. In themselves they were valued members of the Chinese people, “extending the prestige of their race . . . Are not these so-called workers part of our fellow countrymen?” (73, 108). Yet Zou Rong felt keenly about such “Chinese workmen ill-treated abroad. We first saw them banned from America, then from Honolulu and Melbourne . . . our fellow countrymen settled abroad are humiliated by foreigners” (73).

Zou Rong’s call was for China to reassert itself; “you 400 millions of the great Han race” had potential power, given that “your lands occupy two thirds of Asia; fellow countrymen, you are a fifth of the peoples of the globe . . . you possess the omen of the Yellow Peril [huanghuo], you possess the might of the sacred race” (46). Consequently, “sweep away the demons from foreign parts who have infringed your sovereign rights. The stain on your history may be washed away, the honour of your country may soar” (47). Indeed, “China is capable of embracing the whole world, of shaking and dazzling the entire globe, or surveying benignly the nations from its heights and dominating the five continents,” given that “we possess five million square li of land, 400 million ingenious people, over five thousand years of history . . . its products are abundant” (81). With such potential strength, China’s present humiliations could be reversed in the future and its enemies made “fearful of our power and terrified of our might” (81). As Dikotter put it, the rev-

olutionaries were “acutely aware of the myth of the ‘yellow peril’” and ready to “turn this negative image into something very powerful, China as the future gravedigger of Europe” (2005: 191). Domestic struggle would have its external benefits, for Zou Rong, “revolution is inevitable . . . if China is to be independent” (1968: 58). On the international front, revolution was inevitable “if China is to take its place as a powerful nation on the globe . . . in the new world of the twentieth century; it is inevitable if China is to be a great country in the world and play the leading role” (58).

Other racial hierarchies were present in the beliefs of nationalists like Zhang Binglin. In an open letter in 1903 he poured scorn on Kang Youwei's relative moderation and path of constitutional reform. Instead it was a question of Chinese nationalism. Looking around within Asia, Zhang reckoned that “the Chinese terrain and national spirit are vastly superior to those of India. The land is not fragmented and the people are possessive” (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 313). Looking at the past, “ever since the Manchu conquest, we have been enraged by the sheep stink of these lesser races . . . if the situation continues to decline, we will simply become the slaves of the Westerners” (313). Nevertheless, China had potential strength: “Chinese determination is stronger than the Indians, and we can foresee that Chinese accomplishments will certainly surpass those of the Indians” (313). But could they, and would they, surpass those of Japan and the West?

The future leaders of China were growing up in this mixed atmosphere of fears and hopes, a future bridging the gap between potentiality and actuality. Educated at a military school in Tokyo, Chiang Kai-shek had become a “passionate admirer” (Spence 1982: 81) of Zou's tract *The Revolutionary Army*. Mao Zedong similarly recalled, as a young teenager in 1907/1908, “I began to have a certain amount of political consciousness, especially after I read a pamphlet telling of the dismemberment of China” (Snow 1937: 133). As Mao recalled, “I remember even now that this pamphlet opened with the sentence, ‘alas, China will be subjugated!’ It told of Japan's occupation of Korea and Formosa, of the loss of suzerainty in Indo-China, Burma and elsewhere,” and “after I read this I felt depressed about the future of my country and began to realize that it was the duty of all the people to help save it” (Snow 1937: 133). Elsewhere, Li Zongren recalled, “I was a boy when a series of severe national crises occurred at the end of the Ch'ing dynasty. China had been repeatedly defeated in foreign wars . . . relegated almost to the position of a common colony . . . foreign encroachments increased” and “the danger that China would be partitioned seemed imminent” (1979: 3). This was a humiliating position that his family felt strongly about, with “vehement . . . feelings against foreign invaders” (8), and which led him to join Sun Yat-sen's nationalist movement in 1910.

Elsewhere, in exile, “Sun Yatsen in particular saw the power and usefulness of Zou's message” (Spence 1982: 50). Sun arranged for 11,000 copies of

Zou's *The Revolutionary Army* to be printed in San Francisco in 1904. Sun's supporters distributed thousands of copies of Zou's booklet in Singapore, redubbed *The Fight for Survival*. As for Sun Yat-sen, he hoped for impending change. In his "Road of Progress" tract, of November 26, 1905, Sun argued that "with all her teeming millions and their remarkable intelligence and strength, China has been fast asleep and in a decadent state," but "fortunately, time and tide have awakened her from her lethargy. She loses no time in collecting herself and doing the utmost for her regeneration" (Shieh 1970: 10). Nevertheless, Sun also reckoned that "the turbulence of the times has aroused [China] from its deep sleep . . . revolution cannot be far off . . . then we can look back to find Europe and America looking ahead to us" (Shieh 1970: 40). Exiled in Tokyo, Sun's founding of the *Tongmenghui* (United Alliance Society), otherwise known as the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance, in August 1905 was helped by the pan-Asiatic mood in vogue in Japan. There, "the Japanese search for a hero who could arouse patriotism and regenerate China for the cause of the Yellow Race led them to Sun Yatsen" (Jensen 1970: 59). Consequently, Sun Yat-sen's "most effective foreign supporters were Japanese" (Wilbur 1976: 54). By this time, Meiji Japan had emerged as a source of interest, an ambivalent funnel for Westernization that was not the West itself, and a model both for State renewalists and more radical reformers like Kang Youwei and then Sun Yat-sen (Jensen 1980).

On the other hand, Chen Duxiu, a future Communist leader, refused to join Sun's *Tongmenghui* because he "resented the narrowly racist base of Sun Yat-sen's views" (Schwartz 1951: 61). Nevertheless, Chen's anti-imperialist base was strong. On returning from Japan, Chen set up the Anhui Patriotic Society in 1903, with its constitution stressing that, because "the foreign calamity is daily growing worse, the Society seeks to unite the masses into an organization that will develop patriotic thought and stir up a martial spirit, so people will grab their weapons to protect their country, and restore our basic sovereignty" (Feigon 1983: 41).

China's humiliations continued to have an impact across the Pacific, causing cross-Pacific Chinese resentment, and sharper nationalist sentiment. This study has been pursuing the interaction of China and the international system inside and outside China, and as such dealing with the Chinese state and with the diaspora Chinese communities. McKeon's linkage is central to this dual strand: "What all of these nationalisms had in common was their conviction that the experience and status of Chinese abroad was a direct result of the status of China within the international system," for "if Chinese people were bullied locally, that was because China received no respect internationally" (1999: 326). Chinese nationalism was further affected by such outside treatment and pressures, which generated "chauvinist fervour" (Feuchtwang 1993: 14) in turn from China. Consequently, "the yellow peril of European racist phobias and immigration controls was turned into the peril

which the yellow race faced unless it strengthened itself. Pursuing and strengthening the race (*baozheng*) would turn the peril into a yellow glory" (15). Chinese rhetoric on Pan-Asianism reflected a *tongzhong* (same race) discourse used for Japan and China, but extended further in recognition of a "patterned world system" (Karl 2002: 110) in which China had become a "lost country" (*wangguo*).

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND A SINO-JAPANESE AXIS

A dramatic blow to European ascendancy in Asia had already come as Russia and Japan went to war in February 1904. The immediate issue was Korea, though fighting spread onto nominal Chinese territory in Manchuria and the Liaodong peninsula. China, despite speculation that it would enter on the side of Japan, remained neutral and somewhat ignominiously marginalized (Nish 2004). As Robert Hart put it, on January 10, 1904, "both Russia and Japan desire expansion—at China's cost" (1976: 1392).

Even as Japanese forces gained the upper hand, Maurice Baring still wondered "as to the question of the 'yellow peril'" (1905: 52), since "the war has introduced a new and serious factor into the case. The Chinese have now realised that far from the white races being invincible . . . they can be thoroughly well beaten by yellow men" (54). Certainly, Japan's victory resonated within China. Hart noticed, on March 27, 1904, that "many Chinese delight in the prospect of Japan's victory" (1976: 1403) over Russia. Yung Wing reckoned, "The triumph of Japan over Russia in the recent war has opened the eyes of the Chinese world. It will never tolerate injustice in any way or shape, much less will it put up with foreign aggression and aggrandizement any longer!" (1909: 73). Mao Zedong recalled how, as a youth, he had "felt something of her [Japan's] pride and might, in . . . her victory over Russia" (Snow 1937: 135).

Outside China, commentators were equally quick to notice the war's impact on China. In Australia, Gilbert White, the bishop of Carpentaria, reiterated the danger to northern Australia, "which [is] a standing temptation to anxious foreign countries who do not know what to do with their surplus population. Japan and China are close at hand, and who knows how soon China may become as formidable as Japan?" (1907: 64). Henri Borel started his book, *The New China*, with his assertion of December 1909 that "the awakening of China to national consciousness is a process suddenly excited by the thunder of Japanese guns after a long period of silent brooding . . . China with her four millions is now moving upwards in the world's course" (1912: 13, 16). In the United States, Thomas Millard considered how "China . . . has . . . felt the reaction of the Russo-Japanese war . . . new ambitions . . . to assert independence, to claim equality with white races" (1909: 2). It was a question of perceptions; the Russo-Japanese War "had the general

result of causing Western prestige to decline in the East . . . as pan-Orientalism . . . influence is felt in all eastern countries” (3), a trend which “might create a real yellow peril for the West” (13). Interestingly enough, Millard highlighted the importance of image and imagery in his comments on the “impressions from pictures,” which “show the white race he has long respected and feared beaten at war by a dark-skinned brother. By this . . . subtle means has the message which Japan’s victory carries to the East been communicated to the masses in China” (5).

The Russo-Japanese War was worrying enough for Western circles, insofar as it undermined general Western credibility in China. The air of invincibility of the West over the East had been punctured. In addition, this was exacerbated by growing speculation on Sino-Japanese alignment, a geocultural block with geopolitical implications.

Japan officially denied any such strategy. Shinichiro Kurino, the Japanese Minister to Russia, had protested in the *New York Times* on February 18, 1904, that the prospect of Japan leading any threatening Pan-Asiatic coalition was “pure fantasy” and that anyone frightened by the idea of a Sino-Japanese “yellow peril” was “ignorant of the gulf separating the Chinese and Japanese people.” However, Field Marshall Yamagata talked, in the wake of victory over Russia, of a coming racial war between a “Yellow” Japanese-Chinese bloc against the “White” West. Kayahara Kazan, the *Yorozu choho* correspondent, in his November 11, 1906, editorial for San Francisco’s *Shinsekai* (The New World) newspaper, titled his piece “The Coming War.” He saw Japanese expansion as inevitable in Asia, where China “now looks to Japan as its teacher” who “shoulder[s] the historic responsibility of determining whether the future world is to be dominated by the white race, or whether the latter is to be replaced by the Japanese race . . . the struggle between races . . . is a problem of life and death” (Iriye 1972: 139–41). Denied or not in Japanese circles, such perceptions were widely held in the West.

Australian voices were loud on this. Henry Lawson’s unamused 1906 poem “To Be Amused” warned that “while lurid clouds of danger loom, / . . . Australia races to her doom. / . . . Until your children’s heritage / Is claimed for China by Japan. / . . . in the conquering Japs, / . . . I see the brown [Japanese] and yellow [Chinese] rule” (1967–9: 1.221–22). White solidarity was needed in the face of this yellow solidarity: “With land and life and race at stake— . . . / Make clean the place! Make strong the place! / Call white men in from all the world!” (1.223). In Sydney, *The Bulletin*, on November 8, 1906, was trenchant: “There is overwhelming evidence that it [Japan] is engaged in stirring up and training the Chinese masses for a racial war of yellow against white. The first shock of war will beat against Australia” as “the hordes of Asia move against Australia.” Australia could, and did, see herself as the geographic frontline against any Chinese resurgence, demographically and geopolitically.

In Europe, continental voices were also apparent. Amid his continuing warnings to the Russian czar, the Kaiser predicted in 1907 that “the final great fight breaks out between the yellow and white races in which Japan will lead the Chinese invasion of Europe” (Balfour 1964: 260–61). Yellow Perils abounded in Russia. Ivanovich, while rejecting the notion of an immediate independent Chinese threat to the West, nevertheless felt “it would not be surprising were the present war to give the yellow race some, for us, dangerous lessons” (1904: 169). Over time, for Japan, “it will not take her forty years to drive Russia out of Northern Asia. The Chinese horde will follow” (175). In Russia, defeat left General Kuropatkin worrying about how a China-Japan axis “could proceed to take a great deal of Siberia from Russia” (1909: 2.200).

In Britain, treatment of her post-1902 ally, Japan, was generally sympathetic in her own right, and, in comparison with Russia, the traditional foe. The effect on China was considered in the media and among commentators. Michael McCarthy argued that Japan, “the coming Power,” represented a supportive reformism, whereby “if China henceforth be subject to Japanese influence, its work-loving and peaceful inhabitants will become enlightened” (1905: 396). The *Manchester Guardian* profile “Japan’s Victory,” of June 2, 1905, similarly wondered about a potential alignment of Japan and China: “Japanese instructors are enrolled in the Chinese army and Chinese students are studying in the Japanese schools,” links that “prove that the two countries are awakening to the solidarity of their interests in the face of Western aggrandisement.”

The *Daily Mail* correspondent Frederick McKenzie in his book *The Unveiling of the East* looked back at China’s recent past and noted that “in the case of China, America and our colonies had to deal with an oriental power unable to defend its subjects abroad” (1907: 165). However, the Japanese “by their example, arouse their potentially greater neighbour, China, to new life. They have launched a movement, ‘Asia for the Asiatics,’ in which “their pioneers are teaching . . . Chinese officials that the day of world-domination by the white man is over” (317–18). Consequently, he saw a “China in the first stage of renaissance . . . this great nation, with its enormous, unworked resources, with its merchant princes whose wealth and enterprise can compare with the greatest of our own, with its vast supply of cheap and capable labour” (191). Questions, if not answers, were blowing in the wind: “Is the coming of the Chinaman . . . the sinister shadow clouding and darkening our future? Are the old dreams of the Yellow Peril, of the millions of armed men to be flung against us . . . likely to become actual facts?” (191). This was the ultimate nightmare for him: “Think . . . of what our world and its civilisation would suffer at the hand of the hordes of Chinese . . . equipped as were the captors [Japan] of Port Arthur” (160). Japanese encouragement of Chinese renewal could of course backfire against Japan, given China’s innate power potential. Bertram Weale’s treatment of *The Conflict of Colour*, written from

Beijing, warned of Japan's leadership of a common Yellow bloc, Pan-Asianism with a racial edge. Within this, China's larger long-term potential loomed for Weale: "If a new China really arises, Japan must be relegated . . . to the position of a Minor Power. And she [Japan] is determined that this will not occur" (1910: 150).

Amid such concerns over "Yellow Perils" posed by China, with or without Japan, sympathy could be found in some Western circles. Double standards were brought up in Anatole France's novel *Sur la Pierre Blanche* (On the White Rock), published early in 1905, which gave no shrift to Western supremacism (Hirakawa 2005). Western conduct toward China was hypocritical in the novelist's view. It was indeed true that "the Chinese do not send to Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg missionaries to teach Christians the Fung-chui [Feng Shui], and sow disorder in European affairs" (France 1909: 163), unlike the West. Moreover, "a Chinese expeditionary force did not land in Quiberon Bay to demand of the Government of the [French] republic *extraterritoriality*, i.e. the right of trying by a tribunal of mandarins cases pending between Chinese and Europeans" (163). In a reference to the burning of the Yuanming Yuan Summer Palace in 1860, he pointed out that China "did not burn Versailles in the name of a higher civilization. The armies of the Great Asiatic powers did not carry away to Tokio and Peking the Louvre paintings and the silver service of the Elysée" (164). All in all, he noted, "for many long years have Asiatics been familiar with the white peril. The lootings of the Summer Palace, the [1900] massacres of Peking . . . the dismemberment of China, were these not enough to alarm the Chinese?" (162). In other words, "we created the White Peril. The White Peril has engendered the Yellow Peril" (162), whether it came from China or a China-Japanese axis.

In the United States, Japan's impact on China was also a subject for commentary. Frederick Williams felt that "Japan is doing the world's work" (1904, vi) concerning China, "whose present decrepitude offers such deplorable temptation . . . a necessity of chastisement, and that Japan, as the only nation now really at home on the Pacific, is the hand to hold the rod" (v). If Japan could hold a rod over China's head, it could lead China's feet. Indeed, Sidney Gulick's views of future developments in Asia, from his missionary experiences in Japan, were that "Japan's leadership in China might then be utilized for uniting orient against occident and the result might be the so-called yellow peril" (1905: 155). Payson Treat's reminiscences of the postwar rumors in the United States were that "Japan would organize the wealth and manpower of China to provide and equip the armies which would revive the days of Ghengis Khan and create a real 'Yellow Peril'" (1928: 190). Conflict also lurked in Arthur Smith's analysis *China and America To-day*: "During the preceding hundred years there has been a mighty collision between the civilisations of the West and the civilisation of the East" (1907a: 221). In that col-

lision, "there is no particular in which the worst Boxer atrocities in China were not equalled and exceeded by what has been perpetuated in many cities and settlements of Christian America" (165). Yet Japan's triumph over Russia in the 1904–1905 war was seen by Smith as triggering subsequent Chinese reforms. Smith argued that a "series of important changes in army administration have been in progress in China . . . evidence of a revolutionary change in Chinese military effectiveness," in which those who had the opportunity of observing "the contrast between the Chinese army which judiciously fled before the Japanese in 1894, and the troops of today, see not only change, but thorough going transformation," albeit a transformation "accompanied by an intense anti-foreign wave" (116–17).

Japanese control over China was a theme for American novelists. Marsden Manson's *The Yellow Peril in Action*, published in San Francisco in 1907, portrayed China and Japan as uniting to attack and defeat the United States. Similar joint Chinese-Japanese invasion scenarios also came in H. G. Wells's *The War in the Air*, where "the Japanese and Chinese have joined in. That's the supreme fact they pounced into our little quarrels. The Yellow Peril was a peril after all" (1908: 240).

Such scenarios were prominent for Jack London, a prolific "muck-raking novelist," socialist, and environmentalist who was "caught up in the racialized politics of the 'Yellow Peril' era of imperialism he helped to popularize and invent" (R. Wilson 2000: 570; also Whalen-Bridge 1993). As a war correspondent witnessing Russia's defeat by Japan, London wrote on May 22, 1904, "in the past I have preached the Economic Yellow Peril; henceforth I shall preach the Militant Yellow Peril" (1988: 430). His essay "The Yellow Peril," penned from Manchuria in June 1904, went beyond the more obvious threat posed by Japan. London argued, "The menace to the Western world lies, not in the little brown man, but in the four hundred millions of yellow men [China] should the little brown man [Japan] undertake their management," for "the Chinese is not dead to new ideas; he is an efficient worker; makes a good soldier, and is wealthy in the essential materials of a machine age. Under a capable management he will go far" (1909: 281). With such a Sino-Japanese linkage, he warned "at no distant day we shall hear 'Asia for the Asiatic!' Four hundred million indefatigable [Chinese] workers (deft, intelligent, and unafraid to die), aroused and rejuvenescent . . . that menace to the Western world which has been well named the 'Yellow Peril'" (281, 274).

Jack London remained "indefatigable" (Lye 2005: 15) on the Yellow Peril represented by a Sino-Japanese axis. In his futuristic 1907 novel *The Unparalleled Invasion*, he portrayed the world in 1976 and the "menace of the twentieth century—China, old China, rejuvenescent, fruitful, and militant" (London 1993: 2.1240; also Sharp 2004: 96). As such, London described how "China's awakening, with her four hundred millions and the scientific advance of the world, was frightfully astounding. She was the colossus of the

nations” (1993: 2.1237). Underneath this challenge, “the real danger lay in the fecundity of her loins” (2.1238), giving “a population of 400,000,000 souls—one quarter of the then total population of the earth” (2.1235). On top of that demographic power “lay a vast territory, and in that territory were the hugest deposits in the world of iron and coal—the backbone of industrial civilization” (2.1235). That potential had been unlocked after the Russo-Japanese War, when “Japan took upon herself the management of China. In the years immediately following the war with Russia, her agents swarmed over the Chinese Empire . . . the political reconstruction of the [Chinese] Empire was due to them . . . China was at last awake” (2.1236). He then envisaged China as defeating Japan in 1922. Consequently, demographic expansionism throughout Asia, allied to economic advancement, underpinned London’s final vision for 1976 about China, where “her flood of yellow life poured out and on over Asia” (2.1239), initially through emigration and then “the clash of arms and the brushing away of all opposition by a monster army of militia-soldiers . . . Never was there so strange and effective a method of world conquest” (2.1240). After flooding across much of Asia, this impending global hegemony was only defeated by advanced germ warfare carried out by the United States! Jack London’s “fiction” of 1907 was matched by his “factual” analysis of 1909, *If Japan Waken China*, “not to our dream, if you please, but to her dream” of “leading Asia against the West, Yellow against White, Japanese management allied to Chinese masses” (1970: 361). The very image of threatening masses underpinned immigration debates and policies across the Pacific.

IMMIGRATION AND TRADE FURORS ACROSS THE PACIFIC

In the United States, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, already renewed for another ten years in 1892, sparked vigorous debate when it came up for renewal in 1902 (E. Lee 2002, 2003). China’s minister in Washington lamented the disparagement of Chinese immigrants, asking the press in 1901, “Why can’t you be fair? Would you talk like that if mine was not a weak nation?” (DeConde 1992: 72). Yet one problem was that China was a weak nation: “Before the Boxers, the Chinese ambassador could be counted on to argue the case of the Chinese community with Washington” with some limited effect; but “now, with a weakened China—in effect, a nation that had almost become a subject nation—there was no one to plead for them” (I. Chang 2004: 140). China’s international weakness in turn made the Chinese community all the weaker across the Pacific.

Sentiments of white Californians remained resolutely racist. Some three thousand delegates proclaimed that in Chinese-American intermarriages “the offspring has been invariably degenerate” (Chinese Exclusion Conven-

tion 1901: 4). Racial superiority was clear enough, with the calls by the Chinese Exclusion Convention of “keeping up the standard of population and not permitting it to deteriorate by contact with inferior and non-assimilative races” (8). This was put into wider geocultural settings: “This is not alone a race, labor, and political question. It is one which involves our civilization . . . the preservation of our civilization” (8). Alarmist clichés were plentiful, of “a peaceful invasion . . . an insidious foe . . . in possession of the citadel before we were aware . . . immigration of Chinese would be for all purposes an invasion by Asiatic barbarians” (8). Conversely, and ironically in retrospect, it still held that “nor are the Chinese unappreciative of the friendship of the United States, recently displayed in saving possibly the empire from dismemberment” (10), a somewhat glossed and exaggerated reference to the American Open Door notes of 1899.

Domestic American opinion remained racially sensitive “in this era of unchecked anti-Chinese passion” (I. Chang 2004: 137). The sociologist Edward Ross used the phrase “race suicide” (1901: 88) at the American Academy of Political and Social Science, with regard to white America vis-à-vis the “yellow” Chinese. To Ross, culture, race, and, ultimately, politics were involved in the immigration issue, where “the members of a great cultural race like the Chinese show no disposition, even when scattered sparsely among us, to assimilate to us or to adopt our standards” (87), so “not until their self complacency has been undermined at home and an extensive intellectual ferment has taken place in China itself will the Chinese become assimilable elements” (88) in the United States, and indeed in the international system.

American labor organizations maintained their “vitriolic” (Currarino 2007: 476) warnings that the Chinese were “the indispensable enemy” (Saxton 1971). This was exemplified by the American Federation of Labor’s (AFL) petition to the Senate concerning the Chinese as a race “so alien” (American Federation of Labor 1901: 36) and akin to a “malignant tumor” (5). The AFL concluded that, “this is not alone a race, labor and political question. It is one which involves our civilization” (37)—again, tones reminiscent of Huntington’s later *Clash of Civilizations* thesis. The AFL argued “the free immigration of Chinese would be for all purposes an invasion by Asiatic barbarians” (37). Citing Kipling’s “March of the Mongols” macroscales of conflict, the AFL talked of “the struggle of the Pacific Coast” between “two mighty streams, of which one is white and the other yellow . . . the great drama of the coming times . . . to be worked out in the twentieth century” (10).

Domestic politics continued to stoke fears of the Chinese along the Pacific coast, where the *San Francisco News Letter*, August 30, 1902, noted demagogic politicians ready to “wade knee deep in blood if necessary to drive the yellow peril into the sea,” in which “the cry that ‘the Chinese must go!’

was the shibboleth with which the demagogues at that time conjured the working man's vote into the ballot box." China's presence continued to be felt on immigration issues. In the United States the renewal of restrictions in 1902 saw internal and external frictions. Chinese sources were aware of their own weakness regarding the United States, with the Honolulu *New China Daily* lamenting in 1903, "Since our country [China] is weak, we cannot plan to send an armada to conquer San Francisco and attack Honolulu, or gather at that country's treaty ports. We can only rely upon reason, instead of conquest, words instead of battleships" (Tsai 1985: 101). This was followed by determined but failed Chinese attempts to renegotiate immigration entry conditions.

Wider and long-term considerations were present for some, as in Jacob Gallinger's comment in the U.S. Senate, when he was trying to block the passage of the tougher and permanent 1904 Chinese Exclusion Act. Gallinger argued, on April 23, 1904, that post-Boxer "China today is weak and helpless but China some day will be strong and aggressive," a prospect leading him to "hope that the relations of this country with that empire may be such that when that day comes we shall have the good will and the sympathy and not hatred of that great people" (US 1904: 5419). Platt had argued in the Senate, on April 16, 1902, against further restrictions, the proposed legislation "is offensive to the Government of China, with whom we wish to remain on good terms" (Cohn and Gee 2003: 85). He returned to the fray in 1904 (US 1904: 5416–18). Ultimately that proved of little consequence with the passing of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1904.

Instead other voices and harsher sentiments had prevailed. Senator Weldon Heyburn from Idaho saw geopolitical dangers on America's strategic flanks, "I see an element of danger to our country from the importation of Chinese into the [Panama] canal zone in the nature of an overflow" (US 1904: 5418). Faced with this danger, Heyburn's remedy was simple: "We desire that we should be protected against the possibility of this invasion of the Chinese. We desire that we shall be protected against the possibility of building up a little China within the canal zone" (5418). Senator William Stewart of Nevada reckoned, "We do not want to be harsh, we do not want to legislate on the basis of race hatred" and "we have trade relations with China, which we hope will continue. We want friendly relations" (US 1904: 5419). However, though wishing for friendly relations with the state of China, Stewart was prepared to downgrade China's people: "We want to protect our white citizens from competition with the Chinese and Chinese civilization" (5419). He may have concluded, "We do not want to set up ourselves as barbarians by doing unnecessary things which are harsh" (5419), but that is precisely what the legislation involved.

As it was, the Chinese Exclusion controversies of 1902–1904 triggered retaliatory Chinese boycotts across the Pacific of American goods during

1905–1906, and American military threats in the Far East. Internal and external dynamics converged, where “the activities of the Bureau of Immigration represents a bizarre intrusion into the diplomatic decision-making process. The unconventional lobbying techniques of Chinese diplomats in the United States is another curious sidelight” (McKee 1977: 10–11; also McKee 1986). Robert Hart was impressed, on June 11, 1905, by the popular power generated across the Pacific: The “Chinese are uniting to ‘boycott’ Americans in return for the Exclusion Act,” and by “the power of such combination . . . they say now ‘our officials can’t do anything and our Govt. is powerless, let us show what popular union can do’” (1976: 1473). The “humiliating way the Chinese immigrants were treated” (G. Wang 1995: 9), especially the notorious detention sheds faced by Sun Yat-sen in 1904, as well as the structural racism of the Chinese Exclusion Act, stoked the boycott, which was “inspired by a more general concern for national and racial survival” (G. Wang 2001: 150).

Chinese voices were strident on the issue. The Chinese representative in Washington warned the United States that “the Chinese people are in earnest. Your exclusion act is humiliating,” asserting that the Chinese felt “insulted and menaced as they are by the attitude of the United States” (DeConde 1992: 73). For Chen Yikan, since “today’s world is a world of power, a world of competition, and a world of the predominance of the superior and the subordination of the inferior,” consequently, “[we] cannot reason with Americans nowadays . . . what is the way to abolish the treaty, then? It is a boycott” (G. Wang 2001: 148–49). Through a successful boycott, China’s humiliation could be reversed and her prestige regained, analogous to Japan’s contemporaneous humbling of Russia. For the novelist Wu Woyao (Jianren), “the Chinese boycott against the American treaty today is also a war in everything but military form. If the battle is won, the prestige will not be lower than that of Japan” (G. Wang 2001: 149). For Lin Guanhong, “today’s world is the world of racial competition . . . today’s boycott against American goods is our last resort. If, by fortune, we succeed, the prestige of our people will be known to the peoples of five continents” (G. Wang 2001: 149). Boycott literature, like the *Fujian Daily News*, saw the entire Chinese nation as insulted by an American immigration barrier that “excludes all 400 million Chinese” (G. Wang 1995: 12). Awareness of their lack of current power and their future potential stirred the Chinese. The *Fukien Daily News*, on May 24, 1905, felt that “in order to exclude the Chinese, the United States adopted force, disregarded justice, ignored humanity . . . this was a great insult imposed on all of us four hundred million Chinese . . . they were strong, but we were weak” (Tsai 1985: 108).

Kang Youwei’s famous letter of January 30, 1906, to Theodore Roosevelt was full of resentment toward the slights to China. For Kang, “two decades rigid enforcement of the Exclusion Laws has brought about the ill-will of four

hundred million people. The exclusion of Chinese labor on the one side [of the Pacific] is now met by the boycott of American products on the other [side of the Pacific]" (Tsai 1985: 148). Immediate power may have lain with the United States, but Kang looked further on in time, whereby "the rapidity with which China had adopted foreign innovations has surpassed that of Japan. When the sentiment of nationality shall have attained full development, a united Chinese nation will seek to asserts its rights and avenge its wrongs" (149). Then, "if the present [immigration] friction be not removed . . . when China ever gets to avenge her wrongs, will America think it strange then if she is paid back in her own coin?" (149).

American images were deeply entrenched. Wallace Irwin's *Chinatown Ballads* had the simple dismissal, "You can take a Chink away from 'is fan . . . / But yu can't git down to the roots that start / From the yeller base of 'is yeller heart" (1906: 24). In the United States, Mary Coolidge considered in her study *Chinese Immigration* that "for half a century the curious customs and behavior of the Chinese in this country have been a mystery, subject to many explanations, distorted by ignorance and colored by prejudice, and never fully understand" (1909: 3). This meant, "in the average mind, the traditional Chinaman—a left handed, cunning, industrious, stolid, cruel and inhuman creature—is still a typical Chinaman" (3). Her stance was sympathetic to the Chinese cause, citing Chinese comments from 1904: "They call it exclusion; but it is not exclusion, it is extermination" (302). What was significant was her linking of internal and external features involved in the Chinese arrival across the Pacific in the United States. American double standards, of enforcing treaty provisions in China but not allowing China to similarly enforce reciprocal agreements in the United States, were pointed out. "The sense of grievance aroused by the mistreatment of the Chinese in this country became one more influence to drive them to protect their rights and possessions from all foreign powers" (467) in China. Consequently, "the boycott [in China] was a result of exclusion [in America]" (469). The boycott itself may have tailed away during 1906, but she felt that its true significance did not lie in trade statistics. Instead it was "to do with the question of national feeling," since the boycott "developed public opinion" in China, and where "it was in fact one of the many signs . . . that China had entered consciously on a new foreign policy, not only toward the United States but toward all foreigners" (483). In short, "the impolitic and unjust testament of the Chinese by the United States" (486) had become an issue not just of internal national politics but of external international politics.

Succinctly, Mary Coolidge concluded by citing an unnamed "Chinese gentleman" that "the renaissance of China has indeed begun" (1909: 483–84). Charles Ewing's letter to Judson Smith, on January 9, 1906, gave a missionary view of events: "The depression in our work is partly due to general causes. A very marked change is appearing in the general character of

Chinese thought . . . I am inclined to define it by the word independence” (Ewing and Ewing 1990: 162). On one level, Ewing felt that “the anti-American boycott is only one manifestation of this feeling among the people” (162). On another level, he also reckoned that “on the part of the government, the same [independence] is evident in various ways. For one thing, it appears that there is to be a stricter insistence that foreigners be kept within their treaty rights” and no further; “the same attitude is being exhibited, on occasion, in the diplomatic dealings of China with other nations” (162). Similarly, the Shanghai *Outlook* saw the boycott as reflecting “the rising spirit in China” (Special Correspondent 1905: 316). Indeed, in retrospect, Tsai has argued for the boycott’s causal role in China’s “national awakening” (1976).

Such national awakening looked outside as well as inside China. William Roberts’s 1906 study *The Mongolian Problem in America* was tellingly published in San Francisco, by the Organized Labor Print, and equally tellingly subtitled “A Discussion of the Possibilities of the Yellow Peril, with Notes upon American Diplomacy in its Relation to the Boycott.” Some parts of the American press forthrightly condemned existing American attitudes and policies: “The Chinese boycott of American goods is a striking evidence of an awakening spirit of resentment in the great Empire against the injustice and aggression of foreign countries” (Foster 1906: 118). Similarly, Archibald Coolidge reckoned that “the anti-American boycott has proved that, throughout China, there now exists a national resentment against the way in which the Chinese have been treated in the United States” (1908: 338), and it “revealed to Americans the disagreeable truth that, though China may be weak as a military power, her people are still in a position where they can hit back, and hit back effectually, if their rights and feelings are trampled upon” (338).

Douglas Story’s prognosis was that “the result of the boycott has been practically to stifle American trade but its effects have reached far beyond the limits designed by the sober-minded merchants who met together in Shanghai,” because “for the first time in history the Chinese have discovered a common ground of union . . . unconsciously the Chinese have welded themselves into a nation” (1907: 169–70). Consequently, “the world waits to learn the purpose to which they will put their new-found weapon” (172–73). As such, at Shanghai, he talked of “the waking of the Chinese to their [economic] power and the impotence of the European to meet it” (61) amid “a yellow Peril—not a peril of advancing hordes, but a peril of invading brains, invading industry, and invading competition” (60). Fundamental East-West divisions remained discernible in “the baleful gleam of the Chinese” (33), which reflected the greater “width and the depth of the gulf which ever must separate east from west . . . there can be no coalescence of oriental with Europeans . . . there is a barrier between white man and yellow man that is insuperable” (70–71).

Bertram Weale's prognosis with regard to this was also to raise the "hidden menace" of China, "this great never-ending Chinese question—the world-question of the twentieth century. The enormous masses of population . . . these enormous masses are alone sufficient to make the brain falter and to allow anything to be possible" (1907: 377). A tangled subterranean image of uncertain peril arose for him concerning China, "as in a glass darkly, visions of mad doings rise up—visions in which the entire populations of huge provinces, infected with the strange bursts of national hysteria which are so hard to explain, rise up to burn and kill" (378), visions that were nightmares, "such visions are now common to almost every European in China; men talk of them and seem constantly to believe that something of the sort is going to happen in the near future" (379). International relations were involved; bipolar concentration of power raised the future prospect of "a powerful America in the Pacific and a powerful new China" (416). The only question was when, rather than if, that day would come.

Alienation was discerned by sociologists like William Thomas, "increasing communications between the white and the yellow races means more strains" (1908: 740) given "our race prejudice and tribal arrogance toward the oriental" (736). Indeed, "the oriental world is large enough to smite us with a sword which we have put into his hands," in "a world conflict for racial supremacy . . . contemplating such a combination, we may well be affrighted" of "the vast population of China, and the fresh and brilliant minds of the Mikado's empire [Japan]" (740). Conversely, Charles Tenney, president of the Pei Yang College of Engineering in China, warned about the dangers of images of "mutual contempt" at "the beginning of the most important epoch in human history. The Chinese, presenting a quarter of the population of the world have held aloof from us, and they have now decided to enter into the modern family of nations," in which "the question is, how are we going to receive them?" (Thomas 1908: 745). How, indeed, was the question?

FALL OF THE QING

Amid such speculations, China's tottering Qing dynasty was coming to its end. In an age of nationalism, their identity was becoming anachronistic. A Manchu elite sitting on top of a native Han Chinese populace was ill equipped for the international system: "The fact that Manchu rulers could not lead a movement of Han Chinese nationalism was one principled impediment postponing China's adjustment to the international world" (Eto 1986: 77). Hu Hanmin, an early figure in Sun Yat-sen's *Tongmenhui* nationalist grouping, argued in April 1906 that "what distresses us sorely and hurts us increasingly is the impossible position of subjugation we [Han Chinese] are in" (De Bary and Lufrano 2000: 317). It was clear for him that the internal and external situation of China were inextricably linked: "Unless their [Manchu] political

power is overthrown, the Chinese nation will forever remain the conquered people without independence and, being controlled by a backward nation [the Manchu minority], will finally perish with it in the struggle with the advanced foreign powers" (317). Chinese nationalism was thus involved in a two-pronged attack on internal Manchu dynasticism and external Western imperialism, inside China and across the Pacific in the Chinese diaspora.

Conversely, in Chinese populations living outside of China, the promise of China's renewal held out hope for their own living situations: "Living in diaspora and being discriminated against for their racial and cultural identity, American Chinese longed for a strong and powerful China to stand up for and protect them" (S. Chen 2002: 11). China's fortunes and misfortunes spanned the Pacific; diasporan voices "admitted that China as a country had become weak in the face of the industrialized West. China's weakness as a nation in the world was always mentioned in the same breath with the United States' anti-Chinese immigration laws and practices" (14). Chinese detainees were well aware of this. One of the "Weak Shall Conquer" poems scrawled on the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station by a detained Chinese reads, "For what reason must I sit in jail? It is only because my country is weak and my family poor" (Lai et al. 1999: 84). Another reads, "If my country had contrived to make herself strong, this [banishment to Angel Island] never would have happened" (86).

However, optimistic predictions came from the Chinese "Envoy Extraordinary" to the United States, Wu Tingfang. His domestic Chinese and foreign American audience heard in 1908 how "the mere mentioning of this subject—'The Awakening of China'—is sufficient to make my countrymen thrill with pleasure and flush with pride . . . changes are taking place in that hoary Empire, which bid fair to constitute the miracle of the Twentieth Century" (1908: 8). Imagery abounded: "'The Sick Man' is rapidly convalescing, 'The Sleeping Lion' is awake . . . China is moving and she is moving with a rapidity" (8). Wu Tingfang's *The Significance of the Awakening of China* continued this theme a couple of years later. He argued, "If China should become a strong power in the world, it will never be a source of trouble to other nations, as some people seem to fear," for its strategic culture meant "the Chinese people are by nature and education a peace-loving people. The essence of the Confucian system is that right, and not might" (1910: 29). Consequently, "what has been done in the past few years to put our army on a proper footing . . . and the intention of our Government to take steps for reorganizing our navy, should not in the least create suspicions in other nations" (29). The trouble was that because of its underlying resources and population, a China able to direct those assets in the military direction would almost inevitably be seen as a threatening giant.

The fate of Chinese emigrants continued to impact on Chinese politicians and diplomats. Wu Tingfang considered that China "was given to

understand that her people could go abroad as freely as the foreigners could come to China,” but came up against “the one blot which sometimes mars our otherwise most cordial relations; I refer to the subject of Chinese Exclusion” (1910: 31). Another Chinese, and future diplomat, Gu Weijun (V. K. Wellington Koo) put it more strongly in his dissertation crafted during his final year at Columbia University in 1911–1912. In it, Gu attacked the extraterritoriality of the Unequal Treaties as reflecting the “characteristic Anglo-Saxon pride and faith in the superiority of their own race and in the supremacy of their own institutions that they could not see how any of their countrymen could have committed a crime” (Craft 2004: 24) in China or indeed elsewhere in Asia.

There was a sense of impending change in the relations between China and the international system. One interested geopolitical observer was Alfred Mahan, acknowledging that “despite various buffets of the past, and the unmilitary disposition of the people, China retains, partly in virtue of her immense mass, alike of territory and of inhabitants, the undisturbed essentials of national solidarity” (1910: 135). Mahan saw potential change, but actual restraints on China: “To constitute her a potent world force, there remains only to bring these attributes into effective operation; an attainment which will doubtless be protracted by her very bigness, the inertia of which has constituted for her a defense” (135–36). Meanwhile, China’s self-funded and self-organized construction of a railroad from Beijing “illustrate[d] China’s past, present, and probable future. They evidence determination to break the bonds of past dependence, yet at the same time show dependence inevitable for a long time to come, until resources accumulate; until development overtakes aspiration” (137), “which will enable China to take her place among the nations” (138).

One meeting place for China and the West was the 1910 World’s Fair, the South Seas Exhibition held in Nanjing. At the time, American commentators welcomed it for its “Western completeness” and judged that “it would be difficult to estimate fully the beneficial effects of this Nanking exposition in its international aspects” (*American Review of Reviews* 1910: 691), as “among the real factors in the healthy development of international relations, and a promise of a mutual understanding and a cordial cooperation between China and the Western Nations” (693). However, this very “promise” indicates how there were troubling undercurrents where “relations between Chinese and foreigners are not as harmonious as they might be owing to the ‘Sovereign Rights’ [Unequal Treaties issue] recovery movement and the birth of the nationalistic spirit, especially among the student class,” even though it considered “but only the superficial observer will lay much stress on these transitory phases” (693). With foreign warships steaming up river, and several thousand government troops dispatched to keep local anti-Western feelings under control, the potential

was there for another Boxer-style anti-Western outburst, a fear perceived in the Western media, as observed by the London *Times* on June 1, 1910, and the *Straits Times* on June 7, 15, and 20. The *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* felt that the exhibition was “an education for both the Chinese and for foreign visitors, China will have learned something new as to her own needs and capabilities” (1910: 697).

In retrospect, Godley saw the Nanjing World Fair as a “watershed . . . the last effort, and most monumental effort undertaken by the Manchu house to prove to foreign powers and growing numbers of domestic critics that the traditional leadership was capable of modernizing the country” (1978: 504), but one in which “its difficulties clearly illustrate how far the nation still had to travel” (505). China’s potentiality was there to be unlocked, be it by Qing or republican reformers. While the future U.S. Minister to China, Paul Reinsch, considered that “no more fantastic idea has ever played a part in serious politics than that of the military ‘yellow peril’” (1911: 34), he could nevertheless link China, “the rampant and infuriate dragon of the yellow peril imagination” (52), with the “reality” of how “today we are witnessing the awakening of this vast people to energies and to a more active conduct of affairs. Peaceful China, the land of non-assertion, is fast becoming military” (51).

In this twilight period, East-West encounter was at the heart of Edward Ross’s extended presentation *The Changing Chinese*, tellingly subtitled “The Conflict of Oriental and Western Cultures in China.” Three possible scenarios for a Yellow Peril were suggested by Ross. One was “the swamping of the slow-multiplying, high-wage, white societies . . . this is real and imminent, and nothing but a concerted policy of exclusion can avert it” (1911: 112). The second was “colossal armies of well-armed and well-drilled yellow men who, under the inspiring lead of some Oriental Bonaparte, will first expel the Powers from Eastern Asia and later overrun Europe” (112). He considered this prospect “dream-stuff . . . the last traces of military spirit evaporated long ago” (112) among the Chinese, in contrast to Japan. In turn, he felt that “the third ‘yellow peril’ is the possibility of an industrial conquest of the West by the Orient” (114). Here, “the diligence, sobriety and cleverness of the Chinese in connection with their immense numbers and their low standard of comfort” raised the possibility of “a manufacturing China driving us out of neutral markets with great quantities of iron, steel, implements, ships, machinery and textiles” (114). Against “such a calamity the great industrial nations will be able to protect themselves neither by immigration barriers, nor by tariff walls” (117). Demographic imagery was invoked: “With an ocean of such labour power, China would appear to be on the eve of a manufacturing upheaval in changing the trade map of the world” (118). Ross’s only consolation was that the very size of the internal Chinese market, coupled with graft and nepotism, meant that the Chinese industrialization would not “occur in our time” (119). When, for Ross, would this nightmare scenario

of Chinese resurgence come to pass? When would there be the effective “harnessing of the cheap labor power of China to the machine?” (138). For him, “not we, nor our children, but our grandchildren, will need to lie awake. It is in the latter half of this [twentieth] century that the yellow man’s economic competition will begin to mould with giant hands the politics of the planet” (138).

George Lanning’s observations from Shanghai, penned during 1911, form another epitaph for the Qing Empire. Despite Qing incompetence, Lanning could still note China’s innate strength. It was a question of China’s sheer bulk: “China is so immense that she cannot be overrun” (1912: 91), and “then again, China is self contained. It is impossible to starve her into surrender” (91). She also had her “immense population” (91). However, the country was also undisciplined, her army little better than “a mob” (95), lacking discipline and riddled with corruption. Regeneration was stymied; “while the Chinese spirit is willing, finance is weak” (110). The Chinese pressure to end extraterritoriality was noted (163–70) by Lanning, though without any sense of imminent change. His comments on the international system were subtle. On the one hand, to some extent China could use wider IR balance of power dynamics: “For the moment, the greatest strength of the position of China lies, not so much in her own intrinsic gifts and powers, as in the jealousy of the outer nations” (92) toward each other. Despite the immediate weakness of China, and immediate pressures from a stronger Russia and Japan, Lanning pointed out “Russian nervousness of what may be the approaching military strength of China” (112). Indeed, there was “the fear that, by and by, when China has had time to recover, to develop, and to organize, she will be a danger to the Russian state” (295). Consequently, in Russia “some of her ultra-religious sons [like Solovev] hold up the coming yellow terror as a fitting punishment for Russia’s misdeeds” (295). Potentially Japan could also be threatened: “New China will present a very different problem from that offered by the Manchus . . . With a fully developed China what will be the position of Japan? China has all the cards in her own hand. An overwhelming population, the basis of overwhelming strength” (297) if China mobilized her manpower.

Two ironies can be noted here. First, as is it turned out, Ross’s “the latter half of this century” was to be ushered in with the 1949 Communist Revolution and the end of the Century of Humiliation, and China’s subsequent standing up in and to the international system (Scott 2007). Second, as Ross’s book was coming out in print, the domestic scene in China was dramatically changing. A National Assembly, promised in 1907, finally met in October 1910. In effect, like Gorbachev almost a century later, the Qing court “opened the floodgates . . . the court actually reformed itself out of existence” (Schoppa 2006: 135). In Paris a young nationalist, Wang Jingwei, China’s “romantic radical” (Boorman 1964), had already tried assassinating the Manchu Prince Regent in 1910. Sun Yat-sen attempted two uprisings in

February 1910 and April 1911. Finally, and decisively, Qing army units starting to mutiny in autumn 1911.

Ernest Smith was one witness to these autumnal events, “a bolt from the blue” (1912: 18) in his *Caught in the Chinese Revolution*, complete with undercurrents of anti-foreign sentiment in China. Such nationalist currents could of course have an impact on Qing territorial integrity. On December 1, 1911, Outer Mongolia in effect proclaimed its independence, with Russian assistance (Ewing 1980), on the basis that its allegiance had been to the Manchus rather than to China. As for China itself, Sun Yat-sen returned from exile in December 1911, and the last Manchu emperor abdicated in February 1912. As the Mandate of Heaven was withdrawn from the Qing dynasty, would a less humiliating cycle be forthcoming for New China?

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SIX

China Adrift in a Brave New World

*The China of to-day is no longer that of yesterday.
Like the awakened sleeper . . . much refreshed and reinvigorated,
he is putting forth all his efforts to overtake his companions . . .
to the Chinese the sense of injustice is keen
. . . inequalities . . . of the past, must be abolished . . .
contracting parties will have to treat one another with equal respect.*
—Tyau Minchien, 1917

*The vast republic across the Pacific,
whose future relations with the rest of the world
are so full of potential possibilities for discord or for peace. . . .
“The storm centre of the world has gradually shifted to China . . .
a key to world politics for the next five centuries.”
These statements have a new meaning,
both as a warning and a prophecy.*

—Wheeler, 1919

IMAGES OF A NEW REPUBLIC, A NEW CHINA

AS PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT of the new republic, Sun Yat-sen's formal Declaration of the Republic on January 1, 1912, deliberately evoked American democratic-republican principles, and looked forward to a clear dawn. His message, “to all friendly nations,” was replete with American-derived talk of progressive inalienable democratic-republican rights, but also had a wider sense that the Manchus “failed to appreciate the anguish-causing lessons taught them by Foreign Powers, and in the process have brought themselves and our people beneath the contempt of the world” (Bland 1912:

53). Consequently, “the republic cherishes the hope of being admitted into the family of nations, not merely to share its rights and privileges, but to cooperate in the great and noble task of building up the civilization of the world” (55). In short, a greater Chinese role in the global balance was envisaged by Sun, where “once China is united and flourishing, then she will be included as the world’s great powers, and will no longer be humiliated and partitioned by other nations” (Gregor and Change 1982: 72). He could also tell soldiers that “in today’s world, nations with military power prosper and advance to the status of a first-class power . . . in the era of competition . . . we must establish patriotism and the maintenance of our race as our premise” (73).

A reviving China may have been the dream for Chinese reformers, but for some outsiders it was a nightmare. John Bland’s *Recent Events and Present Policies in China* returned to the Yellow Peril images associated with China. This was still very evident for Bland: “The Yellow Peril bogey continues to oppress the imagination of the Western world, this persistent vision of the Chinese race roused from its long lethargy, and feverishly arming itself for wars of conquest and revenge” (1912: 407). It was an image to be used by those with power, “this Yellow Peril, bred by ignorance . . . a phantom that has served, and should serve again, many a politicians turn” (407). It was an image to be used by those with influence, “in the Yellow Peril the fervid imagination of yellow journalists has found a perennial source of thrills and shudders” (407). In military terms, low morale and poor equipment meant “the Chinese Army of the present and immediate future constitutes a serious menace to China’s own well-being, but little or none to her to her external foes,” so that “in the sense that China’s weakness and disorder are a source of danger to the world, her undisciplined and loot-hungry mobs of soldiery constitutes a Yellow Peril” (417). China’s domestic fragility was juxtaposed with stronger outside pressures: “In the present ferment of iconoclasm, and all its resultant lawlessness, lies the real Yellow Peril—for a weak and disorganised China means the danger of chronic unrest in the Far East” (421), destabilizing the international equilibrium.

Bland judged that China’s strategic culture undercut any real Yellow Peril threat, “the question of the Yellow Peril, however, as a matter ultimately dependent upon the military instincts of the Chinese people” (1912: 419), in which “the Chinese, as a race, retain their instinctive aversion to fighting for fighting’s sake” (421). Instead, “many long years of educative processes must elapse before the nation can produce the leaders and the spirit of discipline to make the Chinese army the formidable host of the Yellow Peril prophets” (421). As to how far the Communist leadership was to provide such an educative and disciplinary process after 1949 is a moot question.

One issue that immediately faced the new Chinese government was opium. A young Chinese law student in London wrote to the *Times* on this matter on December 31, 1912. In his letter, Tyau Minchien argued, “the Chi-

nese are determined that they want to preserve their very existence as a race. They have to choose between alienating the affection of [foreign] opium merchants or jeopardising their national vitality" (1919: 265). He wondered, "should the people of China for the sake of self-defence repudiate the agreement under review, which were entered into by a [Qing] government which they have since disinherited, would the British nation accept the act of repudiation?" (265). In turn, "if the latter would not accept it, would the former be entitled to regard the refusal as a *casus belli*" (265), as a cause of war, in effect rerunning the earlier Opium Wars. The British government announced in April 1913 that the export of opium from British India to China would be ended. Finally, the results of the Opium Wars of 1840–1842 and 1859–1860 had been reversed, yet the system built around it through the varied Unequal Treaties, extraterritoriality and all, remained intact.

In the United States, the half-Chinese half-Caucasian writer Far Sui Sin, otherwise known as Edith Eaton, was clear enough on China's position in the world in her piece "Chan Hen Yen, Chinese Student." She had her radical Chinese students lamenting at the start of 1912, "Oh, China, misguided country! / What would I not sacrifice, / To see thee uphold thyself, / Among the nations" (Far 1912: 464). It was a question of realizing or regaining past glories, "For bitterer than death, 'tis to know, / That thou that wert more glorious than all, / Now lieth as low as the lowest, / Whilst the feet of those whom thou didst despise, / Rest insolently upon thy limbs" (464). The golden days were, of course, when the "Middle Kingdom wert thou called, / The country that Heaven loves, / Thou wert the birthplace of the arts, the sciences, / And all mankind blessing inventions, / Thy princes rested in benevolence, / Thy wise men were revered" (464). Into a setting of decline, "now, the empire which is the oldest / under the heavens is falling . . . lesser nations stand ready to smite, / The nation that first smote itself, / . . . Who shall restore the Empire?" (464). Who, indeed?

However, amid such profiles of a politically weak, chaotic, and thus destabilizing China, lay another old fear of China that fused economic and immigration matters. In Bland's view, "another, and equally real, Yellow Peril lies in the pressure which these millions of thrifty, patient toilers . . . bring to bear upon the economic and industrial equilibrium of the Western world" (422). Consequently, the United States and Australia were faced with "the menace of this pressure of seething humanity" able to take advantage of "the hopeless inferiority of white men against yellow in the grim economic struggle for life" (422). Social Darwinism was in the air, "where white men and yellow live and work side by side, the balance of economic power passes slowly but surely into the hands of the Asiatic," for "if there be any menace to Europe in Cathay [China], it lies in the fierce struggle for life of three hundred million men who are ready to labour unceasingly for wages on which most white men must inevitably starve" (422).

China's new path, and the impact of any internal transformation on its external situation, was soon the subject of speculation. The Reverend W. E. Taylor used his Shanghai background to tell his audience at the Empire Club of Canada, on March 14, 1912, that "we must reckon with those forces that are working out in China . . . a new adjustment is coming. Just as sure as tomorrow is coming, there is going to be a new adjustment, a new balance of power that is going to affect the whole world" (1913: 182). For some Western observers, and those in Japan (Itei 1962), a rejuvenated, "liberal" China was a more potential threat than the decrepit Manchu dynasty, and so added to potential threat perceptions.

James Cantlie and Sheridan Jones's *Sun Yat Sen and the Awakening of China* (1912) reckoned that "the world that, accustomed to discount China as a supine giant whom nothing could rouse, now has to realise that her awakening liberates a force, strange and incalculable, that must be reckoned with" (1912: 262). They considered, "these questions are of profound, of far reaching importance" and that "no one who has even faintly comprehended all that a Yellow Peril might mean to Europe, can fail to grasp their significance" (262), for "upon them, or rather upon the answers of history during the next half-century, it may well be that the whole fabric of our civilisation depends" (263). The macronature of these comments is noteworthy.

In addition, there were more tangible assertions by Cantlie and Jones. In the longer term, "we may take it then, that the first essential difference between the China of to-day and the defunct Empire is that the republic will strive to become a great military power" (268), for "nothing is certain than that the Republicans intend to organise the military resources of China on a vast scale and under the most efficient guidance they can secure . . . the army that China can now muster will almost certainly lead to far reaching consequences" (273). They felt it was likely that "the Republic will press on the Powers the demand for the abrogation of these extraterritorial treaties," since "China, when weak and decadent, accepted them only under pressure. China, conscious of her own immense reserves of strength is not in the least likely to suffer them a day longer than she can help" (279). Time would, indeed, soon tell on that issue.

YELLOW PERIL INCARNATIONS (FU MANCHU AND OTHERS)

Although a rising Japan tended to replace China as the most overt Yellow Peril, China through its huge population remained a continuing worry for many at the conscious and subconscious level in the West. Three literary productions encapsulated this image: the play *Mr. Wu*, Shiel's novel *The Dragon*, and Sax Rohmer's novel *The Mystery of Dr. Fu Manchu*.

As a young law student, Tyau Minchien was involved in trying to stop the production of the play *Mr. Wu*, set to tour in the provinces and in London

during 1913. Tyau saw it as a “diabolical” (1920: 293) portrayal of revenge on a Westerner who had seduced Wu’s daughter. He felt “the drama as acted is powerful and intense and the playgoer will not easily forget the feeling of eerie creepiness or that of disgust and nauseousness” (294) surrounding the portrayal of Wu. His concern was that “we were afraid that this attempt to foist it upon the British public as a specimen of modern Chinese civilization might engender prejudices unfavourable to the Chinese in their midst” (294). Attempts to get Lord Chamberlain to ban the play failed, although Tyau did at least manage to get these lines deleted: “Add Western knowledge to his native Oriental cunning and you make him a devil incarnate” (296).

Shiel’s novel, *The Dragon*, featured an Oriental invading mastermind named Li Ku Yu. Shiel’s novel was first serialized in *Red Magazine* from January to March 1913 under the title “To Arms,” then collected and published as *The Dragon* later in the year, and subsequently revised and published as *The Yellow Peril* in 1929. Racial themes were prominent; a Chinese figure declares, “White? The colour of decay” (Shiel 1913: 21). White solidarity was under threat, an “old trick of China!—to play off one white against another” (34). Conversely, Asiatic solidarity was in the cards, “a secret treaty, frankly framed against the white races, between the Dragon-flag [China] and the Rising Sun [Japan]” (41). Western success had ultimately bred Chinese resentment and resistance in 1841, 1857, 1884, and most recently “the guns of all the globe which bombarded Peking in 1900, *tra-lar!* She [China] stood up then, and looked around. Beware who touches her! She is the Dragon and grand Anti-Christ, she stands awake” (48). Invasion nightmares were trotted out in images of “swarms” (234) advancing on Paris, a “millions of yellow men . . . a floating locust host . . . flying the Dragon-flag” (277–78) marching to the Channel!

A far more famous figure, image, and “incarnate” encapsulation had also appeared in 1913, in the shape of Sax Rohmer’s *The Mystery of Dr. Fu Manchu*, published in the United States as *The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu*. Fu Manchu typified “that most inscrutably mysterious race, the Chinese” (Rohmer 1913: 58). Fu Manchu represented, in Rohmer’s words, “that secret quickening which stirred in the womb of the yellow races” (295) and “the awakening of the East” (140). There, Fu Manchu was backed by an unnamed “Oriental Power,” threatening the British, French, and Russian grip in Asia. Indeed, “world-change” (136) was in the offing. A “potential Yellow Empire” (168) was in the making through “the great secret society which sought to upset the balance of the world—to place Europe and America beneath the sceptre of Cathay” (212). The future threatened a possible “victory for China . . . the triumph of his cause—the triumph of the yellow race” (219). Fu Manchu was portrayed by Rohmer as the “advance guard of a cogent yellow peril . . . we who knew the reality of the danger knew that a veritable octopus had fastened upon England—a yellow octopus whose head was that of Dr Fu Manchu” (250). Consequently, “the phantom Yellow Peril today

materializes under the very eyes of the Western world” (76), pitting Fu Manchu against Neyland Smith; “Dr. Fu-Manchu, the yellow peril incarnate in one man” (23) head of “the great yellow movement, and [Neyland Smith] the man who fought on behalf of the entire white race” (135).

There was more to Fu Manchu than just crime and adventure. Fu Manchu exemplified many of the wider uncertainties surrounding China in the West and in the international system. Certainly, Fu Manchu was “the embodiment of a white racist’s nightmare” (Hawley 1991: 134). Dower made the point that “better than any other single individual, Sax Rohmer succeeded, through the figure of Fu Manchu, in drawing together in a flamboyant but concrete way the three main strands of an otherwise inchoate fear” (1986: 158), namely, “Asian mastery of Western knowledge and technique; access to mysterious powers and ‘obscure and dreadful things’; and mobilization of the yellow horde . . . Whether led by China or Japan, this was the essence of the Yellow Peril” (159). As Utley pointed out, “it was not necessary to believe the plot of the novel to absorb the stereotypes of the evil Chinese” (1991: 127; also T. Chen 2002). Even more grandly, Hevia considers Fu Manchu as a “dominant and iconic figure,” a “specter out from the East . . . the emblem par excellence of deep seated western anxieties about global cross-cultural relations, and for many, the sign of a world fundamentally and perhaps irreconcilably, divided between East and West” (2003: 319). Contextually, in Hevia’s opinion, “a suddenly awakened China becomes in Rohmer’s hands a supreme threat to British mastery in Asia. This construction was made credible by widely diffused anxieties that the Chinese would exact revenge for the opium trade and Western aggression in China,” thereby “a short step to conjuring a China that could lead the Orient against Western empires” (323).

On the eve of World War I, such literary geocultural creations like Fu Manchu were matched in serious geopolitical analysis. The country most concerned about any Chinese renewal was, of course, Russia. Nikolai Gondatti, Governor of Tomsk, felt in 1911 that “my task is to make sure there are lots of Russians and very few yellows here” (Stephan 1994: 80). In retirement, Kuropatkin waxed all the more vigorously in 1913 about the Yellow Peril in his *Russko-Kitaiskii Vopros* (The Russo-Chinese Question). Kuropatkin’s previous euphemisms about “yellow waves” and “yellow tides” were stated more bluntly there as how “a yellow peril threatens Russia” (Lukin 2003: 53). Chinese immigration continued to worry Kuropatkin: “Now a huge immigration wave . . . is rolling over our border and is getting mixed in the Amur region, especially in the Ussuri region with the Russian population competing in every type of labor,” in which “if we were to abolish the Russian-Chinese border and allow free movement of the Chinese to Siberia on an equal basis with Russians—Siberian territories would soon be Sinicized and the Russians would be moving [pushed back] beyond the Ural Mountains” (60) back into Europe.

The past threatened the future, where “it should be recalled that 187 years ago the Chinese already claimed all of Siberia up to and including Tobol’sk. The danger from such a turn of events in Asia, which threatens the very existence of Russia, is obvious” in theory but also in practice, “in the likely war between the yellow race and the white race” (53).

Kuropatkin may have worried about the Yellow Peril from China and Shiel may have partly based his Fu Manchu figure on Sun Yat-sen’s new China, but China’s political cohesion was still not firmly established. Sun’s ability to shape events was dwindling, and he had to cede power to the more conservative military strongman Yuan Shikai in February 1912. Sun’s newly formed *Guomindang* (Nationalist) Party fought the 1913 election in an atmosphere of crisis, arguing in its manifesto that China’s “situation is like a dilapidated house facing imminent collapse . . . in a world of armed peace, armament must be expanded in dealing with foreign powers . . . to make China strong, the first requirement is to make her strong” through “development of industry” (Shieh 1970: 41, 48) in the longer term. However, in the short term, “as a weak country, we should be adept in diplomacy in order to survive as a nation” (51). Though the *Guomindang* won the 1913 parliamentary election, the assassination of their party leader, Song Jiaoren, and friction with Yuan Shikai resulted in the *Guomindang* being banned in November 1913, with Sun Yat-sen going into exile in Japan.

In light of this internal turmoil, the British public were warned that “the real ‘Yellow Peril’ is not the strength but the weakness of China, which is tempting the foreign capitalist to an unbridled exploitation. If only we could let them alone!” (*New Statesman* 1913). Frederick McCormick’s view of the newly emerging China, *The Flowery Republic*, was also of a country more immediately threatened than threatening, since “China is without . . . money capital with which to elevate her economical plane so as not to be ground between those of rich opposing nations” (1913: 443–44). Furthermore, “[China] is encompassed without by strong nations before which her frontiers are crumbling . . . as an entity and a nation her fate is in the hands of four Powers whose territories completely surround her—Japan, Russia, Great Britain, and France” (444). The future was not necessarily bright or necessarily dark, but it was uncertain and problematic. As to that future, “it is obvious that the national antagonism must now be concentrated upon the outsider, whether that outsider is personified in one nation or in all the Great Powers together,” with McCormick asking, “And what must be the consequences in such a case when, guided by her own self-selected helmsman, she meets some such immovable [foreign] obstacle?” (445). Events were still to play their course, where “the revolution has but begun. China is careering onward in her fate . . . And what will she do? China has shown she is no longer a dead whale on the ocean of international affairs” (445). But then, what was she instead?

Although the Kaiser suggested in June 1914 to U.S. presidential adviser Colonel House that “all Western civilization should stand together against the Oriental races” (Bumenthal 1963: 16), Europe was sliding into its own war. Ellery Stowell may have argued in July 1914 that “China is the key of the whole situation in the Pacific. She is one of the principal factors in shaping the world policies of the great powers” (1914: 245). But China was irrelevant in the spiral of war that pitted the Great Powers of Europe against each other in the summer of 1914. Nevertheless, a perceived danger from the East remained. Gilbert Chesterton’s *The Barbarism of Berlin* noted the logic of the Yellow Peril: “Any European might feel a genuine fear of the Yellow Peril” and “many might say, and have said, that the Heathen Chinese [evoking Harte’s 1870 verses] is very heathen indeed,” that “if he ever advances against us he will trample and torture and utterly destroy, in a way that Eastern people do, but Western people do not” (1914: 53–54). In Russia, Germany was not the only threat in 1914. Stephen Graham’s recollection of the day World War I broke out was, “I was staying in an Altai Cossack village on the frontier of Mongolia when the war broke out . . . Who was the enemy? . . . Rumours abounded” and “persisted that the yellow peril had matured, and that the war was with China. Russia had pushed too far into Mongolia, and China had declared war” (1915: 4). Racial matters were still keenly felt between states. Immigration and racial questions continued to affect America’s relations and images in and with the East. Wu Tingfang, the Republic’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, felt that “the more substantial cause for dissatisfaction with the United States is, I grieve to say, her Chinese exclusion policy,” for “as long as her discriminating laws against the Chinese remain in force a blot must remain on her otherwise good name, and her relations with China, though cordial, cannot be perfect” (1914: 44).

CHINA AND “WORLD” WAR I

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 initially saw China remain neutral. Sun Yat-sen and the Guomindang may have thought that “as the war clouds spread all over Europe, the western nations are too preoccupied with their own problems to pay attention to China” (Shieh 1970: 55), but that did not necessarily apply to Japan. Thus, the war came to Chinese soil as Japanese troops moved into the German holdings in the Shandong peninsula. Gilbert Reid, a Christian missionary in China, felt that “the whole spectacle left peculiar impress on the Chinese mind. Here for the first time white men fought white men, and called for the help of their little yellow brothers [Japan], on the soil of China’s millions” (1921: 56). However, the successful operation of Japanese forces on Chinese soil was a further threat to China’s territorial sovereignty and integrity. China asked the United States to intervene against any further Japanese expansion. But it received the less than

reassuring answer from Robert Lansing on November 4, 1914, “the [U.S. State] Department realizes that it would be quixotic in the extreme to allow the question of China’s territorial integrity to entangle the United States in international difficulties” (FRUS 1947: 190). China was on her own.

Questions of China’s territorial integrity were soon put to the test with Japan’s Twenty-One Demands in spring 1915. This was a far cry from the vistas seen when Sun Yat-sen had proposed an alliance in his letter of May 11, 1914, to Japanese Prime Minister Okuma (Sun Yat-sen 1941: 1–7). In exile in Japan during 1913–1917, the only alliance Sun achieved was on October 25, 1915, when he married Song Qingling, in Japan. She was the daughter of a Chinese Christian missionary, Song Jiashu (Charlie Song), and was someone to feature in her own right as an observer and participant in Chinese politics.

The Shanghai press could well judge Japan’s Twenty-One Demands as “The Browbeating of China” (*Far Eastern Review* 1915). Within China, the acquiescence by Yuan Shikai to most of the Twenty-One Demands was seen as further national humiliation, sparking “national assertion” (Luo 1993) on the part of outraged Chinese patriots. Rallies and newspapers circulated the slogan “Do not forget the national humiliation” (*wu-wang guochi*). May 9 became commemorated as National Humiliation Day, unofficially from 1915 to 1926 and officially from 1927 to 1940. The Twenty-One Demands were particularly inflammatory, made in the spirit of the imperialist scramble of the 1890s but anachronistic twenty years later, given the rise of the Republic of China and of the progressive movement in the United States. It was perhaps “a Pyrrhic victory for Japan” (Eto 1986: 100). Pyrrhic or not, and though the immediate agitation peaked and faded quite rapidly, nevertheless Japan’s Demands “marked a milestone in Sino-Japanese relations” (Luo 1993: 297) and “roused Chinese nationalism or nationalist sentiments to a new height” (298). While not the first national humiliation for China, it was the first to have commemorations organized around it, the first to have a National Humiliation Day linked to it, the first to spark rallies, and the first to appear in educational materials.

Chinese intellectuals were keenly aware of China’s weak state. In retrospect, Kirby’s sense is crucial for these decades, that “nothing mattered more” than China’s foreign setting and situations, that “Chinese history during the era of the first republic was defined and shaped—and must ultimately be interpreted—according to the nature of its foreign relations” (1997: 433). It was in this context that Chen Duxiu’s Call to Youth in September 1915 noted, “Since the opening of the treaty ports our country has been losing territory and paying indemnities to the point of exhaustion” (CRW 1979: 243). China had to reform or die: “Those races that cling to antiquated ways are declining, or disappearing . . . our country still has not awoken from its long dream” (242), but it was no conservative restoration he sought. Instead, “I would much rather see the past culture of our nation disappear than see our

race die out now because of its unfitness for living in the modern world . . . it is impossible to avoid the struggle for survival” (243). In Shanghai, Chen had established the *Xin qingnian* (New Youth) journal in September 1915, with other editors being Qian Xuantong, Gao Yihan, Hu Shih, Li Dazhao, Shen Yinmo, and Lu Xun. Zhou Shuren, more well known under his pen name of Lu Xun, cut through the old order in his varied short stories. His first one, “Kuangren riji” (“A Madman’s Diary”), appeared in the May 18, 1918, issue of *New Youth*, and was later collected in Lu’s 1922 collection *Na nan* (Call to Arms).

The fledgling republic was already sliding into chaos. Gao Yihan considered in his essay “Qingnian zhi di” (The Enemy of Youth), published in *New Youth* in February 1916, that China had become “a country whose people are weak and often humiliated. China is in increasingly grave danger. I fear so” (Schwarz 1986: 60). A curious twist on events occurred as a young library assistant named Mao Zedong speculated on July 25, 1916, that “the U.S. and Japan will go to war. In ten years time, China and America will join the just cause,” in which “we attack the Japanese army, the U.S. attacks the Japanese navy. Then Japan would be defeated in no time. The two republics of the east and west would be friendly and close” (He Di 1994: 150). A more down-to-earth observation was made by young Mao in the April 1917 issue of *New Youth*: “Our nation is wanting in strength. The military spirit has not been encouraged. The physical condition of the population deteriorates daily. This is an extremely disturbing phenomenon” (1969: 152–53).

Japan’s Demands upon China dominated events during 1915–1916. Not unsurprisingly, the French ambassador Maurice Paléologue was told by the Japanese foreign minister that, “European Powers should realize that geographical propinquity, ethnical affinities and historical memories give Japan . . . special interests in China” (1924: 660). China’s weak position vis-à-vis Japan was conceded by other Western contemporaries like Frederic Coleman, “the great, undeveloped, dormant Empire of China is Japan’s natural field of development” (1918: 4). Such Japanese demands caused some worry at the British Foreign Office. On April 3, 1915, the British chargé d’affaires in Beijing, Beilby Alston, described this as part of a scheme “for making the ‘Yellow Peril’ a real menace to Europe” by “imposing a Japanese Monroe Doctrine on China and a cry of ‘the Far East for the Far Easterners’” (Coleman 1918: 106). Consequently, as some of the Twenty-One Demands were eventually rejected by China, Albert Hart expressed relief in the United States that “it is fortunate for all the Western Powers that China and Japan have shown that they will not pool their issues, and go forward hand in hand as the dual great Powers of eastern Asia,” given “the influence in the world which its numbers and civilization would permit” (1915: 817). Amid such external currents, the inability of Chinese politicians to act together was noticeable in China. Yuan Shikai’s moves during 1915 to proclaim himself emperor merely generated provincial breakaways, while his death in 1916

removed one of the few strong figures in Chinese politics and initiated shifting warlord cliques at the center. Japan's pressure on China was noticed outside Asia. In January 1917, Alfred Reed was warning of "a Japanized China" (1917: 46). The wider international system was affected by Sino-Japanese settings. With regard to American possession of the Philippines and Hawaii, "it seems indisputable that Japanese desire for these island territories will be inversely proportional to her opportunity for colonization and exploitation in China" (42), so that "a policy on the part of America which limits Japan's intentions and desires in China may therefore easily reflect those [Japanese] intentions in more concentrated form towards the Philippines and Hawaii" (43), words which came home in 1941.

Despite this slide into chaos and weakening of real central government, China formally declared war on Germany in March 1917—in IR terms, bandwagoning within the wider international balance of power. This was a dramatic decision: "There was no historical precedent for China's taking an active role in global events far from its shores" (Spence 1990: 290). In China, Tyau Minchien enthusiastically welcomed the prospect: "Thanks principally to Germany, she [China] has been drawn into the limelight of *weltpolitik* [world politics] (1918: 221). Tyau thought "China owes it to the world and humanity to fight Prussian militarism" (186), even though "China may be weak in terms of howitzers and dreadnoughts" (185). At the time, Ellen La Motte recalled with a degree of scepticism, "I marvelled at the lofty tone of this [Chinese] note, and wondered how this moral strength had been so suddenly acquired" with "this poor old browbeaten China—humbled and prostrate before the Powers of Europe, unable to protest when her territory is snatched away from her—now suddenly giving voice" (1919: 242). For Arthur Brown, "Time alone will show whether China embroiled herself in the world war to her benefit or to her hurt," for "we suspect that . . . poor, helpless China will get only what the representatives of stronger governments deem expedient and that Japan will have a good deal to say as to what that shall be" (1919: 436). He was right. In retrospect, World War I proved difficult "for a China struggling to achieve status in the world of nations" (Nathan 1983: 258).

An extended analysis came in Bertram Weale's *The Fight for the Republic in China* (1917). Weale thought that "the masculine decision of the 9th February, 1917, which diplomatically ranged China definitely on the side of the Liberal Powers, has caused something of a volte face" (273), for "until this decision had been made it was the fashion to declare that China was not only not fit to be a Republic but also that her final dissolution was only a matter of time" (273). Indeed, he considered that "China has been in no condition to play anything but an insignificant and unsatisfactory role in world-politics" (229). Japanese blocks on Chinese military participation held sway. However, sizeable Chinese labor battalions of around 140,000 were dispatched by China

to give logistical rather than military support to British and French forces on the Western Front. As such, “working if not fighting, side by side with the Allies, China determinedly signalled its desire and ability to play a role in world affairs” (Xu Guoqi 2005: 147). It also hoped to gain redress on its own eastern front, for its own situation.

Despite this nonmilitary role, Weale still felt that China, “with its 500 millions of people, is destined to play an important role in post-bellum history because of the new type of modern spirit which is being there evolved,” in which “the influence of the Chinese Republic, in the opinion of the writer, cannot fail to be ultimately world-wide in view of the practically unlimited resources in man-power which [China] disposes of” (1917: vi). As to the future, a positive picture could be drawn. He felt, “it is to America and to England that China looks to rehabilitate herself and to make her Republic a reality” (289). Indeed, with the help of the United States and Britain, “there is still no reason why this democracy on the shores of the Yellow Sea should not be reinstated” to “the proud position it occupied twenty centuries ago, when it furnished the very silks which clothed the daughters of the Caesars” (289), China’s days of Middle Kingdom glories.

Rather different images were evoked by Rohmer in his Fu Manchu stories published during World War I. His second Fu Manchu novel, *The Devil Doctor*, appeared in 1916, and was published in the United States as *The Return of Dr. Fu Manchu*. In it, the “yellow menace” (Rohmer 1916: 113) was again in play concerning Fu Manchu’s “services to China—the New China, the China of the future” (121). The profiles and stereotypes were still present; Fu Manchu was “this enemy of the white race . . . this inhuman being who himself knew no mercy . . . whose very genius was inspired by the cool, calculated cruelty of his [Chinese] race” (265). Rohmer’s third Fu Manchu novel, *The Si-Fan Mysteries*, appeared in 1917, and was published in the United States as *The Hand of Fu Manchu*. In it, there again lay the threat of the “Yellow . . . rising” (Rohmer 1961: 14). At its heart lay “the greatest mystery of the mysterious East . . . a malignant being, Dr. Fu Manchu” (26); he remained “Dr. Fu-Manchu, the uncanny being whose existence seemingly proved him immune from natural laws, a deathless incarnation of evil being” (66). Against Fu Manchu, there still remained the hero Neyland Smith, “the barrier between the White races and the devouring tide of the Yellow” (185). There was still “the evil prominence, the wonderful, Satanic countenance of the man” (104), Fu Manchu “the enemy of the white races” (111). Again, in the mists of the Thames, there was “the Yellow menace hanging over London, over England, over the civilized world” (116). As such, there was more, with Fu Manchu now portrayed as but the spearhead “paving the way” for “nothing less than a giant Yellow Empire. That dream is what millions of Europeans and Americans term ‘the Yellow Peril’” (26), the “swamping of the White World by Yellow

hordes" (146). This was a "vast Yellow conspiracy" (28). This was "no less a goal than Yellow dominion of the world!" (125).

In a more factual but still concerned vein, elsewhere in 1917, Jesse Steiner's concentration on the Japanese challenge to the United States did see a wider emerging threat. In his view, "it is now plainly evident that the Chinese millions are abandoning their complacent, self-sufficient attitude and are gathering their strength in a more determined and effective manner than has ever characterized them in the past," and "we may be sure, however, that these changes now going on in the East will involve radical readjustments in our international relations with oriental powers" (Steiner 1917: 196–97). Consequently, "when China has gained sufficient prestige to demand similar treatment our old attitude of superiority and condescension toward the yellow races can be maintained only at our peril" (197). Here, "the world significance of waking Asia must be found not so much in a military yellow peril that will close the open door in the East, but rather in the increased stimulus that will be given to emigration from the Orient to the West" (205). The future was troublesome, for "with Asia thoroughly awake the problem may not be so easily solved . . . Conditions in the Far East indicate that China will soon be ripe for such a movement," and "when it begins, western civilization will be put to a severe test either in stemming the tide or in assimilating the hordes from the Orient . . . forces which may soon be beyond our power to control" (205–06).

Chinese voices were equally troubled over China's emerging treatment in the New World Order arising from the clouds of World War I. Zhang Yongjin (1991) may have argued that China's formal status in the world made her a part of the international system, and indeed international society, as its diplomats espoused the rhetoric of international involvement. However, China's actual power situation remained weak. In IR terms, realism weakness was more apparent than English School liberal acceptance. Varied Chinese political figures were aware of this discrepancy.

Thus, in Tyau Minchien's eyes, on March 14, 1917, there were overlapping concerns with regard to international organizations: "For the great powers to welcome China into their charmed circle in one breath and in the next, deny her what are her proper attributes and prerogatives as an independent sovereign state is ingenious and disingenuous," for "the status of [China's] membership in the Family of Nations having been acknowledged, it is but just that all her sovereign rights should be completely restored" (1918: 194). In general terms, Tyau felt "the present [unequal] treaty relations need to be promptly overhauled . . . these obligations fetter the free growth and the national development of the new Republic, to the serious menace of even its self-preservation" (1917: 208–09). He reported, "to the Chinese the sense of injustice is keen . . . injustices, the inequalities . . . inconsistencies of the past, must be abolished" (207, 214). Ultimately, though, "the China of

to-day is no longer that of yesterday. Like the awakened sleeper . . . much refreshed and reinvigorated, he is putting forth all his efforts to overtake his companions" (211–12) in the international system. Similarly, the young Chinese diplomat Gu Weijun pondered in 1917 about "China's relation to the world's future" in the light of "one assault after another on her sovereignty" by the established powers and their "shackles of extraterritoriality" (Wheeler 1919: 166). Wu Tingfang raised Chinese expectations with his plea in 1917 that "we have heard the public announcements of the statesmen of the powers, that after the war, justice and equality will rule among the nations," from which "we expect that in carrying them out into practice in China, one of the first things that will be done will be a reasonable and equitable revision of our [Unequal] treaties" (Tyau 1917: viii).

Sun Yat-sen denounced China's declaration of war against Germany in his 1917 tract "The Vital Problem of China," which considered participation as an "absurdity" (1941: 42) given China's lack of military strength. His focus remained on China and its transformation, a transformation threatened by internal conservatism and warlord fragmentation. Nevertheless, as World War I came to an end, there were opportunities for China, in Sun Yat-sen's eyes, where "we must seize the moment of the ending of the European war, and the great development of European war industry, to develop our own industry" (1927: 175). For him, China "possesses colossal territories, incalculable wealth, vast quantities of human energy," but yet "China is still unable to utilise foreign knowledge and resources to strengthen her own power as a nation" (167). Chinese industrialization was the way forward, "in the course of the next ten years . . . the growth of a heavy machine industry in China . . . a path for the salvation of China . . . then the development of our industry will undoubtedly surpass the development of American industry" (169, 172). Sun's prognosis was that "to regenerate the State and save the country from destruction at this critical movement, we must . . . welcome the influx of large-scale capital on the largest possible scale," then "create our own powerful large-scale industry . . . and acquire complete independence in our work . . . this will render possible the awakening of the slumbering forces and possibilities of China" (174).

Amid such talk, again, of a slumbering China awakening, Western observers were very aware of the potential significance of China. Kenneth Latourette added a scholar's voice to the importance and uncertainties surrounding China: "No great people of to-day, not even the Russians, present a more interesting example of transition," yet "it is doubtful whether the future of any other nation is more uncertain or more fraught with possibilities of peril or of happiness for the entire world" (1918: 97), given China's mass and potential thereon. In Reginald Wheeler's mind, the international system was faced with China, a "vast republic across the Pacific, whose future relations with the rest of the world are so full of potential possibilities for discord or for

peace,” in which he was struck by talk of how “the storm centre of the world has gradually shifted to China . . . a key to world politics for the next five centuries.’ These statements have a new meaning, both as a warning and a prophecy” (1919: 182). The Chinese consul-general at San Francisco, Zhu Zhaoxin, felt that “China is to-day in a more important position than ever by reason of the war. Her commerce has been increased by a great extent” (1919: 306), and amid ongoing industrialization and impending “internal peace” (307), the way beckoned for “China will then be ready to take her place among the nations of the world as a dominant factor” (308). Such optimism was soon to be shattered.

One participatory observer of Chinese events was Paul Reinsch, the American Minister to China from 1913 to 1919. His resignation in 1919 was offered because Reinsch felt, and told Woodrow Wilson on June 7, 1919, that “it is very difficult to get any attention for China . . . yet the destinies of Serbia, Czecho-slovakia, and Greece are infinitesimal in their importance to the future of America compared with those of China” (Reinsch 1922: 364). Reinsch felt that China could become a danger through Western appeasement of Japanese designs on China. Reinsch had cabled the American president in December 1918 that “if China should be disappointed in her confidence at the present time the consequences of such disillusionment on her moral and political development would be disastrous,” for “we instead of looking across the Pacific toward a peaceable, industrial nation, sympathetic with our ideals, would be confronted with a vast materialistic military organization under ruthless control [of Japan]” (Reinsch 1922: 338). Chinese disappointment in the United States and the international system were soon to follow.

Similar concerns were expressed from the British Minister to China, John Jordan. In his lengthy dispatch on December 23, 1918, to Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, Jordan posed an immediate China problem in two different ways. There was “the possibility on the one hand of a weak and disunited China, a prey to international intrigues . . . a harvest of international rivalries as would prove a menace to the future peace of the world,” and “on the other hand, of a militaristic China, with unrivalled man-power and resources under the leadership of Japan” (DBFP 1956: 566). Postwar expectations were a rising issue. Jordan recognized Chinese sentiment: “A strong body of public opinion which stands at the parting of the ways. They are waiting from the Allies as to whether their declared principles [Wilson’s liberal open Fourteen Points] will be applied to China” (567–68). One immediate issue was the disposition of Germany’s holdings in Shandong that had been occupied by Japan during the war.

A wider issue was the revision of Unequal Treaty restrictions on China and privileges given in them to the West. Here, Jordan noted the “resentment in the minds of the Chinese” over its operations, which “has been stretched to the limits which it was never intended to cover and which constitute a menace to

all orderly government . . . inflicting an injustice on China which threatens to disorganise her body politic and to demoralise her people” (DBFP 1956: 578, 579). Consequently, on the international front, “the question of extraterritoriality is now attracting public attention in China and it is probable that an attempt will be made at the Peace Conference to secure . . . that Great Britain will be prepared to relinquish her extraterritorial rights” (578). Ultimately Britain would be hard-pressed to resist such demands from China, hence Jordan’s advice for the government to move earlier rather than later. In his mind, “no serious observer of Chinese affairs can be unconscious of the great forces that are stirring within the country. It is awakening from a long period of stagnation, realising its latent powers and determined to find its place in the world” (567). In short, “this great nation is rousing itself from sleep and bidding fair to renew her mighty youth . . . a broader and brighter eastern horizon on which China will stand strong . . . the change will come. The forces at work are too strong to be restrained” (582). Indeed, one year later he wrote to Foreign Secretary Curzon, on November 22, 1919, about how “I have been greatly impressed . . . I return to Peking, conscious of a new China unfolding,” where “a tour through the country leaves one amazed at her quick capacity for wealth production . . . I do not hesitate to predict that China’s commercial development will be one of the most remarkable features of the present century” (DBFP 1956: 855–56).

Future economic possibilities were also behind Griffith Taylor’s consideration, reckoning on the current “stagnation of the Chinese” being replaced “in the next fifty years” by “a new China which will dwarf the old regime” (1921: 97). This was virtually inevitable in his eyes: “When we realize that the Chinese have the natural resources at their disposal which are unrivaled (except in North America), it is obvious that only unremitting diligence, thrift, and sobriety will enable the white man to resist the ‘yellow peril’” (97). For Taylor, this latent Chinese challenge was “not a peril of military invasion . . . but an economic peril for which I see few nations of the world educating themselves” (97).

In retrospect, one important structural change affecting China’s role in the international system was Kirby’s point on the way in which the West “broke apart as a distinct [monolithic] entity after the First World War” (1997: 442). Previously, “the unity of the western powers in dealings with the Qing . . . had severely restricted the empire’s diplomatic freedom” (442). Consequently as an “outsider,” “the Qing state could take no part, even when it wanted to, in the international alliance system of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (442). However, the break-up of that Western solidarity could make “China a player in a reorganizing, multi-polar, international system” (442). Classic IR realism and balancing opportunities beckoned? On the other hand, the postwar lack of any Concert of Great Powers in the Far East meant that stability in China was undermined and regional-

ism and warlordism facilitated (Waldron 1995 161–80, 277–78; also Iriye 1969: 25–26). This encouraged further outside manipulation within China.

Such structural opportunities remained somewhat theoretical, though, in the face of China's own internal fragility. Consequently, the end of the war brought few actual gains for China. The only immediate territorial changes in China as a result of World War I was Japan's retention of German holdings and concessions in the Shandong peninsula, Qingdao, and Jiaozhou Bay, that it had occupied on the outbreak of the war in 1914, despite them still being notionally under Chinese territorial sovereignty. Admittedly, there had been the temporary dispatch of some 1,600 Chinese troops to protect Chinese merchants in Vladivostok at the end of 1918. Otherwise, China was ignored among the bigger outside intervention in the region by American, British, and, above all, Japanese troops in the Russian Far East.

DIPLOMATIC BETRAYALS AND THE MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT

At the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, U.S. President Wilson went along with the transference of Unfair Treaty rights on Chinese territory from one imperial power—Germany—to another imperial power—Japan. Consequently, Japan was left with German economic privileges in the peninsula and occupation of Qingdao and Jiaozhou Bay. Elleman (2002) has argued that Wilson was sympathetic to China's case; that he did try hard to support China and achieved a reasonable compromise. However, in a situation where matters of “face” were deeply involved vis-à-vis sovereignty and sequence, this was not enough. What was clear was the way in which China's “Versailles humiliation” (Mitter 2004: 37) around the transfer generated widespread resentment in China. Even Sun Yat-sen, despite his general pro-Japanese bent, considered in 1919 that “not only did she [Japan] sell China as ‘pig’ but, in addition, was aiming at cutting a fat slice [Shandong] from the pig itself. Such conduct on the part of the Japanese is one reason why the Chinese hate the Japanese to their very bones” (1941: 127).

Direct agitation was initially sparked by students at the National Peking University, where Mao Zedong was a young library assistant. For Qu Qiubai, a twenty-year-old participant and future Communist Party leader in 1927, “the taste of colonialism in its full bitterness had never come home to the Chinese until then . . . the sharp pain of imperialistic oppression then reached the marrow of our bones, and it awakened us” (Spence 1982: 135). They presented their Manifesto of All Students of Peking at a highly charged meeting on May 4, 1919, as “the last chance for China in her life and death struggle . . . China's territory may be conquered, but it cannot be given away . . . the Chinese people may be massacred, but they will not surrender. Our country is about to be annihilated. Up, brethren!” (T. Chow 1960:

106–07). External considerations were prominent in various ways—disenchantment with Western leaders and Japan—but also inspiration from currents in the West and pan-Asian rhetoric. Japan's strength and vigor, hitherto inspiration for some Chinese, was instead increasingly seen as a direct threat to China's integrity and independence. Their May 4 meeting Manifesto bitterly denounced the “humiliating secret and dangerous treaties forced upon us by Japan . . . Japan, tiger-like and wolf-like . . . the insult and oppression and the attempt to enslave us” (107).

On the internal front, Luo Jialun, who drafted the Manifesto, considered that “China before the May Fourth movement was a nation gasping for breath. After the May Fourth movement, it is a more vital, lively nation. The glory of the May Fourth movement lies precisely in getting China to move” (Schwarcz 1986: 7; see also Schwartz 1983). In the event divergence took place, there would be sociopolitical versus cultural activism. External concerns overlapped with calls for internal ethical regeneration, focusing on the “primacy of culture,” a “critical minded humanism” manifested in the *Xinchao* (New Tide) movement of 1919 to 1922, a “new worldview” (Schwarcz 1986: 7) stressing science and democracy within China. However, such internal matters of impact and legacy within China, analyzed in Mitter's *A Bitter Revolution: China's Struggle with the Modern World* (2004), is not the focus of this study, which is more concerned with China's external role in the international system.

On this external front, the May Fourth Movement was a relative failure, “growing evidence of China's weakness on the international scene” (Spence 1982: 114). China eventually left the Versailles Conference empty-handed and humiliated, with public protests leading its delegation not to sign the Versailles Treaty. Their reason was, in their own official statement, that transferring German rights to Japan was a double insult to “China, the rightful sovereign over the territory and a loyal copartner in the war on the side of the Allied and Associated Powers,” in which “the announcement of the settlement evoked a nationwide protest in China, which was participated in by the Chinese people in every part of the world” (Lawrence 2004: 4). A general strike in Shanghai, beginning on April 14, 1920, had Chinese students warning, “Japan proposes to Koreanize our motherland” (Lo Ren 1930: 73). The British government was told, on June 12, 1920, that “the Shantung [Shandong] question is already one of life and death for China” in which “being an independent country China has, according to International Law, the right to be treated with respect and to preserve her dignity” (DBFP 1966: 55).

Betrayal was the feeling of the day; China “entered with the highest of expectations and came away sorely disappointed” (Tyau 1922: 330). Chinese perceptions were that “the complete victory over China at Versailles . . . dashed to pieces all China's hopes and aspiration. It made her realise the necessity and expediency of not counting on the friendship or trusting the

promises of any white nation” (L. Tang 1927: 106). The news from Paris dramatically spread among the Chinese, both in China and in the Chinese diaspora. As Mitter noted, “Chinese nationalists were outraged. And they took full advantage of the globalized world which China had been forced into entering” (2004: 5) to spread their message through telegraph lines and newspapers headlines. Treatment of China on one continent fed back across continents to Chinese elsewhere. Telegrams received by the Chinese delegation, and quickly released by them, came from around China and around the diaspora from Chinese communities in Australia, the United States and Europe; typically, the feeling was that “a certain nation [Japan] insults us” (Chinese Delegation 1919: 12). Student pamphlets evoked Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points and cried, “The Chinese have listened . . . They have been told that secret covenants and forced agreements would not be recognized. They looked for the dawn of this era; but no sun rose for China” (T. Chow 1960: 93). For Gilbert Reid this was straightforward, a “wrong done to a nation—to China” (1919: 206–07). It was diplomatic insult on the largest scale, international and civilizational. As Reinsch ruefully put it, “Probably nowhere else in the world had expectations of America’s leadership been raised so high as in China. The Chinese trusted America, they trusted the frequent utterances of principle uttered by President Wilson” (Reinsch 1922: 361). This, he noted, “meant the blasting of their hopes and the destruction of their confidence in the equity of nations . . . there had been a triumphant confidence that all this sacrifice and suffering would establish just principles of world action . . . their hope was . . . crushed” (362). The fact that Chinese outrage counted for little in the world arena made the disenchantment all the worse.

Chinese circles were themselves launching verbal attacks against both the West and Japan. In Sun Yat-sen’s eyes, unable to present a coherent strong front to the world, “China chafes . . . her external relations . . . involving a humiliating surrender of sovereign rights” and “intensity of popular feeling on this subject” (Merrill 1921: 655). There was frustration for Li Lichen, writing in the Shanghai journal *Shenbao* in 1921, that “the ceremony of national humiliation day, for instance, can make us remember May 9th of the fourth year (in 1916) in the Republic of China and we know how to make a determined effort and wipe out the humiliation” (Durham 2006: 1). In 1922 the journal asserted that “on National Humiliation Day, we should discuss what policy can enrich the country and benefit the people so as to make our beautiful Republic of China exist on the Eastern Hemisphere forever” (Durham 2006: 3). Tyau Minchien’s *China Awakened* not only highlighted the need for internal political, social, and economic reform within the new Republic, but also of the role of resentments where “the Republic is no longer the old meek, timid good-natured grandfather who says YES to everything asked of her” (1922: 266), for “after the disappointment over the Shantung

question, who will blame her if they should suddenly turn militarist” (339). China demanded respect. Tyau told, almost warning, the world: “Remember that the Chinese people having awakened . . . it is to the interests of the Powers no less than those of China that the republic should at the earliest opportunity be accorded a status in keeping with its size and potentialities” (285). Such moves could of course generate different responses since “to those that wish China well, the transformation taking place in the Republic is a genuine gratification. But to those that wish China ill, the spectacle inspires fear and apprehension” (334).

Tyau was optimistic in many ways: “The family of nations desires the presence of a united, independent Chinese Commonwealth, strong politically, economically and morally” (1922: viii). He also felt that diplomatic recognition by China of the postwar period’s new states strengthened “the new international status of the awakened Chinese people,” as “instead of being always the supplicant for favors from European Powers, the republic has actually assumed the role of a patron” and accorded its recognition and sympathy when appealed to” (307). However, China’s recognition of new far-away states like Czechoslovakia and Lithuania was pretty unimportant for China’s own situation.

Within the emerging international structures, China was marginalized in the new League of Nations, whereas Japan, as one of the Big Five, was automatically made a permanent core Council member. China’s election to the League Council in 1920, with the support of Britain and France, did not change this. There, in the wake of Wilson’s Fourteen Points, widespread speculation and agitation in Chinese and Japanese circles had sprung up around hopes and some expectations that the creation of the League of Nations would bring some formal declaration about racial equality (Lauren 1989: 82–101). The blocking of such a clause, by Australia and the United States, was seen as an insult not only in Japan but also in China. The Washington Conference did result in the signing of the Nine-Power Treaty in February 1922. There were some gains for China. Her territorial integrity was reaffirmed on paper, as were the American Open Door Notes of 1899. Japan also restored control of the former German holdings in the Shandong peninsula, Qingdao, and Jiaozhou Bay. Indeed, Tokyo seemed to follow a softer approach toward China during the 1920s, as expounded by Kijuro Shidehara, Japan’s Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, chief Washington Conference negotiator, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Minister from 1924 to 1927 and 1929 to 1931. On the other hand, Manchuria remained subject to Japanese military interest, internal fragmentation reduced China’s international ability, and the Western apparatus of Unequal Treaty privileges remained mostly intact. As a consequence, race, culture, and politics continued to feature in China’s international relations during the 1920s.

RACE AND CULTURE, PAN-ASIANISM,
AND CHINESE NATIONALISM

Elsewhere, from the British Socialist wing, Henry Hyndman felt that racial factors were very much at play in the international system, where “all other details of world-policy may ere long seem trifling in comparison with this. The suicide of the white race may leave the planet open to the supremacy of the yellow” (1919: 161). Yet he also saw the danger that “if in international relations, the old race and colour prejudices are maintained [by the West against Japan, and indeed China], then troubles may easily ensue beside which even the World War may take second place” (283). In the long term, “the China of the past is rapidly fading, and the Chinese of the present are taking up the line of their own historic achievements and will play a great, possibly the greatest, part in the future of humanity” (30). However, Japan lurked as an immediate local threat to China, with her drive “to give Japan the absolute mastery of the hundreds of millions of people and all the vast resources of the Flowery Land [China] . . . ‘China for the Japanese’ is the policy now being pursued with a relentless persistence” (103–04).

Opportunities in China were rich for two prominent postwar iconoclastic nationalist Japanese thinkers, Ikki Kita (G. Wilson 1969) and Shumei Okawa, involved in the pan-Asian organization *Gyochisha*. Admittedly, liberal advocates like Tanzan Ishibashi decried what he called, in 1921, *Dai nihonshugi no genso* (The Fantasy of a Greater Japanism) and the consequent “meddling in China” (De Bary et al. 2005: 861). It was, though, precisely the allure of these greater and wider opportunities for Japan on the Asian mainland that was attractive to postwar nationalists. In his 1919 tract *Nihon kaizo hoan taiko* (Outline Plan for the Reorganization of Japan), Kita criticized how “even our neighbour China, which long benefited from the protection we provided through the Russo-Japanese war, not only has failed to repay us but instead despises us” (De Bary et al. 2005: 961). However, using and reversing Western imagery of the Orient, Kita claimed that “Japan today is like a man in his prime and in good health. Countries like Russia and China are like old patients whose bodies are in total decay” (966). Consequently, for the future, a proper application was to be found in “an understanding of the ‘gospel of the sword’” where Japan’s “seven hundred million brothers in China and India have no path to independence other than that offered by our guidance and protection . . . let her [Japan] lift the virtuous banner of an Asian league and take the leadership in a world federation” (961). Kita’s dangerous radicalism of the 1920s was to become mainstream Japanese orthodoxy in the expansionist 1930s, rather than Ishibashi’s restraint.

Japanese espousal of pan-Asianism movements was a double-edged sword for China, lending support against the West but also potentially threatening China. Sun Yat-sen’s last major address, his famous Kobe speech

on November 28, 1924, about pan-Asianism, pointed out “The question remains whether Japan will be the hawk of the western civilization of the rule of Might or the tower of strength for the Orient” (1941: 151). As Hsu Shuhsi, an assistant professor of political science at Peking University-Yenching, was to lament, “There seems to be no limit to Japanese ambition” (1926, vi), and “there is no doubt that, in proportion to the degree of the Chinese nation recovering from the political disorder it now experiences, it will grow more insistent upon shaking off the Japanese shackles. Here lies the hope and the danger” (430) for China and the international system. Chinese figures like Tang Liangli could notice the “flirtations of prominent Japanese politicians with Chinese nationalist opinion and their dallying with the idea of a pan-Asianism,” but could still warn that “against White Imperialism in China she puts forth Japanese Imperialism” (1927: 131).

In this new world, racial prestige, and with it power, was changing in the wake of the conflict between the major white powers, and also in the wake of Japan’s yellow role. As the British Foreign Office recognized on October 20, 1921, about this racial dynamic, “the great war in Europe has greatly accentuated this fact by breaking up the solidarity of the white races, and has undoubtedly produced a profound impression throughout the coloured world, together with an immense loss of white prestige” (DBFP 1966: 439). Such a point about World War I was made by Tang Liangli, that “participation of the Chinese in this internecine [European] warfare destroyed the White Man’s prestige” (1928: 87) in China. Race was also a discernible structural factor in interwar international relations for various commentators. Bertrand Russell considered, in the wake of World War I and the defeat of German expansionism, that “there remains the population question . . . there remains, of course, the Yellow Peril” (1920: 208); “in Australia and California there is an intense dislike and fear toward the yellow races. The causes of this are complex; the chief among them are two, labor competition and instinctive race-hatred . . . a formidable menace to the world’s peace” (156–57). Basil Mathew’s *The Clash of Colour* similarly judged “the new post-war race problem is the supreme feature in the world landscape to-day” (1924: 5).

Explicit race-hatred literature was easy to find in those years, as luridly portrayed in Theodore Stoddard’s *The Rising Tide of Color against White Supremacy* (1922), Leo Money’s *The Peril of the White* (1925), John Gregory’s *The Menace of Colour* (1925), Maurice Muret’s *The Twilight of the White Races* (1926), and Etienne Denner’s *Asia’s Teeming Millions: Its Problems for the West* (1931). Such sentiments were not restricted to the fringes. Professor Irving Fisher, president of the Eugenics Research Association, argued in the prestigious *Scientific Monthly* that “eugenics is incomparably the most important concern of the human race” (1921: 214). Classic fears were present from him: “Under unrestricted immigration within a century a majority of this country might become Oriental, particularly if we commit race suicide . . . yellow domination rather

than white domination" (214). Evoking "the 'yellow peril' . . . the nightmare of the Kaiser," Fisher's internal worries about the Chinese (and Japanese) were compounded by external fears of China, where "what Japan has done in one generation, China can do in the next. And when China is fully equipped with battleships, machine guns, aeroplanes, and poisonous gases, she and Japan could possibly conquer the whole white world" (228). Stoddard's *The Rising Tide of Color against White Supremacy* was particularly blunt. Fisher had approvingly noted that "today the yellow color peril is the subject of a seriously alarming book by Lothrop Stoddard, 'The Rising Tide of Color.' It is in the thought of many far-seeing people" (Fisher 1921: 228). In retrospect, Bonnett saw this "incendiary racial tract" as "one of the most talked about books of the early 1920s" and part of a postwar "Whiteness in Crisis" (2004: 35). As to the author, Theodore Stoddard brought up the immediate threat from Japan but also told his readers, "It must not be forgotten that China remains not only the cultural but also the territorial and racial centre of the yellow world. Four-fifths of the yellow race is concentrated in China" (1922: 18). In turn, Sun Yat-sen's famous blast, at Kobe on November 28, 1924, against Western imperialism and pan-Asian solidarity noted Stoddard's book.

Race-constructed perceptions of the international system were not just a feature of the West. In China the late Qing entwining of race and nation seen with Zhang Binglin, Lin Shu, and Liang Qichao had become more clear-cut. Under the Republic, "racialized senses of identity" were noticeable, "racial discourse was a dominant practise which cut across most political positions, from the fascist core of the Guomindang to the communist theories of Li Dazhao" (Dikotter 1997: 21–22). Such emphasis "permeated . . . education . . . readings on racial politics became part of the curriculum" (21). In China, middle school textbooks talked in 1920 of how, "among the world's races, there are strong and weak . . . there are superior and inferior races," and primary school material talked of how "the yellow and white races are relatively strong and intelligent . . . only the yellow race competes with the white race. This is so-called evolution," for "among the contemporary races that could be called superior, there are only the yellow and the white races. China is the yellow race" (21).

Elsewhere in the Pacific, attitudes remained highly sensitive to racial matters within and between countries. Admittedly, in Australia, some figures appreciated Chinese values and aesthetics, as with William Wilson's 1924 teahouse/pavilion building synthesis "Meeting of East and West." Broinowski considered Wilson "a Sinophile and eccentric . . . he believed that China, far from being a sleeping dragon about to wake, rush out and savage Australians, was a peaceful giant arising, refreshed from slumber, to a new creative age" (1992: 53). Theodore John Tourrier's 1927 creation, *A Chinaman's Opinion of Us and of His Own Country*, was a retrospective sympathetic portrayal of Chinese reform and renewal hopes through the fictitious (Cornell 2004) letters of one Hwuy-ung, a so-called Mandarin of the Fourth Button. However, more

typical of Australian perceptions of the Yellow East was Banjo Patterson's talk in "A Job for McGuinness" that "when the Chow [Chinese] and the Jap / Begin to drift down from the tropics, / When a big yellow stain spreading over the map / Provides some disquieting topics," in which, "Oh, it's then when they're wanting a man that will stand / In the trench where his own kith and kin is, / With a frown on his face and a gun in his hand" (1923). Politician could, and did, reiterate many of these concerns across the Pacific. Canada's Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 turned the restrictions of 1885 into tight exclusion, facilitated by China's virtual collapse and diplomatic impotence. In the United States, the 1924 Immigration Act reaffirmed the existing bar on Chinese immigration, on the grounds that as nonwhites they were ineligible for citizenship and, therefore, immigration.

Here, relations between the United States and Sun Yat-sen had deteriorated in the early 1920s. Not only were there World War I disappointments, but also an American fleet had appeared in the Bay of Guangzhou to maintain the tax revenues of the northern, war-lord dominated, regime in Beijing. Sun, in his "Address to the American Citizen" on December 17, 1923, bitterly recalled how China's 1912 revolution "had taken inspiration from and followed the example of the United States. We had hoped for a Lafayette to fight on our side for this just cause" (Zi 2004: 241). Instead they got "an American Commander of Fleet who led more warships than any other country to enter our territorial sea, in an attempt to jointly crush us and eliminate the Chinese Republic" and that the United States had "abandoned outright its lofty belief in Liberty and degenerated from a liberator to an oppressor of peoples fighting for their freedom" (241).

At the time, China was in a state of surface collapse, fragmented between various power centers and warlords. Henry Merrill considered them "a lot of selfish tyrants without patriotism or national feelings," with their military forces no threat to the outside world, but merely "a horrible incubus upon the people . . . the vampire which is sucking the life-blood of the nation" (1921: 646). China's internal divisions shackled her efforts to reverse her international disadvantages, "the chaos of warlordism, and the concomitant weakness of the Peking government, rendered China particularly vulnerable to foreign pressures and encroachments" (Sheridan 1983: 303). Sun Yat-sen may have suggested in 1922 "an Asia for Asiatics only . . . to counterbalance the whites . . . because Japan proved unable [through its 1902 alliance with Britain] to avail herself of her opportunities, China will have to take the lead in saving Asia for the Asiatics" (Nicolaesky 1949: 280–82). However, China, as yet, was in no such position to take up any mantle of pan-Asiatic, anti-Western leadership, with its immediate weakness proving more problematic. As Sun Yat-sen admitted elsewhere, "China, despite its resources" is "now a prey of militaristic and capitalistic powers—a greater bone of contention than the Balkan Peninsula. Unless the Chinese question

can be settled peacefully, another world war greater and more terrible than the one just past will be inevitable" (1922: v).

Japan's own expansionism was distorting any genuine pan-Asiatic alignment between China and Japan. British diplomats were sensitive to this issue. At the British Foreign Office, Victor Wellesley was warning, on June 1, 1920, of a "ruthless . . . brutal . . . insidious" Japan "having for its ultimate aim a complete Japanese hegemony over China, politically, economically, and probably military. Such a prospect is one which neither we nor the Americans can contemplate with equanimity" (DBFP 1966: 32). His perceptions the following year, on October 20, 1920, amid Foreign Office preparation for the Washington Conference, were stark. He considered "the present state of affairs in China can only be described as chaotic in the extreme. It would be difficult to name a time when the central government at Peking stood at a lower ebb than it stands today" (DBFP 1966: 437). China's internal fragility created external problems: "It is the weakness of China as much as the aggressive policy of Japan which is the constant source of danger in the Far East," since "the jealousies and rivalries to which it gives rise constitute the really disturbing element in the situation, for they make China a cockpit of international strife" (437–38). Jordan's prognosis in 1921 was similarly gloomier than his lengthy Despatch of 1918. Now, three years on, he felt, "China is politically disorganized and so weak as to be almost a negligible international entity" (DBFP 1966: 430). Paradoxes continued to surround China. The Foreign Office considered, on January 21, 1921, that "the vast size of China and her teeming population entitles her to be regarded rather as a continent than a country, an agglomeration of nations rather than a single nation" (DBFP 1966: 222). China was "potentially strong, but politically weak . . . a standing temptation to the Japanese policy of absorption. There are, nevertheless, unmistakable indications of a national awakening" (222) in China.

Intense debates were taking place in China over what form and direction any such awakening should take—in other words, how nationalistic should a "national" awakening be, and what should China's relationship be with the West? With Beijing under the sway of northern warlords, "Shanghai gained greater significance" (Mitter 2004: 49) than Beijing for many Chinese nationalists and radicals, in the political and cultural swirls of the May Fourth Movement and its derivations. During the early 1920s, Shanghai was a more open outlet for Chinese political thinking, yet "Shanghai was [also] a society deeply divided by hardened European ideas of race," a "forced encounter with imperialism [which] was simultaneously galling and seductive for the May Fourth Generation" (50).

The West's hard power imperial structures binding China through annexations, extraterritoriality, and other tangible Unequal Treaties constraints were there to be generally rejected, but what about the West's soft power, its ideas and values? Western observers of China interacted with the

postwar modernists, universalists hoping to bring about the regeneration of China. Ironies abounded as “inquiry into Western literature, philosophy and science enabled these [Chinese] thinkers to step outside of their own tradition and to begin to criticize it,” for “without an alternative place to stand—another time, another place—they would have no alternative place from which to call for awakening in China” (Schwarcz 1986: 118). John Dewey’s philosophy of pragmatism and educational explorations, as well as Bertrand Russell’s epistemological positions, were the avenues they turned to. Hu Shih was an important link between Dewey and the New Thought/Culture Movement, “the sign of a new life which has been in embryo ever since China’s contact with the West” (Lo Ren 1930: 48) and “marks the dawning of a new era” (63) in which “science is overthrowing geomancy” (52). Both Dewey and Russell lectured in Beijing during 1921–1922.

The first appearance of *Xinchao* (New Tide), which ran from January 1919 to March 1922, highlighted such avenues. For its editors, “the fundamental problem is that our people don’t realize the richness of Western culture and the impoverishment of Chinese culture” (Schwarcz 1986: 119). They then posed the following specific questions: “1) what is the level of world civilization today? 2) what are modern intellectual trends going? 3) compared to world trends, what are the shortcomings of Chinese thought? 4) what trends should we blend with our own?” (119–20). They concluded, “to gradually bathe isolated China in the waters of civilization is the first responsibility of our organization” (120). San Fuyuan, a *New Tide* member who had served as reporter and translator for Dewey and Russell, wrote the day both Westerners left China, July 11, 1921, that “we thank both of them for not deserting a barbarian race like ours. We can only hope that we won’t be the same the next time we receive them” (Schwarcz 1986: 121). Was his use of the term “a barbarian race like ours” underplayed irony, or did it reflect a trend that “reveals just how far the May Fourth youths had gone toward adopting Westerners’ views of China[?] They were on the verge of turning the contempt which China had of the so-called uncivilized world into self-contempt” (Schwarcz 1986: 121) of China.

While these Chinese figures wrestled with the problems of defining *guomin xing* (national character), Dewey and Russell were ready to pass observations on China and its place in the world. Dewey had already noticed attempts by Japan to bring China on its side against the West, where, on March 27, 1919, “the Japanese are trying to stir up anti-foreign feeling and make the Chinese believe the Americans and English are responsible for China not getting Shantung back, and also talking race discrimination [by the West against Chinese and Japanese immigrants, and in blocking the racial equality clause] for the same purpose” (Dewey and Dewey 1920: 180). Faced with the *New Tide* movement’s rush to modernity, Dewey saw its limitations, its “extravagances and confusions, the undigested medley of wisdom

and nonsense,” as well as the ability of critics to dismiss it, to “hold up the whole movement to ridicule, as less than half-baked, as an uncritical, more or less hysterical mixture of unrelated ideas and miscellaneous pieces of Western science and thought” (Dewey 1921: 584). Nevertheless, he still reckoned, “yet, the new culture movement provides one of the firmest bases of hope for the future of China” (584). Fittingly, Dewey’s *Reconstruction in Philosophy* was the subject of translation in the last issue of *New Tide*, in March 1922. However, the fact that this was the last issue indicates some of the drift and marginalization that was creeping into such projects as nationalism and various more overtly political anti-Western pushes took shape.

China’s external problems attracted Bertrand Russell’s attention in his *The Problem of China*. This was written in 1922, in the wake of his year as professor of philosophy at the National University of Peking. A “sage in the inkpot,” Russell’s writings about China “aroused periodic bouts of apoplexy and despair in the Foreign Office” (Ogden 1982: 572). Russell considered that “people in England [had become] blind to Japan’s aims in China, and unable to apprehend the meaning of what Japan has done” (1922: 15). However, while “they [Japan] constantly profess to be the champions of Asia against Europe . . . they have therefore behaved as to cause a well-deserved hatred of themselves in China” (174). With regard to China, Russell recognized how “China, by her resources and her population, is capable of being the greatest Power in the world” (174). However, “the position of China is quite peculiar, because in population and potential strength China is the greatest nation in the world, while in actual strength at the moment it is one of the least” (63). It is this mismatch between potentiality and actuality, between past glories and current ignominy, that summed up China’s internal setting and international role. Conversely, China’s problems were global problems for Russell: “Chinese problems, even if they affected no one outside China, would be of vast importance, since the Chinese are estimated to constitute about a quarter of the human race,” but, “in fact, however, all the world will be vitally affected by the development of Chinese affairs, which may well be a decisive factor, for good or evil, during the next two centuries” (9). Russell’s own politics can be seen in his judgment that “all the great powers, without exception, have interests which are incompatible, in the long run, with China’s welfare and with the best development of Chinese civilization” (241). As a result, “therefore the Chinese must seek salvation in their own energy, not in the benevolence of any outside Power” (241).

Russell was not the only sympathetic observer of China’s plight. In a different way, Henry Hodgkin, secretary of the National Christian Council of China, amid the “deeper mystery of China” (1923: 10), called for a “national policy towards China, animated by Respect, the spirit of fair play” (front-piece) and that “China be welcomed into the family of nations” (251). Cross-Pacific migration dynamics were present for him. In a comparative frame,

“Chinese are knocking at the doors of Canada, America, Australia and other countries where the white population predominates, and only the fact of China’s political and military impotence prevents this persistent knocking from raising serious international problems” (17). He considered the danger was caused by the West, that “new China is rising before our eyes . . . by our misguided policies, by . . . what we have done in the hundred years that are just left behind us . . . we may see, through our acts, a monster turning his new-found strength against us,” for we “create the Yellow Peril we talk about” (250–51). Basil Mathews’s take on China was a play on words, that currently, “China is, of course, politically—simply broken China” (1922: 45). However, Mathews also believed that a reunified China was inevitable: “China will, however, be one again, her history makes it certain” (45), a state of affairs seen in its periodic cycles of dynastic rise and falls of the world’s oldest continuous surviving great civilization, “when she does so she will become by, the size of her territory, her inexhaustible mineral resources . . . one of the mightiest forces in the world” (46). He wondered in that setting, “Will she be a force for war or peace, for world race-conflict?” (46).

Meanwhile, racial-cultural nationalism was apparent in Sun Yat-sen’s *San Min Chu* (Three Principles of the People) talks that he delivered during 1924. Sun Yat-sen spoke about “a single, pure race,” and asked, “What is the standing of our nation in the world? In comparison with other nations we have the greatest population and the oldest civilization,” yet “we are the poorest and weakest state in the world” (1929: 12). Graphic and powerful metaphors followed: “In spite of four hundred million people gathered together in one China, we are but a sheet of loose sand. We are the poorest and weakest state in the world, occupying the lowest position in international affairs” (12). The metaphor was vivid, the implications clear: “The rest of the world is the carving knife and the serving dish, while we are the fish and the meat. Our position now is extremely perilous . . . we face a tragedy the loss of our country and the destruction of our race” (12). Psychologically, “we are despised” (14). The economic dependency of China on the international system was evident for him: “In reality we are being crushed by the economic strengths of the Powers” (38), as “they are now reducing their political activities against China and are using economic pressures instead” (36). Consequently, “China is not the colony of one nation, but of all, and we are not the slaves of one county but of all. I think we ought to be called a ‘hypo-colony’” (38–39). Faced with this, “we, the wronged races, must first recover our position of national freedom and equality . . . we want to revive China’s lost nationalism and use the strength of our four millions” (88–89), against which “the [great] Powers are afraid that we will have such thoughts . . . we must . . . oppose the great powers of the world” (89: 147). In the longer term, China “will be equal to ten great powers . . . and will then be able to recover her predominant national position. After China reaches that place, what then?” (146). What then, indeed?

Anti-Christian agitation in China was a feature of the 1920s (Yamamoto and Yamamoto 1953), in which rising nationalism played its part. The problem for Christianity was aptly admitted in the *Manifesto of the Christians of Wuhan* in 1926: “We don’t want Christianity to be built on the foundation of the gunboat policy” (Lo Ren 1930: 286) of the West, and “we should not seek the protection of Christianity by the Unequal Treaties which are capable of overthrowing our country and our race” (287), an admission that it had been. As Lo Ren admitted, “the Nationalist Movement, which has as its avowed purposes the emancipation of China from military oppression and foreign exploitation, a very potent factor” behind the anti-Christian movement, for, “inasmuch as Christianity in China enjoys the protection of the so-called unequal treaties, it cannot but be looked upon with suspicion as if actually in alliance with foreign imperialism . . . with the policy of cultural exploitation by the West” (97–98, also 281). Tang Liangli had been totally dismissive, dismissing Christianity as an “alien civilization” (1927: 65). He thought, “there is no group of foreigners who have done more harm to China than the modern missionaries, either directly or indirectly. It is in connection with their subversive activities that China has lost the greater part of her dependencies,” for “by their teachings they have denationalized hundreds of thousands of Chinese converts, and have thus been instrumental, to a great extent, in disintegrating not only the body but the spirit of the nation” (58).

Nationalism was on the increase; internationalism was on the decline. At the start of 1925, Zhou Zuoren, the brother of Lu Xun, admitted his ambivalence toward the cosmopolitanism of the New Culture Movement. A panorama of Chinese movements unfolded from him: “At first I believed in venerating the monarch and resisting foreigners. At the time of the Boxer uprising I was delighted when I heard in the countryside ‘a foreigner’ had his legs broken and his felt hat smashed” (Van de Ven 2003a: 66). From there, he had found other outlets: “Later, when I read *The New Citizen*, *The Citizen*, *The Revolutionary Army* and *New Guangdong*, I changed completely” (66). Then “during the May Fourth Period, I dreamed about cosmopolitanism and expressed some rather unrealistic views” (66). Another turn took him outside China: “Last spring I narrowed it in scope to Asianism” (66). But then he went back to his Chinese roots: “My thinking has returned to nationalism . . . our starting point must be nationalism” (66).

Other Chinese voices, including Communist circles, used racial rhetoric. In 1924, Li Dazhao rejected the notion of “the white peoples as the pioneers of culture in the world; they place themselves in a superior position and look down on other races as inferior . . . the races on a world scale have come to confront each other” (Meisner 1967: 190). At the Guomindang Conference of April 1925, Wang Jingwei, leader of the Guomindang Left faction, pushed for “Chinese racial revival” (1927: 113). Conversely, Maurice Muret argued in *The Twilight of the White Race*, “China is . . . a critical spot in the danger

zone of our world. The lust of which she is an object, the anarchy of which she is an example, her complacency toward Bolshevism, her hatred of the West, all constitutes serious dangers” (1926: 257). This pointed to a new dimension in China’s external relations, the USSR.

THE SOVIET FACTOR

During the 1920s, Western observers were not only concerned about Japan using Chinese resources to augment her own hegemonic designs, but were also concerned about Communist penetration through internal and external subversion, in what Elleman (1997) subsequently saw as sustained “diplomacy and deception” at play from the Soviet Union and China toward the West, but also each other. A new factor in the matrix of China and the international system had been the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Soviet Union could be seen as the very antithesis of international order, a radical voice of challenge and inspiration for others. As a young radical librarian, Li Dazhao witnessed the Allied celebrations on November 15, 1918: “Men and women of the Allied powers run up and down the street in celebration of the victory, and in the city of Peking the soldiers of these nations loudly blast forward their triumphal songs” (CRW 1976: 246). However, the greater significance for Li was the victory of Communism in Russia: “The Russian revolution is but one of the world revolutions; numerous revolutions of other peoples will successively arise . . . such mighty rolling tides are beyond the power of the present capitalist governments to prevent or to stop” (248–49) in China. Not surprisingly, he became one of the founding figures, alongside Chen Duxiu, in the setting up of the Chinese Communist Party, the CCP, in 1921. One of Li’s library assistants was Mao Zedong. Mao felt in 1919 that “the time has come . . . the army of the red flag swarms over the east . . . sweeping away numerous enemies . . . the May Fourth Movement has arisen . . . the world is ours, the nation is ours . . . the Chinese people of several hundred million,” for “our golden age, our age of brilliance and splendour, lies ahead!” (1969: 162, 164).

The Soviet Union was ready to offer encouragement to such Chinese currents. *Vooruzhennyi Narod’s* 1918 “Our Yellow Brothers” articles recorded how “revolution creates miracles . . . a Chinese worker in Russia takes a rifle, organizes international detachments and gives life for the cause of Socialism,” so that “red proletarian blood flows under the yellow skin; a brave heart beats in the yellow chests in time with the heart of the world proletariat, yellow hands hold high the banner of the International” (Lukin 2003: 98). Georgy Chicherin, the new Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, was flush with revolutionary solidarity in his letter to Sun Yat-sen, published in *Izvestia* on August 1, 1918. Chicherin’s letter included, “greeting you [Sun Yat-sen] as the leader of the Chinese revolution,” as “the man who, since 1911, has con-

tinued in exceptionally difficult circumstances to march at the head of the Chinese democracy against the enslavers, the North Chinese and foreign imperialist Governments." From the new Soviet perspective, there was ideological and structural convergence, Chicherin asserting in this public letter that "the Russian working classes turn to their Chinese brothers and call them on to the common fight" for "our victory is your victory. Our defeat is your defeat. Let us close the ranks in the great fight for the common interests of the world proletariat" and against Western capitalism. An "alliance" (Elleman 1997: 54) was in effect being offered.

Meanwhile, Lev Karakhan's 1919 "Declaration to the Chinese People and to the Governments of North and South China" could announce how "Soviet Russia and the Soviet Red Army are marching cross the Urals to the East . . . to bring to the peoples liberation from the yoke of foreign bayonets . . . which are stifling the enslaved peoples of the East, and particularly the Chinese people" (SDFP 1951-53: 1.158). Rhetoric rather than substance may have been at play here. Nevertheless, the Karakhan Declaration used ringing words and created strong impressions, hopes, and fears. With the Soviet Union renouncing "all the special privileges" accruing from the czarist times within China, though not returning earlier annexed territories, "it was hailed in liberal circles, as evidence of China's return to her position as a great power" (Whiting 1951: 356).

Western observers were increasingly concerned about this Soviet factor. Gilbert Reid had already noted in 1919 that "another trouble for China comes from the spread of Bolshevism. The end is not yet, it lies in the future. It looks now as if an Asiatic conflagration is to take the place of the European conflagration" (1921: 143). Since "of all the countries of Asia, China borders on Russia to the longest extent . . . the most discontented in China will join the most discontented in Russia and together work for the overthrow of all governments" (144). During 1919-1920, British intelligence "produced a series of ever more dramatic warnings about the Bolshevik menace," even though "these often lacked credibility due to their speculative nature" (Best 2002: 49). Godfrey Denham's first intelligence briefing, from Shanghai on April 7, 1920, was about how "Bolshevism is spreading and that is peculiarly acceptable to the Oriental by its advocacy of race equality . . . and that it is a very real danger to the British Empire in Asia" (Best 2002: 50).

Soviet rhetoric and Soviet-Chinese alignment greatly disturbed London, as evidenced by Chicherin's comments, on October 25, 1922, that "Soviet Russia and China are natural allies and the future belongs to friendly relations between them . . . Soviet Russia entertains no designs, which might conflict with the complete economic and political independence of China and its chosen mode of development" (SDFP 1951-53: 1.342). In short, Chicherin argued, "Soviet Russia is the only great Power prepared to support the full independence of China in all respects, and the full flowering of its

independent development,” for “Soviet Russia follows with the greatest sympathy the Chinese people’s struggle against foreign oppression and interference” (1.342). Meanwhile, the Chinese Communist Party Second Congress *Manifesto* reminded the world in 1922 of “the vast fertile lands of China, its unlimited riches and teeming millions,” before citing how China’s humiliations since the Opium Wars had led to “China’s present special status in the field of international relations” (Hu Sheng 1955: 270) as a semicolonial dependency of the West, but a China hoping for gains through its Soviet links.

The agreements signed in March 1923 between Sun Yat-sen and the head of the Soviet diplomatic mission, whereby the USSR promised to give diplomatic and financial support for the Guomindang government at Canton, sparked renewed worries in British circles. This was further exacerbated in October by the high-profile arrival of Mikhail Borodin, as Comintern adviser to Sun Yat-sen, who had returned to Canton in the spring. Soviet “missionaries of revolution” (Wilbur and How 1989) were present in China. Conversely, Mao Zedong was already blasting the United States, as “the most murderous of hangmen” (Sheng 1988: 180). Borodin’s role was supplemented by General Vasily Blyukher, “Galen,” as “aid and arms flowed in with them” from the Soviet Union amid its “dual approach to China” (Eto 1986: 111). Indeed, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) figures sat on the Guomindang Central Executive Committee, with Mao Zedong appearing on the lists as one of its seventeen “alternate” members. In the Soviet Union, pro-Chinese rhetoric could flourish. Vladimir Mayakovsky’s 1924 poem “Hands off China” blasted the West: “Let’s sweep away the web. / Hands off China! / . . . They want to crush you by colonization. / Four hundred million are not a herd. / Louder, Chinese / Hands off China! . . . We are with you, Chinese! / Hands off China!” (Lukin 2003: 99).

UNEQUAL TREATIES REVISION AND NATIONALIST AGITATION-RENEWAL

One feature emerging with vigor in both Guomindang and Communist Party circles was a sharpened focus on renegotiating the Unequal Treaties. The model was the recognition of equality, reciprocity, and mutual respect of sovereignty gained in China’s December 1919 Treaty of Friendship with Bolivia, China having rejected earlier Bolivian proposals for traditional consular jurisdiction. Admittedly, the Washington Conference, of November 1921 to February 1922, had declared that the varied Western nations and Japan “are prepared to relinquish extraterritorial rights, when satisfied that the state of Chinese laws, the arrangement for their administration and other considerations warrant them in doing so.” Phrases such as “when satisfied” left the discretion and timing out of China’s hands and could be a euphemism for indeterminate, indefinite postponement by the West and

Japan, neither committing nor binding them in any tangible way. In other words, “mere tokenism” (Fung 1983: 82). Despite, or perhaps because of this euphemistic vagueness, the abrogation of the Unequal Treaties was a diplomatic-cultural issue of some importance during the 1920s, “the *cause célèbre* of Chinese nationalism after the First World War . . . a bond that united the whole nation” (Fung 1987: 793). Thus, the Guomindang *Manifesto*, released on January 1, 1923, promised, “We must employ every effort to accomplish revision of the treaties in order to restore our nation to a position of freedom and equality with the international family” (Shieh 1970: 69).

Western commentators were often unsympathetic to Chinese demand for treaty revision, reflecting “a fear of losing status and prestige throughout Asia” (Stremski 1979: 160). From his consulate background, Charles Denby saw Chinese demands as a “menace,” a “criminal injustice,” and “an unfriendly service” (1924: 667) to Westerners in China. From the Chinese side, Mah’s perspective was more robust, pointing out that “what was once a Chinese attitude of silent acquiescence toward the restriction of sovereignty has become one of active and energetic protest against its further continuance” (1976: 676). Extraterritoriality was “a national grievance” (687). Mah’s explanation for this was that it “may be traced to the rapidly growing national consciousness” (680), where “extraterritoriality . . . fettering her sovereignty . . . having been extracted by force, has become an object of national protest . . . in recent years the cry raised against it [extraterritoriality] has become incessant” (684). For him, the consular implementation of extraterritorial jurisdiction “has done more than any other factor in humiliating Chinese national pride and in convincing the Chinese of the foreigners’ selfish aggression in the name of justice” (690).

Consequently, 1924 saw the formal coining of the Chinese phrase *Bupingdeng tiaoyue*—Unequal Treaties in public political usage—a term “invented by the GMD [Guomindang], along with the Communists, to express China’s long smoldering rage and frustration” (D. Wang 2003: 413). Rodney Gilbert dismissed the term as but one of various phrases of Soviet “invention . . . persistently and monotonously associated with China’s international affairs” (1929: 1). Given his strong anti-Communist and pro-imperialist views, Gilbert considered that “a very good case for past and present ‘imperialism’ as a general beneficent force, could be made with ease” (3), with Chinese claims as but diversions away from their “native ineptitude” (10). Nevertheless, his dismissive comments contained admissions both of its force and its nature, “the tiresome, but tireless, campaigns against the Unequal Treaties” (5), seen in China as “a perennial insult . . . a very powerful appeal to the Oriental mind . . . the appeal of Chinese to Chinese against the Unequal Treaties is that they were humiliating . . . the war being waged against the treaties is a struggle for the recovery of ‘face’” (7, 8, 10). It is significant that, in retrospect, the “rhetorical range of the vocabulary, as well as

the tone, changed explosively after 1923,” where “the phrase *bupingdeng tiaoyue* developed a series of confrontational and class infected connotations such as ‘threat,’ ‘slavery’ and ‘misery’ inflicted upon China” (D. Wang 2003: 408). There, the Guomindang’s First National Conference *Manifesto*, on January 1, 1924, asserted that “for the salvation of our country . . . all unequal treaties . . . should be abolished, and new treaties should be concluded on the basis of absolute equality and mutual respect for sovereign rights” (Shieh 1970: 85, 83). The term was also picked up within the Communist Party. Mao Zedong, as head of the Propaganda Bureau for the United Front during 1925–1926, put forward the slogan *Quxiao bupingdeng tiaoyue* (Cancellation of the Unequal Treaties) as a way of awakening the masses and of fostering wider Chinese unity.

Sun Yat-sen’s May 1924 speech, “The Harm of the Unequal Treaties to the Chinese Working Class,” argued that “as a result of the Unequal Treaties, the status of Chinese workers, as the slaves of world powers, is the worst in the world” (D. Wang 2003: 408). Later on in the year, Sun described all “Unequal Treaties as China’s ‘self-selling indenture’ *maishenqi*” (D. Wang 2003: 408). In his last major speech—the Kobe speech on pan-Asianism on November 28, 1925—Sun Yat-sen returned to the Unequal Treaties, and the way in which “to rely on benevolence alone to influence the Europeans in Asia to relinquish the privileges they have acquired in China would be an impossible dream. If we want to regain our rights we must resort to force” (1941: 149). Comparisons were there to be made: “Japan has been able to achieve her independence through the abolition of the Unequal Treaties, they [China] could do the same” (142) and “in the matter of armaments, Japan has already accomplished her aims, while Turkey has recently also completely armed herself” and scrapped the old Ottoman Empire Unequal Treaties and extraterritoriality provisions therein (149). Sun’s denunciations of the West were maintained but there was also a challenge to Japan: “In the minds of short-sighted Japanese, the abrogation of Unequal Treaties by Japan would mean the loss to Japan of her acquired rights and privileges (1941: 133). In offering a cooperative alliance, again, with China on the basis of equality and reform, Sun stated, “I do not see why the Japanese could not forfeit their present privileges” in China (134), but of course that ignored the real pull within Japan for it to maintain China in an inferior position, and maintain its own privileges for Japan’s benefit.

Sun Yat-sen’s premature death in March 1925 certainly did not terminate nationalist demands for the abrogation of extraterritoriality privileges, with Sun famously urging in his will that “the abolition of unequal treaties should be carried into effect with the least possible delay” (1941: viii). Indeed, there remained what could be described as an “extraterritoriality complex” (Kirby 1997: 440). Sun’s fellow nationalist Wang Jingwei presented both a tribute to Sun and his own analysis of “international problems” to the Guomindang

Conference on April 1925. In portraying the previous decades of relations with the West, Wang reckoned that “the Powers are bound to produce another pretext for refusing to relinquish extraterritorial rights” (1927: 131). The past left its legacy: “From the Opium war up to the present time, the Unequal Treaties contracted were all extorted by the Imperialists by means of threats, force, blackmail, and other such means” (132). Wang’s view of the whole edifice of international legality was strident: “International Law . . . an instrument for securing the privileges obtained from the weak by the powerful nations . . . a wolf and a lamb talking justice . . . Obtain their consent to abolish the Unequal Treaties? Wait for the river to lose its mud!” (133).

Western resistance was apparent. By late 1925, U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg rejected Chinese demands and reminded the Chinese authorities of their existing treaty obligations, with George Finch concluding that “relations of China with the other Powers during the last few months have assumed such an ominous extent” (1925: 752). Archibald Rose could consequently note that, where “the extraterritorial question . . . is one of the bitterest and most controversial subjects in China . . . there is now growing agitation for the repudiation of all the old treaties” (1925: 86, 88). Underneath the furor, he reckoned that “there is an intellectual and nationalistic renaissance in the air . . . a new spirit of revolt against the privileges of the foreigner. There is a determination to rebuild China as a nation, independent, strong . . . I think there will be great changes in her relations with the West within a very few years” (91).

In northern China, such sentiments were also manifest with the Beijing-based government, which also called on the foreign powers to begin treaty revision. Belgium, a relatively small Power, became one focus for China’s push to terminate extraterritorial agreements. The Chinese acting Prime Minister Gu Weijun declared on November 6, 1926, that “no nation mindful of its destiny and conscious of its self-respect, can be fettered forever by treaties which shackle its free and natural development and which are repugnant to the best traditions of international intercourse” (1931: 53). The irony was that it was “cosmopolitan diplomats” like Gu who “doggedly pursued the task of rights recovery on behalf of a nation that lacked the military or financial capacity to defend itself” (Nathan 1983: 267), a paradox that became clear in the 1930s. Nevertheless, the Belgians were bluntly told, on October 28, 1926, about “the nation-wide sentiment in China against the indefinite continuance of unilateral treaties and the earnest desire of the Chinese people to have China’s intercourse with other countries placed on the basis of equality and mutual respect for territorial sovereignty” (W. Gu 1931: 133).

In southern China, this push to end the Unequal Treaty restrictions was also noticeable. The Guomindang National Congress *Manifesto* of January 1, 1926, asked, “How did China come to lose its liberty and equality? The fault lies in the bondage of the unequal treaties” (Shieh 1970: 112). Delegates

felt, “Imperialism has been shaken to its foundations and its collapse should be imminent. The joint struggle of the oppressed can destroy the imperialists,” for “in their national revolution, the Chinese people are not fighting alone. Standing with them in a common front are Soviet Russia, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, and the oppressed peoples within imperialist countries” (114–15).

Such a “left” turn for the Guomindang was disturbing to the West, though again most British diplomatic figures discounted the significance of Sun Yat-sen’s Canton-based southern regime, seeing it very much as a local rather than national force. The Guomindang-Comintern link continued to disquiet British politicians. The Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead, was strident in a speech, published in the *Times* on June 29, 1925, denouncing Soviet underground activity against the Empire. This was met with Chicherin’s rebuttal that “the occasion for Lord Birkenhead’s speech was provided by the events in China. The victim of economic exploitation on the part of the great Powers . . . the Chinese people by mass strikes and various kinds of political demonstrations have risen against this yoke” (SDFP 1951–53: 2.51). As to the Soviet role, while “I do not deny that our Government sympathizes with the struggle of the Chinese people . . . this does not mean intervention in the internal affairs of another State,” but it did mean fostering “the friendly relations created between the USSR and the States of the East [China], which are growing more and more firm with every day” (2.51–52). As for Mao Zedong, he continued in March 1926 to lament the status of an “economically backward and semi-colonial China” (1954–56: 1.13).

Events continued to feed Chinese outrage over its semicolonial status, in part centered on Shanghai—long the symbol and real center of the Western presence in China and of China’s lack of control over its territory. May 1925 saw a strike by Chinese workers at a Japanese factory in the Shanghai International Settlement, leading to Japanese guards opening fire and killing a worker. Demonstrators gathered outside a police station, demanding the release of the workers and protesting against militarism and foreign imperialism. Abruptly fired on by a British-led unit, eleven demonstrators were killed and eleven others wounded, which caused a storm of protest across China. It also highlighted China’s national and international weakness and lack of control in the area. Demonstrations in Canton the following month were met with fire from British troops, killing some fifty-two Chinese and wounding over a hundred.

Chinese opinion was outraged. In the wake of the events, Zhou Zuoren wrote bitterly, “Westerners have guns and therefore they are civilised. Chinese do not and are therefore barbarians” (Van de Ven 2003a: 66). Beijing academics were appalled by the events: “The tragedy which has taken place in the International Settlement of Shanghai has filled the Chinese nation with horror and indignation,” in which “explanations can be easily found if

one realizes that foreigners in China have long been privileged by the stipulations of unjust treaties, and thereby have lost a sense of moral and legal responsibilities (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 259). The past was also the context for the present, in the denunciations by Zou Lu, president of the National Kwantung University. The past was the way that “since the day our country was forced to sign the unequal treaties by the Imperialists she has suffered a good deal through the eighty long years of foreign political and economic aggression” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 261). The present was the way in which the Canton meeting had been called “to express their sorrow for the laborers and students of Hankow, who were wantonly massacred by the British and the Japanese, and unanimously passed the proposal for the abolishment of unequal treaties” (261). The future was to be seen?

Politicians were quick to denounce the events. Tang Liangli saw them as an “insult” (1927: 112) to the Chinese nation. At a time of Guomindang-Communist cooperation, Qu Qiubai’s communist *Rexue Ribao* (Hot Blood Daily) denounced the “shame of the cold-blooded foreigners . . . we should inspire all of China with the hot blood of the people of Shanghai . . . the hot blood will overpower the cold iron” (Schwarcz 1986: 165) of the West. Hu Hanmin, Sun Yat-sen’s confidante and a leading figure in the right wing of the Guomindang, was vehement over the Shanghai issue in 1925. He considered “the atrocious acts of the Authorities of the Foreign Concessions at Shanghai are extremely opposed to humanity and destructive and insulting to the Chinese Republic and to international relations as well” (1925a: 9). Despite his own emerging differences with the Communist Party, he felt the trouble “reflected imperialism and misleading interpretations by the outside world. Such atrocious outrages of the Imperialists evidently show they are outside the pale of human beings,” even as “with their artful tongues they strive to divert the attention by complaining that the students and laborers were propagating Bolshevism” (1925a: 7).

As Minister of Foreign Affairs in the newly formed National Government, Hu Hanmin’s statements during summer 1925 were suitably wide in drawing inferences from the Shanghai troubles earlier in the year. Western imperialism was the enemy: “Our people, who are toiling to amass wealth not for China but for foreign capital are being shot down as foreign slaves” (1925b: 16). Shanghai was but the biggest example of a structural problem: “At any moment we may be locked out or locked in our own house, for the key of the door is not in our hands . . . our seaports, known as the treaty ports, are in the hands of foreign powers” (16). This he felt was an “intolerable state of affairs” (16). Instead he asserted, “equality in international relations, independence in the exercise of their sovereign rights. This entails the abolition of extraterritorial rights, foreign jurisdiction, economic privileges which are unilateral in their nature . . . we demand the keys to our own house” (20). The Shanghai killings were part of the problem of Treaty Ports and extraterritoriality. In turn, those were but features of the whole system of Unequal Treaties.

Consequently, Hu Hanmin's demands were for the wholesale eradication of the Unequal Treaties: "We four hundred million Chinese people must fight as one body and one soul; the way of our fighting lies in [the] course of our foreign affairs. It is the only way to restore our sovereignty in the world. We all know we must destroy Imperialism" (1925b: 6). This was why, ultimately, "the Imperialist had slaughtered our people, with the unequal treaties as their weapon" (11). China's demographic weight mattered for him, as did his calls to the Chinese diaspora, "our brothers abroad . . . must help in the work, so that unequal treaties may be abolished with the shortest possible time, and the yoke of imperialism done away with" (29). Ultimately, abolition of the Unequal Treaties was his top priority; agitation and pressure were needed "until the unequal treaties are abolished. It is the most important duty of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Now most of the nations treat us unequally. That is why we want to do away with the unequal treaties" (5). What was wrong with China was indeed internal fragmentation, but his argument was that "we believe this [internal] confusion to be due to the unequal [external] international status of China. We are certain that, so long as the unequal treaties exist, China will not be able to put the house in order" (19). The catch-22 was that Western powers were now, conversely, arguing that because of China's internal confusion, and while China's house was not in order, it had to maintain extraterritoriality and other features of the Unequal Treaties!

Rodney Gilbert, the author of *What's Wrong with China*, was blunt in his distrust, if not denigration, of China. For him, concessions were likely to be dangerously perceived, since "if, having got a certain hold upon China in one way or another, we voluntarily relax that hold, it means to the Chinese" that we are "afraid of China and are paying tribute to her unquenchable superiority . . . that China is so important that we need and fear her" (1926: 30–31). Anti-Americanism was seen as rife: "The Chinese conclude that the one people on earth towards whom they can assume the arrogant attitude of the superior receiving tribute from the tribute-bearer is the American," where "a long-restrained impulse to kick all foreigners is given vent in kicking the American tribute-bearer since he has so obviously invited it" (31). Western concessions to China, amid any "fear of the 'awakening' Orient" (33), were seen as dangerous by Gilbert, for they would be taken as "only another sign of the weakness of the West, of which the East has only to take prompt and bold advantage to rule . . . with China again the Middle Kingdom, the cultural pivot of the universe" (33). Such expansionist hegemonic dreams were to be hidden from the West; China would "lie to all the rest of humanity to conceal for the sake of propriety, in some cases, and of expediency in others . . . for various and devious reasons" (33).

Ambiguities still existed in Chinese intellectual circles over the role of culture and political priorities. Qian Xuantong, as a historian and cultural radical, was concerned over calls to defend "national purity" (*guocui*) backward

calls in his view. In his Shanghai-published essay "On Anti-imperialism," June 15, 1925, he argued, "While we . . . fight foreign imperialists, the British, for example, we should continue to accept their culture . . . our country is doomed to degeneration . . . if we stick to the damned national purity [*guocui*—if we reject modern culture"—a rejection that would be a "psychology of degeneration" (Schwarcz 1986: 166). Yu Pingbo, previously active in the *New Tide* and May Fourth Movements, advised in his *Xuechi yu yuwan* (Defense and Revenge) essay, again published in Shanghai in 1928, "Don't blame the foreigners first . . . the national humiliation we suffered recently seems like a huge mountain. In fact it is like a drop in the ocean . . . compared to how we have been humiliating ourselves . . . we must become more conscious, more enlightened" (Schwarcz 1986: 167). It was also at Shanghai, on March 1930, that Lu Xun founded and led the China League of Left-Wing Writers.

Tang Liangli's *China in Revolt: How a Civilisation Became a Nation* presented a clear picture of Chinese emotional as well as political demands in early 1927. At the emotional as well as political level, extraterritoriality was seen by Tang Liangli as "instrumental in creating in the mind of the foreigner, an attitude of mind which can breed nothing but contempt for the Chinese and their institutions," whereby "extraterritoriality is a standing disgrace to Chinese pride and a symbol of China's national humiliation and degradation in the family of nations" (1927: 48). Consequently, "Young China is determined to have abrogated at once all the treaties which are not based on the principle of international equality, but are wrung from China by force—the Unequal Treaties" (149). Wrung by force, they could if necessary be reclaimed by force, "the future course of China's international history is thus plain. Within the next few years we shall witness the abolition of the entire system of the Unequal Treaties which have kept China in bondage for nearly a century," in which "the deciding factor here will no longer be the Great Powers, but Young China, which refuses to sell her sovereignty for a mess of pottage, the Chinese nation and united in spirit . . . determined to fight . . . with armed resistance if necessary" (152). It was a question of "Chinese dignity and sovereignty" (168). Certainly by 1927 the Unequal Treaties had become a more heated topic. Academics like Lester Woolsey, a U.S. State Department attorney from 1909 to 1920, noted "the aspiration of China has grown almost to the proposition of a national revolt against the so-called Unequal Treaties" (1927: 289). Kalfred Dip Lum supported "the 'battle cry' for the abrogation of unequal treaties, the abolition of extraterritoriality, and the return of foreign concessions . . . resulting from foreign exploitation of Chinese wealth and the infringement of Chinese sovereignty . . . the imperialism of unequal treaties," and argued that through their duress "unequal treaties are null and void" (1927: 19).

Tang Liangli was frustrated by China's international status: "It has become a commonplace to say that the problem of China in international

politics is growing daily in importance,” but “however China is usually regarded as irrelevant when, in the west, international problems are under discussion” (1927: 38). In other words, the international system impinged on China, whereas China did not impinge on the international system. Tang Liangli judged that “China’s intelligentsia is discovering the secret of Western strength, which will enable her, in the every near future, in spite of all apparent political confusion, to meet the western world on a footing of international equality” (xv). China was on the move: “China in Peace has passed away. In her place has arisen China Reborn, fully conscious of her legitimate aspirations . . . as a nation, and insisting upon her rebirth being registered in the roll of Sovereign and Independent states” (149). For such a cause, “Young China’s sons are prepared to die” (149). As to the future, it was one with “recognition of China’s newly acquired status as a great power” (167). The past was the platform for China’s advancement: “Out of a humiliated semi-colonial status, Young China has, in spite of the tremendous odds which were facing her, emerged, by her own efforts, as a Great power,” which “with her man-power and material resources, is bound to be a tremendous factor in the future course of world history” (169). Such statements were still, however, assertions of aspirational hopes rather than descriptions of established fact.

Political ambiguities seemed to be resolved with Chiang Kai-shek’s emergence in the Guomindang, with Chiang pushing aside Hu Hanmin in the autumn of 1925. Chiang’s military reforms at the Whampoa Military Academy, along with the introduction of political commissars and Comintern advisers, had given some real discipline to Chinese Guomindang forces. Chiang, seemingly still following Sun’s leftward alliance with Communism, brought closer the possibility of a reunified China as he launched his Northern Expedition in July 1926, which brought him through the key Yangzi basin, seizing the British concessions at Hankow and Kiukiang.

For Stephen King-Hall, Britain’s removal from Hankow was significant: “The dramatic events at Hankow have revealed as a flash of lighting will reveal the magnitude of a storm, the reality of the great changes which are taking place in the relationship between the Western man and the Chinese” (1927: 42). As such, “it is as certain as it is that night will follow day that Extraterritoriality, Concessions, and such like policies are dead and dammed. The immediate problem is how to bury them decently and expeditiously” (42). Indeed, Shanghai itself seemed threatened. As Best summarized, “to Britain, all of this—the dramatic rise of the Guomindang regime in Canton to national prominence and its ability to challenge British interests in the Yangtse valley—came as a great shock” (2002: 57). Here, Chiang’s Guomindang drive could be welcomed by Chinese commentators like Gu Ziren in July 1927. This Associate General of the Young Men’s Christian Association of China saw Chiang’s moves as proof that “at today’s point in history there is a new consciousness of nationhood rising amongst the Chinese people. It

is rising swiftly and strongly like a great tide after long quiescence" (Z. Gu 1927: 23). Such nationalist renewal, alongside "the transformation of China . . . into a strong industrial nation" (23), would "lead China to . . . her rightful place as a strong contributing member amongst the commonwealth of nations" (27). The trend was clear: "New China is turning her face . . . toward her 'promised land' . . . the great march is on, and no force on earth can stop it" (26).

With Guomindang forces approaching Shanghai, varied perceptions of China were apparent in the West. Victor Wellesley, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, argued on August 20, 1926, that "from military and naval points of view we are more or less powerless to deal with such an amorphous mass as China; and this rules out anything in the nature of coercion, except possible naval demo stations in conjunction with the other Powers" (Fung 1983: 83). On the other hand, underlying contempt toward Chinese claims was apparent in Lord Birkenhead's advice to the British forces being sent to reinforce Western holdings in Shanghai that they should be prepared to use poison gas, which "ought not be unacceptable to an opium-addicted people" (Best 2002: 69). Such sentiments were noticed by the Chinese. In early 1927, Tang Liangli's views on "the present state of affairs in China where the battle between western capitalist Imperialism and Chinese National Freedom and Independence is being fought," was that "we are witnessing the first beginning of the clash between Western and Chinese Civilisation, of the racial struggle between White and Yellow Peoples" (1927: xv). More broadly, Arthur Hirtzel, Permanent Under-Secretary at the India Office, advised Foreign Secretary Austen Chamberlain on January 17, 1927, that the stage was set at Shanghai for "the decisive trial of strength between Russia and ourselves" (Best 2002: 64).

Soviet rhetoric was, of course, very different. Maxim Litvinov's response, on February 21, 1927, to these claims was that "these same conservative English circles are now trying to unload their own mistakes on to the Soviet government," by "trying to make it the scapegoat by means of a ludicrous fable which explains the liberation movement of the many millions of China, the greatest in history, by the 'machinations' of Soviet 'agents'" (SDFP 1951-53: 2.155). He returned to this theme later in the month: "We have not in the past concealed and we do not now conceal our sincere sympathy with the Chinese people's liberation movement, their struggle for independence, which has met with considerable success in the past year" (2.155). However, "while a year or two ago the foreign press spoke of the Chinese national revolutionary movement ironically, as an 'artificial creation of Moscow agents,'" now "even the worst enemies of the Chinese people and their struggle for independence are bound to admit that the movement is the legitimate expression of the inevitable and powerful historical process making for the creation a national Chinese State" and that "China despite everything is

beginning to pursue its own independent policy” (2.155). The next month, March 1927, American and British gunboats bombarded Nanjing!

Throughout this “Bolshevik threat” via China, other figures in the West had thought differently. Rodney Gilbert’s treatment of the “rattle-brained pro-Bolshevik element” (1926: 33) in China was caustic in *What’s Wrong with China*. Quite simply, he considered that “in China there is absolutely no market for Marxian Socialism” (258). Instead, he felt that “Russia came into the East with the deliberate and well-advertised intention of wrecking the Occident and making it a fertile field for communistic enterprise, by promoting chaos in Asia and thereby rendering worthless the West’s economic and commercial investments” (259). However, it was not so much Communist “theory” that had taken root in China, as “the Russians have no interest in preaching theoretical communism in Asia,” but rather they “have devoted all their energies . . . to the preaching and fostering of race hatred and of the most narrow minded and poisonous sort of nationalism” (258).

A more sympathetic profiling of events had come with H. G. Wells and Bertrand Russell. Wells, in “What is Happening in China,” dated January 23, 1927, considered that “when we look at China . . . there seems to be something new there, something which has any rate, so far as the western observer is concerned only become credible and important in the last eight or ten months” (1928: 12). Now it was recognizable as “a change in the rhythm. It is the clear onset of a new phase, of a new China, like nothing the world has ever seen before, a challenge, a promise to all mankind” (13). As such, “right up to the present time we have been . . . satisfied with the pre-eminence of our civilization and the worthlessness of theirs . . . the Chinese have suffered blow after blow and humiliation after humiliation” (13–14) from the West. In the wake of the United Front Guomindang-Communist Party cooperation, “now with a sense of surprise we find ourselves confronted by a modern self-consciousness, consolidating its power very rapidly and demanding to speak on equal terms with the American and European. A living Chinese nation has appeared in the world,” which “marks a new age” (14) for China, and for the international system. While noting similarities in organizational character and the use of modern propaganda between the Guomindang and Communist parties, Wells saw “profound differences” (20) in aims and profession, despite “the disposition to call the [Guomindang] Cantonese government ‘Red’ and to force it into association with the Russian government, which seems to be the aim of a large section of the Atlantic press” (21). However, pushed together, Wells could see a powerful Soviet-Chinese Eurasian bloc, in which “the average Chinese brain is said to be rather richer in grey matter than the average European” inhabiting “lands of a richness far surpassing all the resources of North America,” from which could come “the development of a powerful and even dominating civilisation” (22).

Sympathetic profiling also came from Bertrand Russell concerning “this process . . . taking place. In China it is beginning, and may not improbably become very strong. Whatever is vigorous in China—more particularly the Nationalist Government—begun under Russian influence . . . the only friendly Power . . . it is quite probable that it [China] may adopt the philosophy of the Bolsheviks” (1928: 220). In a prophetic look forward, Russell considered that “Russia offers a model in emancipation from the West and help to the Chinese . . . it is therefore by no means improbable that, twenty years hence, the Bolshevik ideology will be in power throughout China” (221). “Twenty years hence” was to take China to 1948, the fall of Beijing to Communist forces and the ensuing proclamation of the People’s Republic by Mao Zedong.

However, by the time that Russell’s work had appeared in the press, events in China had taken a dramatic turn. Chiang Kai-shek pushed aside the left-leaning Wang Jingwei and directly purged Communist elements in Shanghai and elsewhere in April 1927. This was a serious setback for the Chinese Communist Party, compounded by failed urban Communist insurrections at Nanchang in August and at Canton in December. This debacle of Soviet tactics was keenly felt, with Britain attracting much of the blame. Chicherin wrote in *Pravda* on December 23, 1927, “All these imperialist and White Guard groups in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and other imperialist centres of colonial policy in China were spurred on and inspired, as now clearly appears by London,” and “English imperialist reaction must be recognized as the chief motive force of the Canton blood-letting and of the violence, murder, and expulsions committed against Soviet citizens” (SDFP 1951–53: 2.292). Some Chinese dynamics were acknowledged; Chicherin considered that Chiang Kai-shek was guilty of “atrocities,” and “a people of 400 million cannot be halted in their road to liberation” (2.292). Nevertheless, the Soviet reaction was very much Soviet-centered: “The Soviet Government sees in the acts of unparalleled cruelty of the Chinese counter-revolution and of the forces behind it an offensive against the USSR” (2.292).

Amid the debacle, Borodin left China in July 1927, returning to relative obscurity back in the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, his comments in June 1927, following the Shanghai crackdown by Chiang Kai-shek, were pensive. Borodin mused, “the dream of accomplishing world revolution by freeing the people of the East brought me here,” but he admitted, “China itself, with its age-old history, its countless millions, its vast social problems, its infinite capacities, astounded and overwhelmed me, and my thoughts of world revolution gradually sank into the background” (1927: 1003). Another figure commenting on these events was Sun Yat-sen’s widow, Song Qingling, ironically the sister of Chiang Kai-shek’s wife Song Meiling. In attempting to rally the left wing of the Guomindang against Chiang Kai-shek, Song Qingling argued in August 1927, “If China is to survive as an independent country in the modern struggle of

nations, her semifeudal conditions of life must be fundamentally changed and a modern state created,” to circumvent “the cancerous force of Chinese militarism eating from inside and foreign imperialism ravaging from the outside” (1953: 7). She then left for Moscow.

These internal splits were grave hindrances on China’s renewal for some Chinese. Veterans of the May Fourth Movement like Yu Pingbo stressed China’s psychological degeneration, self-subservience and national shortcomings. In his 1928 “Defence and Revenge” tract, Yu argued, “Don’t blame the foreigners first . . . we are responsible for the way we continue to insult each other . . . the national humiliation we suffered recently seems like a huge mountain,” but “in fact it is like a drop in the ocean compared to how we have been humiliating ourselves. If we hadn’t been insulting each other all along, how would they have dared insult us?” (Schwarcz 1986: 167). Thus, “we must wipe out domestic shame first, before we can take on the wolves at our door” (168). Geoeconomics also came into view: “We must stop vain, empty appeals . . . So what if we shout ‘Down with Japan’; they still control our economy. Cutting relations with Britain is even more useless, for its market is the entire world” (168).

For the moment it was Chiang Kai-shek setting the pace. Nevertheless, far away from the remnants of Soviet-backed groups surviving in Shanghai, some signs of Communist vitality were apparent in the remote rural Soviet centers set up by Mao Zedong, initially in the Jinggang Mountains in 1927–1928 and then in Ruijin, where the Jiangxi Soviet of 1928 to 1934 enabled a new China-centered leadership to emerge and the Soviet links to wither. Agnes Smedley’s account of the Communist campaigns during 1928 to 1931 in *China’s Red Army Marches* highlighted Guomindang corruption, Chinese Communist Party integrity, and Zhu De’s military prowess leading “the army of the masses, the army of the people” (1936: 209). Her account ended with a profile of the All-China Soviet Congress of November 1931, in which Mao’s overall leadership first emerged, as “the young Chinese Soviet republic turned its heroic face toward the future” (311).

Some Westerners still emphasized China’s seeming paralysis. Archibald Rose’s six-month stay in the second half of 1927 left him feeling that “the outstanding fact in the situation is the breakdown of the government machine in China. There is no Central Government to deal with the affairs that concern the whole country—defence, foreign affairs and communication” (1928: 1). Reginald De Ruffe asked simply but starkly, “Is China Mad?” (1928). Two years earlier, in 1926, he had written *Chine et Chinois d’Aujourd’hui (Le Nouveau Peril Jaune)* (China and the Chinese Today [The New Yellow Peril]). Two years later, China’s collapse seemed more evident to De Ruffe from his Shanghai base.

Part of the “madness” lay in the state of China, for De Ruffe, “at the beginning of 1928 what do we see? China is in a state of decomposition. At

Peking there is a phantom government before which the diplomats continue their genuflections” (1928: 355). IR constructivism theory could be inverted and China damningly dismissed as a failed state by him: “China as a nation, for several years, has lost more and more ‘face’ in the eyes of other people” (36). On the one hand, “when we shall study relations between China and foreigners, we shall see enter as an important factor amongst the former the idea of ‘pride’ which they invoke in a puerile manner and on every possible occasion” (36). On the other hand, “unfortunately, there is as a rule no reason for national pride; for, unhappily for China, there is nothing of which she can be proud in these days,” since “at the present time, China is fifteen centuries behind all other nations, and the only spectacle she has given to the world, for the last decade, is one of utmost corruption and anarchy” (36). Race was mixed with anti-Communism. Western appeasement of local Communist forces at Hankow in early 1927 was denounced by De Ruffe: “to abdicate before mob rule . . . was to surrender not only in the name of Great Britain but also in the name of the entire white race” (357). The earlier Communist-led boycott of Hong Kong in 1924 “not only compromised British prestige but the prestige of the whole White race in the eyes of the Yellow. It was indeed an act of treason to the Whites” (355). His final sally was “this particular complaint, which is now the hobby horse of those Chinese and which deals with extraterritoriality,” the argument that “there should not be inflicted any longer on a great country like China, the shame, the loss of ‘face,’ which is derived from this particular [extraterritorial] regime,” a complaint he considered “only a pretext, and that corresponds to no reality” (37–38).

However, Guomindang rhetoric remained forceful enough over revisions and abrogation of the Unequal Treaties. As King-Hall noted about the “digestive apparatus, such as zones of influences, territorial leases, loans, etc., by which China was to be absorbed into the capacious stomach of Western civilisation,” the trend was now that “the dish has proved too tough for the West, and regurgitation is now the complaint of the would-be gourmet” (1927: 14). Power differentials remained apparent. From Columbia University, Paul Monroe noted continuing reluctance to move on the issue by the Major Powers, they “continually procrastinate . . . due to the shibboleth of ‘national prestige’” (1928: 391); with China hampered by its own power weakness, “all these treaties have been secured because China has not been able to make a sufficient display of force to protect her own interest” (387). The question from that was how far China was able to make any credible display of force, in terms of capability and intent.

Bau Mingchien, professor of political science at the National University of Peking, argued that “China’s international relations are anomalous” (1928: 122). On the one hand, “Turkey, an ex-enemy of the Allies had obtained the abrogation of capitulations and was being treated with equality and reciprocity,” while on the other hand “China, an ex-ally of the

Allies, in glaring contrast, was to bear the agony of unequal treaties and denied the recognition of the relationship of equality and reciprocity” (35). These externally generated fetters had internal political consequences. Resistance to the Unequal Treaties “inspired Chinese nationalism” (35), for “against the background of unequal treaties there arises a factor that is to remain a perpetual opponent of such inequalities and non-reciprocity, that is, Chinese nationalism . . . the embodiment of the spirit and soul of the Chinese people” (21). This was generating political action, the drive toward what Bau saw as the “unshackling of the fetters of humiliation” (125). Another Chinese observer, Lo Ren, sought “the abolition of unequal treaties and the recognition of China on the same footing with other nations,” in which a “feeling of shame has been particularly keen during recent years because of the constant foreign insults offered within China’s own doors and the humiliating position in which China has been placed in the eyes of the world” (1930: 43).

An official calendar was released in 1927 with twenty-six National Humiliation Days marked throughout the year. At the Fourth Plenum of the Second Central Executive Committee, February 1928, the objectives of nationalist foreign policy were defined in terms of *Minzhu zhi pingdeng* (racial and national equality) and *Guojia zhi duli* (independence of nations). July 1928 had Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting stating that “the National Government will immediately take steps to terminate, in accordance with proper procedure, those unequal treaties which have not yet expired and to conclude new treaties” (Fung 1987: 808; also Tyau 1930: 647) on a basis of equality and reciprocity. The Guomindang Central Committee emphasized, on June 18, 1929, the need for “the attainment for China of a status of equality and complete freedom in the family of nations. So long as unequal treaties remain . . . our political sovereignty is impaired” (Walker 1956: 154), so “the abolition of the unequal treaties must be an integral part of our revolutionary endeavour . . . the unequal treaties must be done away at whatever sacrifice” (155).

Consequently, at the Consular Service, Eric Teichman advised the British Government on August 7, 1929, that “the Chinese, by a process of gradual erosion is getting their way with one Power after another, are undermining very seriously the whole structure of the foreigner’s extraterritorial position,” and “however much we may dislike the idea, we may shortly have to face the future of extraterritoriality in China as a practical issue of immediate urgency” (DBFP 1960: 136). Extraterritoriality was not something British authorities wanted to give up, since, concerning “the prospects of the abolition of extraterritoriality considered in the abstract, the most immediately unpleasant consequences would be the disappearance of the position of racial superiority still enjoyed by the foreign resident in China” (139). The emotive force of extraterritoriality could be directly put to the British government by the Chinese authorities, on September 6, 1929, where “extraterritorial privileges” have “the most injurious effect on their relations with the

Chinese by producing in the latter the feeling of humiliation and the sense of resentment which have always caused mutual suspicion and the consequent loss of mutual confidence," thus "undermining the very foundations of friendly relations" (DBFP 1960: 168) between the two countries.

Some advances were made by China in her attempts to readjust her position in the international system. Indeed, Tyau Minchien considered "in all the decades of China's efforts to secure a fundamental readjustment of her treaty relations with the foreign Powers, there has never been a period more fruitful of results than the past eighteen months" (1930: 637). Some gains were apparent. Tariff independence was regained by the end of 1928. Some of the smaller Concessions were wound down. China was able to bring its 1865 treaty arrangements with Belgium to an end by late 1929, and gained similar termination of extraterritoriality agreements with other nations like Denmark, Sweden, Portugal, and Spain. However, these were all fairly small states. Against larger Western Powers, the Great Powers of France, Britain, and the United States, extraterritoriality remained in force: "Extraterritoriality remained the citadel of the unequal treaties, and it was here that the British [and Americans] were prepared to take a stand at all costs" (Fung 1983: 96). The Soviet Union also gave Chinese forces a bloody nose in the Guomindang's abortive attempt to assert jurisdiction in Manchuria in 1929. The Western powers, and Japan, were still too strong. China was still too weak, and still at times "unable to find a practicable way of translating their anti-treaty rhetoric into action" (Fung 1987: 808). Moreover, the Guomindang government was reluctant to push too strongly, toning down its confrontational stance as it sought Western support against the Chinese Communist Party, the Soviet Union, and Japan.

Thus, while David Yui welcomed the agreements reached with the smaller Western powers like Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, and Spain, it was only partial victory. The responses of the other major powers in "asking for an indefinite postponement [of any abolition] are proving a great disappointment to the Chinese people . . . the Chinese people throughout the whole nation are absolutely determined . . . to free themselves from this obsolete unilateral system" (Yui 1930: 40); to try "shaking off the shackles of the unilateral and obsolete treaties which have been binding our nation hand and foot for more than three-quarters of a century" (43). As Tyau Minchien conceded, "China's task is only half completed. The nation will continue to persevere . . . until China is complete master of her own household" (1930: 660). Tang Liangli was unimpressed: "The treaties concluded in 1928 by T. V. Sung and C. T. Wang are 'equal' in name, not in substance" (1930: 350).

NATIONAL REUNIFICATION AND UNCERTAINTIES

Admittedly, some national consolidation had been achieved with Chiang's resumption of the Northern Expedition in March 1928. One eyewitness on

the warfront as Chiang advanced was Aage Krarup-Nielsen, who recorded in *The Dragon Awakes* “depressing times, where the influence and prestige of the white man in the East appears to be waning day by day . . . a new era is dawning, and it is up to the white race to find her proper focus while there is yet time” (1928: 14, 71). For Eastman, in retrospect, because “the Chinese were profoundly sensitive to the abject condition of their nation . . . and to the humiliations of imperialist aggression, the nationalist revolutionary armies had been greeted exultantly” as the Northern Expedition moved up from Canton; “to many Chinese, nationalist rule marked the beginning of a new era, when China would again be united and strong . . . and when they would no longer feel shame at being Chinese” (Eastman 1986a: 116). Amid some confrontations with Japanese troops in Shandong, a new National Government was formally proclaimed at Nanjing in October, with Beijing reincorporated by the end of 1928. Its hard power military muscle was debatable; Lo Ren admitted “It must be acknowledged that propaganda has won more victories for the Nationalist forces than their cannons and machines . . . never before in China has the march of an army to victory been paved with so much paper” (1930: 157).

Another observer was the Reverend W. White, bishop of Honan, reflected in his talk “What is to Become of China,” delivered on April 26, 1928, to the Empire Club of Canada. As Chiang’s southern forces were moving up to Beijing, Reverend White was optimistic. He told his audience how he had first gone to China in the late 1890s, and cited Beresford’s 1899 book *The Break-Up of China* as discussing typical problems facing China then. Thirty years on, White was optimistic: “There is no doubt that the Powers have exploited China . . . China has suffered all these indignities and insults, and seemed helpless; but they have all brought about the situation which has stirred China into new life,” where “you have a situation there at the present time which is full of great promise. In my thirty-one or more years of residence in China, I do not think that China has ever appeared to me to be so full of hope as she is today” (1929). Hoary images were invoked by White: “You remember what Napoleon said about China: ‘China is a sleeping giant: let her sleep. When she wakes she will move the whole world.’ Now she is awakening and there is new life full of promise” (1929) *for* and *in* China.

Nationalism was something to be rejoiced in by Reverend White: “When we speak of the nationalist movement in China we speak of it as ‘The New Thought Tide’” (1929). Despite turmoil, there was “a new spirit that is underneath this disturbed surface . . . underneath there is a set of the tide in one direction . . . towards a new life, towards a reconstruction of China, and that is a hopeful situation” (1929). Yet he also looked back: “To understand the China of the future you must understand the China of the past” (1929). White was struck by the way in which China’s civilizational greatness had survived in ways that older civilizations of the Old World had not: “The first point that

stands out clearly over the past history of China is her capacity for continuance” for “Greece and Rome and Persia and Egypt . . . rose to great heights in the matter of culture and civilization, but they have gone down; and yet China has carried on steadily, the only nation in the world that has done so” (1929). Given this endurance, “no nation can [permanently] conquer China; it is absolutely impossible. That is the first thing, their capacity for continuance” (1929). Looking to the future, China’s structural advantages were evident for White: “Here is a country with this overwhelming population coming now to be able to stand on an equality with the other nations, equipped in a modern way, educated in a modern way,” in which economic advantages were striking: “With the cheapest labor in the world, and with a stock with hardiness of physique and with capacities for endurance, astonishing capacities, when you think of that, what is going to happen to the world?” (1929). White’s answer to that question was simple: At some point “it will mean that China will be almost the dominating country in the whole world” (1929).

However, in reality, China remained extremely fragile at the start of the 1930s, with a Communist offensive already in action in 1929 around Hankow. Indeed, Eastman judged hopes around the Northern Expedition as “extravagant expectations” that had “turned ashen” (1986a: 117) by 1929, amid factionalism and fragmentation within the Guomindang. In Van de Ven’s assessment, “the harvest of the Northern Expedition was the entrenchment of nasty cultures of violence” in which “new military groupings had established new bases, the already demoralised bureaucracy lay in ruin and the barriers that had contained violence had crumbled. Paranoia, intrigue, murder, and brutality had become common” (Van de Ven 2003a: 95). Tang Liangli’s critique of Chinag Kai-shek was blunt: “Corruption and nepotism are so rampant in Nanking that the Nanking oligarchy has become the laughing stock” (1930: 353), and “a new period of civil disturbance is in sight which can only be ended by a decisive victory of the Left” (362). Consequently, uncertainty for the present and future were still apparent for some commentators *vis-à-vis* China and the world.

One commentator was Japanese Foreign Minister Kijuro Shidehara, who had used a generally low-key, conciliatory diplomacy in his stints as Foreign Affairs Minister from 1924 to 1927 and 1929 to 1931. He noted to the Japanese parliament, on January 21, 1931, “the political situation in China began once more to show signs of unrest in the spring of last year” (De Bary et al. 2005: 887). However, on a positive note, he announced, “nothing was more gratifying to us than to witness the measure of success which the Nationalist government, through tremendous efforts, was able to attain in 1928 in the great enterprise of effecting a national unification” (887)—a questionable response, if not by him, then at least from the more nationalist expansionist wing of Japanese politicians who would not have seen Chiang’s reassertion of Guomindang authority in China as something to rejoice in. As to China’s

internal stability, Shidehara was uncertain: “The future alone can tell if the crisis has been averted once and for all” (887). However, he warned that “temptation may grow stronger for men in power to resort to an adventurous foreign policy with a view to diverting the minds of the people from internal to external affairs” (887). While he aimed this at China, “I sincerely trust that the responsible statement of China will avoid all such temptation,” the same question could be put to Japan itself.

The event of that spring that Shidehara had referred to was the Central Plains War that broke out in May 1930. The war pitted Chiang Kai-shek’s northward-advancing forces against a regional coalition of various warlords, who were supported from the sidelines by Chiang’s rival Wang Jingwei. Eventually, through bribery and the military intervention of the Manchurian warlord Zhang Xueliang in September 1930, the opposition fragmented and collapsed. As to its aftermath, Wang Jingwei moved toward rejoining the Guomindang. National unity seemed established. Yet more than 300,000 casualties had ensued and the Guomindang government was almost bankrupt. Moreover, troops that were originally tasked with destroying the Communist Red Army were pulled away, which enabled the CCP to survive and regroup. Finally, after the Northeast Army’s entrance to Central China, Manchuria’s defense was considerably weakened, facilitating Japan’s occupation in 1931. Mao Zedong’s analysis of events in January 1930 was “how chaotic the state in which China finds herself” (1954–56: 1.121), chaos caused but also facilitating further external involvement, “as the imperialists contention for China intensifies, both the contradiction between the imperialist powers and the whole Chinese nation and the contradiction among the imperialists themselves develops simultaneously in China” (1.120). Insofar as this presaged imminent revolution, he was precipitous; as to how far this presaged fresh external intervention, he was accurate enough with regard to Japan’s imminent expansion into Manchuria and northeastern China.

Consequently, Hallett Abend’s *Tortured China* set the scene for how “on the verge of cataclysmic ruin . . . China, today, is literally a tortured nation—tortured by internal ailments . . . China as a nation has today practically ceased to exist” (1930: vi). Three stresses were prominent amid this disintegration: “The clash of Occidental and Oriental cultures in modern China . . . the clashes of rival armies . . . the clash with the mechanical methods of production of the western world” (234). At the official level, a Foreign Office “Memorandum Respecting the Prospects of Stable Government in China,” July 19, 1930, considered that “the concept of a strong central government is entirely alien to the spirit of Chinese institutions . . . China has never in her long history had a strong central government”; “the [present] central government . . . is a facade for the purpose of conducting China’s foreign relations . . . it is unlikely that any stable authority will be established in China for possibly a very prolonged period” (DBFP 1960: 388).

The Foreign Office argued, "It is now recognised that the causes of China's political chaos lie deeper than mere tuchunism [warlordism], and must be sought in the nature of China's political inheritance" and "in certain inherent defects—moral not intellectual—that are embedded in the Chinese character" (DBFP 1960: 385). Nevertheless, "the spread of the present communistic movement and its intensification under Russian auspices are also possibilities which must be reckoned with in considering the measures to be taken for the future protection of British interests in China" (388). Indeed, the New Zealand High Commissioner, on November 28, 1932, warned Wellesley about how "large areas of China had ceased to be under the control of the Central Government and were becoming increasingly under Communist control," with him being "seriously alarmed at the possibilities if the 400 odd millions of Chinese were to be added to the 160 millions of Soviet Russia," for "they would form a very formidable bloc which no Government in the world could contemplate with equanimity" (BDFP 1970: 98).

Strident racial voices were noticeable in the 1930s. Alfred Rosenberg's *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* was a curious but perceptive enough source in parts. Rosenberg saw earlier American immigration restrictions as antagonizing hypocrisy: "To forbid immigration to North America and Australia to the Yellow races, but at the same time to wish to colonise or rule the Far East, is a Capitalist insanity, which begins to avenge itself today [1930] in the smouldering revolts in China" (1982: 424). Immigration restrictions meant "the Yellow man is pushed back, throttled. But then he will necessarily turn his face in other directions and will follow the tracks of Ghenghis Khan, Tamerlane and Attila . . . thanks to the world policy of Europe and America" (424). Consequently, "whether contemporary, disintegrated and, for a long time, powerless Russia can stem the advancing yellow flood of millions is more than questionable. Bismarck's words, 'The Yellow men will one day water their camels in the Rhine,' may find fulfilment" (424). Within Chinese circles, a renewed pan-Asiatic Yellow Peril theme was something to rejoice in. Typical was Huang Zhenxia's 1931 poem "Huangren zhi xue" (Blood of the Yellow Race), complete with lines like "Hide, frightened European dogs! / Topple, Muscovites imposing high buildings! / Roll, Caucasian yellow-haired heads / . . . The Yellow Peril is here! / The Yellow peril! / Asian warriors' bloody maws are devouring men" (Dikotter 1992: 161–62).

Culture and civilization continued to be highly politicized issues. Assertive comments there may have been, but some have called such statements of the early Republic "the diplomacy of cultural despair" (Ojha 1969). Instead, China's cultural values could be reasserted as more weighty than mere military power. For the well-known and influential journalist Dai Jitao, Sun Yat-sen's personal secretary from 1912 to 1925 and a subsequent associate of Chiang Kai-shek, "as a patriot, who felt keenly China's continuing humiliation, he [Dai] found a psychological compensation by expressing a

belief in the distinctiveness and value of his own historical tradition” and “seeking psychological compensation for China’s lowly position among the nations of the world by emphasizing the ethical values of Chinese culture” (Cranmer-Byng 1973: 73). Sophia Chen Zen’s profile of China’s changing culture reflected this redirection of Chinese aspirations. For Zen, “what China actually needs is not so much a westernization as a modernization of her people” (1931: 1071). China’s path did not lie through military power, given China’s “traditional abhorrence of war, manifested for example through the national contempt for the profession of soldiers” (1081). Instead, China had its “influences and suggestions from the realms of art and literature, of philosophy,” with a future beckoning where “China will be on the road to cultural greatness” (1081)—soft power prestige.

However, China was still lagging behind, as Chinese voices admitted. Hu Shih sadly acknowledged in his tract “Which Road Are We Going?,” that “in corruption China certainly leads the world” and reckoned “a country which “has no money for universal education, that country is simply committing suicide. Because of our ignorance, our productive power is at a minimum, our power to govern feeble” (1931: 15). Edward Hsu’s analysis was that “the once haughty and arrogant Celestial Empire has been ignominiously reduced to a position . . . more decadent than at any time in our long history” (1933: 65). China’s economic failures were particularly apparent: “We have demonstrated, to the satisfaction of every other people how slow the progress can be. After half a century’s contact with the West, our industries and scientific accomplishments are still nothing to speak of” (66). Thus, “modern China has lost its heritage, however imperfect it is, without building an entirely new foundation based upon the civilization that has crushed our own. The result is the present crisis, in its external, internal, social and economic aspects” (66). One irony was that it was China’s relative insignificance within the world economy in the 1920s which enabled it to avoid some of the economic dislocation affecting wealthier, more industrialized, Western countries during the global depression of the 1930s. Hu Shih’s discussion in *The Chinese Renaissance* also saw macrocultural forces at play: “The grand finale of this drama of . . . cultural conflict” (1934: 3). Here though, Hu reckoned that “China has wasted fully a century in futile resistance, prolonged hesitation, spasmodic but incoherent attempts at reform, and disastrous wars of revolution and internal strife” (3). Consequently, “today she is still displaying to the world the most pathetic spectacle of a once great nation helplessly struggling to stand on its own feet again,” and “groping desperately to find ways and means for the solution of her numerous and pressing problems created and complicated by the impact of the irresistible civilization of the West” (3).

Western observers were uncertain about China’s international role at the start of the 1930s. Nathaniel Peffer’s profile of China in 1931 was one of unknown futures. His *China: The Collapse of a Civilization* reckoned, “China

seethes and heaves, rushes forward turbulently, and recedes. The old contours are being cut away and new ones filled in. In times, in a long time, there will be a new configuration" (1931: 9). However, "what will it be, none can guess . . . but this is certain, it will present a new landscape, a landscape the literati, poets and mandarins of only a hundred years ago would not recognise," and "one that may well be more rugged and forbidding than the soft China that yielded so easily to the vigorous and aggressive intruder in times past" (9). Roll on to 1949?

Lionel Curtis's profile *The Capital Question of China* could note that "the dominating facts in this situation are the magnitude of China, the vast numbers of her people" (1932: 287). China's political instability and fragmentation were a "radical disease from which China is suffering" (273). Such weakness had wider ramifications: "One-fifth part of the human race cannot continue in a state of increasing anarchy without affecting the entire structure of human society" (245). Curtis considered that foreign intervention to try to organize and dominate China was a recipe for failure; it was for China to set itself up again. From there came the potentiality for the future, where "the nightmare which troubles the Far East is not fear of Japan, but fear of China . . . an obsession which drives men to action contrary to reason" (299). Ultimately, "the people of China are important, less by reason of their vast numbers, than for what they are, and, still more, for what they are capable of becoming" (300–01). Again, roll on to 1949? Of course, China's demographic mass remained firmly implanted in virtually all descriptions, as with Peter Fleming's Chinese encounters: "The workers were small blue automata. The mud hid their legs to the knee, and when they stooped they had the blind, shapeless look of parasites" (1934: 305).

China's "crisis" formed the context for John Bland's *China: The Pity of It*, where "there is no denying that China was never weaker than she is to-day, and that her continued existence, as an independent nation, depends entirely upon the goodwill of other nations . . . the process of disintegration is rapidly acquiring increased momentum" (1932: 334). Such was the "manifest helplessness of the Chinese people," witnessed in the previous "twenty years of disorder," that "the process of [internal] demoralization has gone so far, that only by a benevolent intervention of the friendly Powers can final ruin and disintegration be averted" (323–24). In politico-cultural terms, "the world's collective conscience must face the realities and urgency of the problem and set itself to solve it by regarding the Chinese people as a 'ward of civilization'" (333–34). Yet Bland was no advocate of blanket Westernization for China. Shades of the positive eighteen-century Enlightenment images of China can be seen in his concerns over cultural Westernization. Bland's geocultural critique was, "what is there, we may ask, so undeniably enviable or permanent in the recent life history and present institutions of Europe and America, that entitles us to impose them upon the Chinese?" (153). He asked, "what is

there in them to justify the desire, or the attempt, to uproot and destroy the whole Chinese [i.e. Confucian] system of ethics, morals and culture, a system which had proved its enduring worth long before the light of letters dawned upon Greece and Rome?" (151). Conversely, he suggested, "we should . . . once more . . . learn from the East something of the secret of its serenity and time-tested wisdom . . . codified by Confucianism and tempered by the gentle teachings of Gautama [Buddhism]" (152).

By 1932 geopolitical events had transformed China's settings. Extraterritoriality, that symbol of Western geocultural supremacy, remained on the diplomatic agenda in 1931. The American Chargé d'Affaires in London, Ray Atherton, reported conversations on January 2, 1931, with British officials, arguing that "with the gradual cessation of civil war in China the demand for abolition of extraterritoriality would unite all [Chinese] factions . . . foreign governments must meet this situation and better now than later" (FRUS 1946: 716). On this, "a united front, especially between Japan, England, and America" was sought, "a scheme for gradual abolition, giving away the shadow at first, be followed later by part of the substance, must be worked out" (716). Negotiations were started but left unresolved as events overtook them. The U.S. Minister to China, Nelson Johnson, was thus told by Chinese officials on September 11, 1931, that "I might not wish to go south to resume negotiations in regard to extraterritoriality in view of the fact that Japan was bound to take drastic action vis-à-vis China within the next three months" (FRUS 1946: 3). Johnson was unclear what was meant: "I asked him what he meant by drastic action. He said his information was that Japan would occupy Manchuria within the next three months" (3). Johnson was dismissive. "I told Dr. Ferguson [the Chinese government spokesman] that I thought such action on the part of the Japanese highly improbable; it seemed fantastic" (3). Yet that is exactly what was happening: the Japanese invasion of the Chinese mainland.

SEVEN

Wartime Humiliations from Japan and the West

*Having outlived their age and the environment,
they have been conquered repeatedly by alien races from beyond the Great wall.
They have deteriorated in racial quality and stamina.
The "Middle Flowery Kingdom" of old is now but a dreary land.*

—Tatsuo Kawai, 1938

*China is the greatest and stupefying fact in the modern world . . .
once she was the greatest empire in the world . . .
today she is undoubtedly the most chaotic . . . the most pathetic . . .
God—intended her to be a first-class nation among the peoples of the earth,
and she has chosen to take a back seat with Guatemala at the League of Nations . . .
What is China's destiny?
Will she survive?*

—Lin Yutang, 1938

AN OVERT FEATURE during the 1930s was the threat to China, and also to the wider international system, posed by Japan. By the 1930s, "Japan had become the primary concern of Chinese foreign policy," since "the East Asian regional order of the Ch'ing dynasty, the international legal order envisaged by the Washington Conference treaty powers, and the world revolutionary order dreamed of in Moscow" had "all proved unavailing as an international matrix for the Chinese Republic" (Eto 1986: 115). Instead, China was now faced with a fully expansionist Japan and a growing possibility of war on a scale never before encountered during its previous decades of humiliation. Japan's "informal empire" (Duus et al. 1989) in China was turning into a

much more explicit one (L. Young 1998; Duara 2003) as Japanese troops fanned out across Manchuria in September 1931. Japan's occupation of Manchuria was completed by January 1932, with further encroachments into northeast China in 1933, and full-scale war with China in 1937. In turn, Japan's ongoing China War of 1937 to 1945 was subsumed within the still wider Pacific War in December 1941 as Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor and, amid pan-Asianist rhetoric of a Japanese-led "Co-Prosperty Sphere," swept across Southeast Asia. These clouds of war were to hang over China until 1945, then to be quickly followed by the resumption of China's civil war between Chiang's Guomindang and Mao's Communist forces, which had been temporarily halted in the face of Japanese aggression. Peace was only to be reestablished in China with the conclusion of the civil war and the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. In short, China had to endure eighteen years of warfare from 1931 to 1949, a troubled couple of decades, but ones which were to be the last in China's Century of Humiliation.

THE MANCHURIAN AFFAIR AND AFTERMATH

Japan's takeover of Manchuria in 1931 had been sparked by the unilateral action of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria, itself pulled into action through plots by officers like Kanji Ishihara. Ishihara's vision was wide-ranging and direct. In May 1931 he had argued that an occupation of Manchuria would facilitate Japan's "position of leadership towards China" (De Bary et al. 2005: 987). China was dismissed as a failed state: "It is extremely doubtful if the Chinese will be able to build a modern nation-state" (988). A still wider conflict was envisaged with the Soviet Union and above all with the United States, Ishihara arguing that "China and the Manchuria-Mongolia problems are not problems in our relations with China but in our relations with the United States" (988), a somewhat strained piece of logic with regard to Chinese perceptions. Wider conflict was inevitable with the great powers: "It will be to our advantage to carry out this war by 1936 at the very latest before Russia has recovered economically and before the United States has built up its naval power" (988).

The actions of the Kwantung Army met little resistance from the civilian leadership in Tokyo. They also met little military resistance from Chiang's Guomindang government: "Marshal Chiang has lost much face" and "his failure to provide more determined resistance to Japan" (*Time* 1932). The Chinese boycott of Japanese goods was overturned by Japanese bombs (Jordan 1991). Further pushes by Japan into Jehol, unresisted by Chiang Kai-shek, took place in 1933. As Song Qingling put it on September 30, 1933, this was a "drive for the dismemberment of China . . . Japan's robber war on Japan" (1953: 74–75).

Concern surrounded China, though sometimes it was as much a concern *about* China as distinct from a concern *for* China. Gilbert Hubbard's overview of China, presented to the Royal Institute of International Affairs in spring 1933, emphasized the increasing "danger of her absorption into the Russian orbit, of her domination by Japan" (Hubbard 1933: 637). He wondered, "would she [China] incline to an Asiatic combination opposed to America and the West," or even would China on her own "mobilise her enormous latent strength as to become the dominant force in the East" (637). Frank Eldridge's *Dangerous Thoughts on the Orient* was trenchant, seeing "China is a potential Balkans of the East . . . China will continue to be a menace to world politics. China understands only force" (1933: 189), and "Japan understands all this much better than the West. China has been a constant menace to Japan. Japan has had to live with it for years. The weakness of China has been a constant lure to every freebooting European power" (190). China's threat came precisely through its weakness, which would encourage the threat from elsewhere. European freebooters were thereby criticized, and Japan to a great extent excused or even justified. In addition was his focus on "the unabashed attempt of Soviet Russia to control the destinies of the Chinese people" (205). Such an interpretation was a foretaste of future Cold War attitudes after 1945. Oswald Spengler, the famed author in 1922 of *The Decline of the West*, considered a dozen years later in *The Hour of Decision* that in China, and elsewhere in Asia, "Russia and Japan undoubtedly have their eyes fixed on the potential uses of these peoples and are working in secret by methods which the 'Whites' neither know nor see" (1934: 65). As a "fellaheen" people, the "Chinese can never again play again an independent part in the world of the great powers. They can change their masters . . . but it is only to succumb to another" (65), for "they constitute objects and war resources for foreign powers . . . battlefields for the decisive battles of foreigners, though precisely for that reason they may achieve immense, if transitory, importance" (65) for the international system.

On the one hand, a successful initial defence of Shanghai in February 1932 (Sergeant 1991: 185–204), "China's trial by fire" (Jordan 2001), lifted Chinese spirits. On the other hand, this was reversed by Japanese troops entering Shanghai in March, with Chinese forces pulling back under an armistice agreement. Even more ominously, the Tanggu Truce in May 1933 dramatically undercut Chinese hopes for the future by leaving Japan in military control of Manchuria and Jehol, creating a demilitarized zone along the Great Wall of China, and thereby detaching Manchuria from China proper. Wen Riqing considered, on June 24, 1933, the Tanggu Truce as "a great national humiliation" (Craft 2001: 198). On the military front, Peter Fleming's judgment was damning on the Guomintang efforts: "In practice . . . a contemptible failure" (1934: 247), pulled down by corrupt and incompetent leaderships. Guomintang politicians may have rejected Japan's creation of

Manchuko as nothing but a “puppet state” (Tang Liangli 1935), but the Hu-Umezu Goodwill Mandate agreement of June 1935 continued the military retreat and readiness to placate Japan by the Guomindang government.

Internal criticisms were made from various concerned diplomats, students, and journalists about Chiang’s “appeasement and conciliation” (Coble 1985: 293; also Coble 1991, Craft 2001) of Japan during 1931–1937. Hu Zhengzhi considered it, in September 1932, as “blind man’s diplomacy” (Craft 2001: 198), and Fu Sinian lamented in August 1934 “does not our foreign policy resemble sleep?” (Craft 2001: 198). Gu Weijun and Yen Weiching, both of whom were appointed to the Chinese delegation of the League of Nations in 1932, were joined by Guo Taiqi, the Minister to Britain and by Song Ziwen, the finance minister, in sending a joint memorandum to Chiang on June 30, 1933, “Formulation of a Foreign Policy for the Immediate Future.” They warned of the dangerous impression given to the wider world by China’s seeming acquiescence in the loss of its three northern provinces to Japan. In warning of the possible dismemberment of China, they drew the parallel with the way in which China’s defeat by Japan in 1895 had prompted the near partition, Li Hongzhang’s “slicing of the melon,” of China by other Powers in the late 1890s. They felt that Chiang’s seeming acceptance of Japan’s occupation of territory would be “interpreted by the more ambitious nations as proof of China’s utter inability to maintain herself as a self-respecting, independent State” (Craft 2001: 201).

Other political observers were concerned. Japan’s Manchurian occupation was the spark for an “outburst of militant nationalism” (Israel 1966: 49) by students, but this was eventually suppressed by Chiang’s Guomindang government, with the student agitation proving in retrospect for John Israel “a fiasco” (84). Orrin Magill’s report to the Chinese YMCA in August 1933 reported “complete disillusionment, hopeless depression of spirit, and a feeling of shame before the world” (Israel 1966: 108) by students. As such, “the students had lost faith in international justice; China’s inability to defend herself provoked feelings of national inferiority, deep despair and searching introspection” (108). Zou Taofen, a popular Shanghai journalist, was vociferous during the early 1930s in calls for resistance to Japan, with his various journals closed down in turn by Chiang. Late in 1935, Zou and his followers helped organize the National Salvation Movement, which demanded that Chiang suspend the civil war against the Communists and instead fight the Japanese (Coble 1985). Yet, as one journalist, Chen Weitai, put it on February 9, 1936, Chiang’s central foreign policy goal should have been the retention of China’s sovereignty, rights, and territory, but his appeasement had instead lost more Chinese territory than the Qing dynasty (Craft 2001: 200). Such calls were ignored by Chiang. Instead Zou Taofen and the other leaders of the National Salvation Movement were arrested in November 1936.

Henry Stimson's position, based in part on his own experience as U.S. Secretary of State from 1929 to 1933, had varied strands. He hoped, in a curiously racial-tinged way, for the maintenance of postwar treaties like the 1922 Washington Conference "on which so many hopes of our race" (1936: 89) rested. Nevertheless, China's potential was something "most frequently ignored and forgotten" (90–91), but "the future of the Far East will be very largely dominated by the future of the four hundred millions peoples of Chinese blood" (91). China was to be supported economically, since otherwise "if the character of China should be revolutionized and through exploitation become militaristic and aggressive, not only Asia but the rest of the world must tremble" (91). China should be supported, but on Western terms, "in the education and development of China towards the ideals of modern Christian civilization" (90).

Some hopes of Christianity had become centered on Chiang Kai-shek. After marrying, in December 1927, Song Meiling, the Methodist, American-educated younger sister of Sun Yat-sen's widow Song Qingling, Chiang had himself been baptized in the Methodist Church during 1929. China during the 1930s thus had a "Christian" couple as Head of State and First Lady, something that influential American media figures like Henry Luce, head of Time Inc., were quick to praise. Generally, "Chiang's growing strength combined with his new found Christianity to foster the strong sense of optimism about Sino-American relations" (Jespersen 1996: 25), in which "Chiang's conversion seemed to be an auspicious harbinger . . . Luce latched onto the generalissimo and his wife and promoted them as clear examples of China's movement towards becoming more like America" (Jespersen 1996: 25; also Schaller 1979)—Christian, democratic, capitalist, and an effective American ally in the world. Chiang and, thus, "China became a symbol of American success . . . an Americanized China" (24) during the 1930s. However, attempts to bring gradual reform of the Chinese socioeconomic structure, under American ways, proved limited, despite scattered American advisors, educators, and supporters in China. Such hopes may, indeed, have been "illusions of Americans who dealt with Nationalist China . . . the grandiose aims and the inadequate instruments possessed by Americans who attempted to influence the development of modern China in the Nanking years," where, in retrospect, "one is struck by the impossibility of the undertaking . . . the attempt by a disparate band of 3,000 to transform a civilization of 450 million" (J. Thomson 1969: 239).

A rather different development was the *Lanyi* (Blue Shirts), the *Lixing-she* (Society for Vigorous Practice), which was set up in 1929 with Chiang as patron and inspiration, an authoritarian-totalitarian movement (Eastman 1972, M. Chang 1979), projecting "Confucian fascism" (Frederic 1997). Their message was simple enough. China's *minzu jingshen* (racial spirit) was to be built up, through allegiance to a *lingxui* (leader), the equivalent of the Nazi

usage of “Führer.” Chiang’s logic in establishing such a leadership role over them in January 1932 was clear enough: “Before we resist foreign enemies, we must pacify domestically” (Frederic 1997: 407); in other words, the Communists inside China needed to be smashed first. They were the priority, not Japan.

This overlapped with Chiang’s setting up of the New Life Movement in February 1934, which stressed and adapted the neo-Confucian moral values of *Li* (propriety), *Yi* (righteousness), *Lian* (integrity), and *Chi* (sense of shame) (Van de Ven 2003a: 163–68). In ideational terms, the New Life Movement rejected the cosmopolitan antitraditionalism of the New Culture Movement of the 1920s. In 1925, Song Meiling explained her husband’s logic by instead looking to the past, to China’s days of Middle Kingdom glory, where “at the time when those principles were practiced, China was indeed a great nation,” an example she saw for Chiang to emulate: “He decided then and there to base a New Life movement upon them, to try to recover what had been lost by forgetfulness of this source of China’s greatness . . . to enable China to resume her position as a great nation” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 296). The New Life Movement was also a reaction against China’s immediate past, its humiliations. Its stress on physical and mental robustness was quite political, “to strengthen the nation, [one] can naturally defend the state and glorify the nation, help our state and nation to forever accord with the world and not again suffer from the aggression and oppression of foreign countries or receive disdain and insults” (Dirlik 1975: 957–58).

Song Meiling’s portrayal of it in 1935 fused internal and external concerns: “The suppression of the communist-bandits and the work of the New Life Movement are proving to be the first stage of a long battle,” but “out of it will come a strong and united China, which will command the respect of the world” and “that new China, like the very old one, will be based firmly upon the four cardinal [Confucian] virtues, with the addition of those desirable elements which go to make a modern world” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 298). Her sister Song Qingling saw it, in April 1937, as a stiff and reactionary “pedantic movement . . . it gives nothing to the people” (1953: 103). While Chiang’s militarism dominated it initially, control shifted more to his wife Song Meiling, with the installation of the missionary reformer George Shepherd to lead it in 1936. American diplomats noted this shift; within the movement, “the battle is drawn between the Anglo-American Christian democrats and the German-Italian totalitarians” (Dirlik 1975: 948). This may have been a battle within the New Life Movement, but by 1936 it was already in decline and fading into irrelevance after 1937. Greater battles were being fought between the Guomindang and Communist groupings, and between China and Japan.

Two common themes ran through such critics of Chiang. First, a voluntary united front should be created internally between the Guomindang and

the Communist groupings. Second, while recognizing that China was currently militarily weaker than Japan, China should compensate for that by a more active alignment with the West—soft power foreign policy to make up for hard power military weakness. Jiang Tingfu argued, on September 18, 1932, that obtaining foreign assistance from the so-called imperialist powers was a method of self-help. He denigrated the idea that China's interests in the long run would be harmed, pointing out that accepting foreign help would strengthen China's relations with those countries and would provide China a balance of power against Japan (Craft 2001: 203) through rearmament and redeployment. In reality, Chiang neither prepared for internal reconstruction though accommodation with the Communists nor prepare for war against Japan, despite Sun Youli's argument that Chiang's "gradualism" (1993: 41–43) represented such a gradual preparation. However, in reality, and despite retrospective rhetoric to the contrary, such preparation only really came about in 1937 when further Japanese expansion had forced Chiang's hand.

At the time, Wang Jingwei argued that "peace can only be built, and become firmly established on the foundation of equality, and this equality must not be merely equality in international status, but more especially equality in national strength" (1934: 5). He was ready to admit China's general weakness, "China is like Turkey was in the Victorian era, when a British politician referred to that country as the 'sick man of Europe.' China is sick" (13). She was suffering from "general debility . . . the unsettled and underdeveloped condition of a vast country rich in natural resources and with ample man-power to make good use of them" (13). Consequently, "China is now devoting herself to the political and economic reconstruction of the country. . . . She is seeking the readjustment of her military forces and the strengthening of her national defences" (5). However, for Guomintang leaders, internal matters took priority over external matters: "There is only one course open to us—to put our house in order" (5), in other words, "our immediate objective . . . is the suppression of Communist banditry" (44).

Japan was denounced by Wang Jingwei, its invasion and occupation was a "tumorous growth" (1934: 14) to be cut out when China was generally stronger, but not before. Its actions in Manchuria were to be denounced: "Is Japan prepared to give up the Three Eastern provinces and Jehol, abandon her present policy of aggression, and dissolve the puppet regime in 'so-called Manchuko'?" (58). He thought not: "So long as Japan is not willing to give up her present policy, nor can China submit to that policy—and this we will never do—how can there ever be a compromise?" (58). Here though, the nub of the issue lay in China's immediate military weakness, "all this, however, depends on one thing, *force*. The nation must abandon all conceited ideas . . . as a matter of plain fact, the Government is ready to admit that it is weak and powerless" (104). What could China do? It could refuse to sign transfers of

territory. The lessons of the past were evoked: “China’s firm determination not to sign any treaty prejudicial to her territorial and administrative sovereignty” in light of how in the past “the signing of such treaties have meant the loss of China’s sovereign rights, the degradation of national character and the degeneration of China’s racial qualities” (114). It could also mean transferring the capital from Nanjing to the interior, “in order to make possible continued resistance to Japanese armed aggression we moved the seat of Government further inland” (115). What China should not do was to take on Japan militarily, “at present our armaments compare to those of the Japanese like arrows to machine-guns, and if we should rashly declare war on Japan, we would experience a repetition of the disastrous Boxer Rebellion” (116). Instead, China should wait it out, “so long as we persist in our preparations for self-defence, a time will inevitably come when the invaders will be exhausted, and the Powers will awaken to their obligations to the cause of peace” (116).

In terms of internal developments, a criticism of Guomindang policy was that it did not build up its military forces against Japan after 1931, and that its focus on crushing “Communist-banditry” reduced rather than fostered national unity. In this vein, during 1930–1933, Chiang launched five large-scale “extermination expeditions” against Mao Zedong’s Jiangxi Soviet. The first was in December 1930, and the second in April 1931. The third one, led by Chiang in July 1931, involved 300,000 Guomindang, but while hammering Communist forces, had withdrawn in the wake of Japan’s advances into Manchuria in September. With his focus on crushing the Chinese Communist Party first, rather than taking on Japan, a fourth “annihilation campaign” was launched in May 1932, to be followed by a fifth in September 1933, the most thorough assault. It was after six months of contraction that the CCP broke out with its dramatic Long March northward that started in October 1934 and only finished twelve months later in October 1935, a much-depleted and very exhausted force having marched about 8,000 miles over 370 days in order to regroup in the northern province of Shanxi. This was closer to the Soviet Union, but also closer to the Japanese war front.

Ironically, Chiang’s attempt to launch another annihilation campaign against Mao’s new Shanxi Soviet in 1936 backfired against him. On inspecting troops in December 1936, Chiang was kidnapped at Xian by his two generals and forced to call off his campaign against the CCP and instead agree to a second united front with them, in order to stand up to Japan more effectively. In their own words, “it is now over five years since Japan occupied China. National sovereignty has been infringed upon, and more and more of our territory lost to the enemy [Japan]. The humiliating Shanghai Armistice Agreement of early 1932 was followed by the signing of the Tang’gu and Hu-Umeza Agreements” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 310). The government was denounced: “Our diplomats have been doing their best to reach a compro-

mise with alien invaders . . . the imprisonment of the Shanghai patriots [Zou Tao-fen's National Salvation Movement] has shocked the whole world besides paining the entire Chinese nation" (310). In theory their demands were met and Chiang was released; but while Guomindang military campaigns against the CCP did now cease, any united front against Japan remained a paper exercise. Chiang was still reluctant to commit large-scale forces against Japan, although the CCP organized increasingly effective guerilla resistance in northern China against the Japanese occupation.

Was Chiang right not to confront Japan on the military front after 1931? The military imbalance vis-à-vis Japan was a real issue. As such, Craft argues that on its own China was too weak to take on Japan, and that Chinese critics of Chiang were flawed in their analysis of Japan's political dynamism: "Their own ideas might have brought about China's destruction sooner than Chiang's appeasement of Japan" (2001: 216). All China could do was to wait until the wider balance of power swung against Japan, and wait until the international system aligned itself with China against Japan. With Germany and Italy's alignment with Japan, shown in the Anti-Comintern Pact of 1937 and the Tripartite Pact of 1940, and with the Soviets distancing themselves under Stalin's Five-Year Plans internal drive and their neutrality agreement with Japan in 1941, in effect this left Britain and America from the international system to intervene on China's behalf. Yet both were swept up in the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s. The United States also had its own strong isolationist restrictions. Meanwhile, the United Kingdom was facing imperial overstretch, and was operating its own paralyzing appeasement policies toward the simultaneous threat from Germany, Italy, and Japan. There was a sense of "China as an abstraction" (W. Cohen 2000: 105) in the 1930s, as not really functioning as a proper sovereign state, more and more thin before the eyes of observers, as it cracked from external pressures and internal fragmentation.

Nevertheless, Japan saw itself as also threatened by China. For some British Foreign Office analysts like Wellesley, on February 6, 1932, given "an enormous country like China, almost a continent in itself, with a teeming population of 400 million," therefore, "it is not difficult to understand why Japan does not want a well-ordered and united China . . . a China so politically powerful as to dominate Japan" (DBFP 1965: 373, 379). Yosuke Masuoka had led the Japanese departure from the League of Nations in 1933, and was then involved in Japan's presence in Manchuko, before becoming foreign minister in 1940. Masuoka's argument in 1934 was that "at present China, despite her gigantic military forces, is no menace to Japan, but she has in the past centuries and may be in the future," and "we Japanese cannot forget the past nor ignore the future as easily as nations far away from China, across the oceans [the United States] or the plains of Asia [USSR, Europe]. We are China's immediate neighbour . . . Japan is therefore compelled to act" (1934: 4). This is exactly what it did in 1937.

There, Harry Gannes's 1937 profile *When China Unites*, subtitled "A History of China's Struggle for National Independence," could indeed see the "gravitational pull of sections of China, the so-called spheres of influence, now under the hegemony of foreign powers," within which "the bitterest opponent of China's unity is and will remain the greatest enemy of China-Japanese imperialism" (1938: 261). He concluded his final chapter "China Faces the Future" with the sense that "haltingly, bowed down with the weight of an age-encrusted economy, impeded by outworn traditions, held back by ferocious invasions and shameful oppression, China is nevertheless moving forward" (261). As such, "when China long divided, unites, she will grow strong and become a powerful master of her own destiny. The most ancient nation will march with giant strides in the van of human progress" (261). Some progress seems to have been finally emerging by 1937; some signs of administrative-economic reform and some internal stabilization were there, so that "all that was lacking, it seemed to some, was the necessary score of years" (J. Thomson 1969: 240). However, that "score of years" was precisely what came to be lacking as Japanese forces started their full-scale invasion of China.

THE SECOND SINO-JAPANESE WAR (1937–1945)

The 1933 Tanggu Truce proved of little avail for China when war broke out in July 1937. Japanese rhetoric claimed, unconvincingly, that it was all sparked by Chinese provocations. Japan's ambassador in the United States, Saito Hiroshi, explained in December 1937, "the trouble is not of foreign but of Chinese making . . . the present conflict has been forced upon Japan . . . Japan is not bent on conquest, and has no desire to teach or annex any part of China . . . with China's millions Japan had no quarrel" (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 317–18). Given Japan's readiness to detach the Ryukyus, Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, and Jehol from Chinese control, this was not too credible a line, even if "China's millions" did accurately point to China's ongoing demographic weight. Japanese Prime Minister Fuminaro Konoe argued, or rather asserted, to the Japanese parliament on September 5, 1937, that fighting had been caused by Chinese provocation, "the Chinese Government has finally caused the present affair" (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 316), with "erroneous anti-Japanese policies . . . a spirit of contempt and have offered resistance towards Japan" (315) fuelled by "uncontrolled nationalist sentiment" on which the Japanese government "has been forced to deal a firm and decisive blow against the Chinese Government in an active and comprehensive manner" (315–16).

In August 1937, Song Qingling looked forward to the mobilization of China's masses: "China must now prepare to recover her lost territory" (1953: 108) and not "endure the taunt that China is the sick man of Asia" (110).

Unfortunately, Chiang's regime showed little ability, or intention, to mobilize the masses, and China looked all the sicker. Shanghai was taken in November 1937, the capital Nanjing in December 1937, and Wuhan in October 1938. One way in which Japan's military machine operated in a "comprehensive manner" was in systematically targeting Chinese civilians as well as military forces. The Rape of Nanjing occurred in December 1937 and rapid occupation of swathes of Chinese territory ensued by 1938. Guomintang rhetoric toward Japan was strong. For the Guomintang "Manifesto of the Extraordinary Congress," April 1, 1938, "we have suffered insults and humiliations . . . the atrocities committed by Japanese troops in China are unprecedented" (Shieh 1970: 172). The readiness of Japanese forces to inflict systematic barbarities upon the Chinese population as a whole at Nanjing stands as graphic testimony to what Harold Timperley rightly then called "Japanese terror" (1938b), and which was subsequently termed an Eastern "Holocaust" (I. Chang 1997, also Fogel 2000). Such events reflected China's weakness, her marginality for the West and humiliation from Japan. It showed Japan's contempt for China and the Chinese. After some resistance around Shanghai, Chiang Kai-shek's government eventually retreated westward to Chongqing in 1938, with a subsequent degree of isolation, inertia, and decay setting in for the Guomintang.

As Japan launched its full-scale war against China in 1937, China was initially fighting alone. The stakes were high, in Chinese terms, as Japanese forces took the capital Nanjing. Nevertheless, Japan's onslaught on and in China could be seen as having a wider and longer-term significance for the West. Song Qingling thought in August 1937 that "China will not be alone. For China has the sympathy of the world" (1953: 113)—true enough but not very tangible. The Nine Power Conference at Brussels, in November 1937, invoking the 1922 Washington Conference Nine Power Treaty, "clearly internationalized the Sino-Japanese War" in which "China would play a major role in new conceptions that were being developed for organizing a global alliance against Germany and Japan" (Iriye 1986: 522). Its rhetoric, which Italy voted against, was strong enough: "Japanese armed forces are present in enormous numbers on Chinese soil and have occupied large and important areas thereof. Japanese authorities have decided in substance that it is Japan's objective to destroy the will and the ability of China to resist the will and the demands of Japan" (US 1943a: 391). Whereas the Japanese government claimed this was a bilateral issue between China and Japan, the Brussels Conference disagreed: "It is clear that the Japanese concept of the issues and interests involved in the conflict under reference is utterly different from the concepts of most of the other nations and governments of the world" for "the representatives of the states now met at Brussels consider this conflict of concern in fact to all countries party to the Nine Power Treaty of Washington of 1922 . . . and of concern in fact to all countries members of

the family of nations” (390). However, tangible action by the family of nations was sparse. Instead China was left to fight it out with Japan.

It was little comfort for China to hear Lord Halifax, the British Foreign Secretary, noting in May 1938 that “China is fighting the battle of all the law-abiding states and she is incidentally fighting our own battle in the Far East” (Iriye 1986: 524), since China was fighting on its own. Admittedly, China was still impressive in size, and with potential for the future, if it survived. Even while China was being pounded by Japan, Pearl S. Buck’s observations in her 1938 profile “China Wins” had been that “when a quarter of the earth’s people hate Japan, it is a serious hatred, an eternal hatred” (1970: 119), and something that would manifest itself after 1945. For Buck, China would ultimately win the war through sheer endurance. Edgar Mowrer, the *Chicago Daily News* reporter, was struck in his trip to China by “China wearing out Japan” (1938: vii), so that “in consequence, the foreigners were no longer afraid of Japan and beginning to reckon with the possibility of a successful China with which one had better be on good terms” (192). Gunnar Andersson’s sense, in *China Fights for the World*, was that “the democratic Great Powers are well aware that in their own interest they cannot afford to sacrifice China” (1939: 276), given “the importance to which the wealth of the country and qualities of its people . . . this great nation” (254) could transfer to Japan if defeated. Indeed, he reckoned that in the longer term “if Chiang Kaishek can hold out till the Japanese give up, China will be the leading Great Power of the East by 1950” (Andersson 1939: 254). However, in many ways, the Western powers did seem prepared to sacrifice China, as long as they were not directly attacked themselves.

The complexities of Japan’s challenge to the international order were well illustrated in Tatsuo Kawai’s *The Goal of Japanese Expansion*. Kawai had been the consul-general at Shanghai, before being promoted in 1938 to director of the Information Bureau and official spokesman for the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo. He was keen to claim that Japan was not expanding at China’s expense, arguing that “Japan’s expansion and progress will render possible the liberation of China from what Sun Yat-sen called a ‘semi-colonial status,’” thereby “enabling her to stand with Japan on a footing of equality and reciprocity as a free and sovereign state in the Asiatic system. Japan does not wish to conquer China or any other country” (Kawai 1938: 16). Consequently, Kawai argued, “our forces now fighting in China are not there merely to kill—but to bring birth to a new Asia . . . a new solidarity of the Asiatic races” (73). Japanese hopes were ultimately at the expense of China where the Chinese “having outlived their age and the environment . . . have deteriorated in racial quality and stamina. The ‘Middle flowery Kingdom’ of old is now but a dreary land” (61). Economic cooperation between China and Japan could be seen as little more than classic exploitation: “Japan’s shift to heavy industries is expected to prove the propulsive power to China’s light industries,

while the development of Chinese natural resources will accelerate the progress of Japan's heavy industries" (80). At the end of the day, classic images of China's manpower as economic fodder could lend themselves to Japanese direction: "China, with her vast territory and well-nigh inexhaustible manpower, and Japan, with her industrial experience and ability and technical skill, can join forces in exploiting the rich natural resources of the Asiatic mainland" (103).

Japanese rhetoric was sensitive to Chinese concerns. Japanese Prime Minister Fuminaro Konoe was accurate enough when announcing a New Order for East Asia, on November 3, 1938, in noting that "it is undisputed history that China heretofore has been a victim of the rivalry between the powers whose imperialistic ambitions have constantly imperilled her tranquillity and independence" (De Bary et al. 2005: 991–92). How accurate he was in portraying internal Chinese politics is more debatable, that "the conduct of that [Guomintang] government, which in its efforts to stay in power cared not whether the nation was left prey to Communism or relegated to a minor colonial status, cannot but be regarded as treason toward those many patriotic Chinese who had risked their lives in order to erect a new China" (991). Chiang rejected Konoe's talk of a New Order on December 26, 1938, "Japan seeks to control China's military affairs . . . Japan seeks to uproot China's racial culture . . . obtaining a strangle-hold on China's economic arteries . . . the enslavement of China as the means whereby Japan may dominate the Pacific" (Chiang 1939: 320–21).

Nevertheless, amid talk about equality of status and fraternity of purpose, a pro-Japanese Chinese administration was eventually set up in Japanese-occupied territory in March 1940 (Boyle 1972, Bunker 1972, Brook 2005). Ironically, this was headed by Wang Jingwei, the erstwhile leader of the leftwing Guomintang faction and rival of Chiang Kai-shek, with Tang Liangli as Vice Minister of Propaganda, "a Chinese Goebbels" (*Time* 1940). Despite his nationalist credentials, Wang had become increasingly pessimistic over China's ability to defeat Japan, and so had left Chongqing in 1938. Instead, he felt that China needed to actively engage and cooperate with Japan. One thing that he and Tang did was to republish Sun Yat-sen's speeches on pan-Asianism, the book titled euphemistically by them as *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies. A Guide for China's Foreign Policy* (Sun Yat-sen 1941).

However, Wang's Jingwei's government rapidly became a Quisling-style puppet cipher for the Japanese High Command in China. Wang's broadcast from Tokyo on June 24, 1941 showed how far he had moved from his earlier rejection of Japanese expansionism. For Wang, Japan's "construction of a new order in East Asia" was "a gleam of hope in the darkness" for China; "one the one hand, in endeavouring to eliminate from East Asia the evils of Western economic imperialism from which this part of the world has suffered from the last century" and "on the other hand, in checking the rising

tide of Communism which has been threatening our prosperity for these twenty years” (Cheng and Lestz 1999: 331). However, he considered Japan’s own actions a different matter; they had been “on behalf of China,” Japan’s New Order was one based on “independence, freedom, co-existence and co-prosperity,” and “Japan will give aid to aid to China” (332), reflecting supposed pan-Asian solidarity. Although Tang Liangli talked of “Sino-Japanese friendship on the basis of equality and mutual respect” (1941: xv), that was precisely what was not forthcoming. Though he thought that “the [Japanese] New Order in East Asia, based on Sino-Japanese mutual friendship and cooperation, is but the Pan-Asianism of Dr. Sun adapted to suit the circumstances of the age” (xvii), unfortunately it was but an adaptation to serve the purposes of Japanese imperialism and of the Japanese race. Though Tang Liangli argued that the 1938 Konoe Declaration had been a “change of heart” (1941: xv) on the part of Japan, in reality it had proved little more than rhetoric. The Rape of Nanjing and other atrocities like Japan’s Germ Warfare Project carried out by Unit 731 in Manchuria showed otherwise. Wang Jingwei had argued that “the association of Japan with ourselves on a basis of equality is exactly the realization of the aims and hopes of Dr. Sun’s Pan-Asiatic doctrine” (1941: 169). This was true enough in theory, but rendered superfluous by the fundamental inequality of the relationship between his wartime Nanjing regime and the Japanese Empire.

Different Chinese voices could, of course, be heard. Lin Yutang’s widely read *My Country and My People* (1938) and its eulogistic synthesis on Confucian-derived rational virtues contained wider contextual ponderings. For him, “China is the greatest and stupefying fact in the modern world . . . she is the oldest living nation with a continuous culture; she has the largest population; once she was the greatest empire in the world,” yet “today she is undoubtedly the most chaotic . . . the most pathetic, the most unable to pull herself together and forge ahead” (Lin Yutang 1938: 4). Contrasts abounded for Lin: “God—if there be a God—intended her [China] to be a first-class nation among the peoples of the earth, and she has chosen to take a back seat with Guatemala at the League of Nations” (4). China’s fall loomed on the horizon, “doubt arises in one’s mind, what is China’s destiny? Will she survive . . . did God really intend her to be a first-class nation? Or is she merely ‘Mother Earth’s miscarriage?’” (5). In the past, “once she had a destiny. Once she was a conqueror. Now her greatest destiny seems to be merely to exist, to survive” (5). Her present international environment was one where she might “sink lower under foreign domination” and suffer “national extinction” (341). The answer for Lin lay in political renewal, though not in any “foreign isms” (341).

In such a setting there was the paradox for Lin Yutang of a China “caught in the hopeless tangle of dark realities . . . a nation whose potential possibilities are yet unexplored,” but waiting for a “Savior of China” who could bring “Justice” instead of the Guomindang’s corrupting “Face, Fate and Favor”

(1938: 342). Ironically, Fu Manchu's creator Sax Rohmer also mused on future saviors in China: "One wonders if a Kubla Khan is about to arise, one who by force of personality will weave together the million threads and from his loom produce a close-knit China," for, "should this occur, what then? The Pacific slopes of America would be deeply interested. And Australia would follow the policy of such a Yellow Emperor with keen attention" (Rohmer 1938). Mao Zedong comes, retrospectively, to mind. Rohmer's futurology was one way of expressing China's potential; another was Nicholas Spykman's more academic geopolitical analysis that Japan could well fear China because of "the power potentials inherent" in her "gigantic size. The last illustration makes it clear that size is not strength but potential strength" (1938: 31–32). It remained a fact that despite this potential, China's lack of industrial development and communications infrastructure meant that "China today, although among the largest states in the world" remained a "second class" (39) power. China had the potential to be "quadrivirate of world powers" along with the United States, Soviet Union, and India (and possibly a European Confederation), but that was a question of "fifty years from now" (39), 1988 rather than 1938—a not inaccurate estimate?

For some Chinese, the war could be seen as an opportunity for China to purify itself in the combat against Japan. Wen Yiduo warned in March 1939, "we've been civilized too long, and now that we have nowhere to go we shall have to pull out the last and purest card, and release the animal nature that has lain dormant in us for several thousand years, so that we can bite back," for "this is a chance that comes once in a thousand years" (Spence 1982: 279). His background as one of the May Fourth Movement figures, further radicalized through experience of anti-Chinese racism in the United States in the early 1920s, makes his comments all the more striking concerning the nature of Chinese nationalism vis-à-vis the outside world. Culture was an important issue. Song Qingling told British Labor Party delegates, on October 3, 1937, that "the Japanese militarists are deliberately destroying Chinese culture which has a history of four thousand years. It is but natural that such a policy of the Japanese can only arouse our hatred" (1953: 117) of a "brutal and culture-destroying barbarism" (121).

A forthright picture of China's future possibilities was given in Song Meiling's *China Shall Rise Again*. Chiang's influential wife could hope and foresee "a strong and virile China" (Song Meiling 1940: 22), enjoying "the international eminence and prosperity which is rightfully ours—and for which we are peculiarly fitted by our culture, by the vastness of our natural resources, and by our great industrious population" (33). She looked forward to a China "powerful and prosperous (as we should be) and would have nothing, or no one, to fear in the future . . . cherishing and enhancing the possessions and potentialities of our race" (36–37). She prefaced such comments with talk of fostering peace, yet there were further implications in her assertion that Japan was using

“the manpower and resources of this vast country [China] to realise her ambition of dominating Asia and ultimately the world” (106). The logic of that was of course that if Japan’s domination of China’s power would enable a Japanese domination of Asia and beyond, then China’s use of its own power could, and perhaps would, also enable such projection of strength into Asia and beyond.

While Chiang and his wife could muse on longer-term prospects for China, in the shorter term it was a question of somehow lasting out until Japan collapsed, perhaps in the face of outside international intervention. Guomindang operations against Japan were limited; indeed, 1940 and 1941 saw some resumption of Guomindang operations against the Chinese Communist Party, despite their notional united front against Japan.

YELLOW-RED PERILS?

Despite the Japanese invasion, in reality China was still deeply divided between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Chiang Kai-shek may have confidently told Peter Fleming that “the Red Armies at present in the field would be wiped out” (Fleming 1934: 226), and Wang Jingwei may have talked of the need for “the suppression of the Communist movement in China, and the extermination of large forces of bandits who are associated with that movement” (1934: 34), as did Tang Liangli in *Suppressing Communist-banditry in China* (1934). But the CCP survived Chiang’s final “annihilation campaigns” in the summer of 1933. Agnes Smedley felt that “the Chinese Soviets and the Chinese Red Army will conquer in the end, for their aim and program are in harmony with the processes of historical progress. Because of this the iron battalions of China’s Red Army are marching and nothing can stop them” (1936: xxi). Chiang Kai-shek and varied Western observers may have dismissed the Chinese Communist Party as “bandit” remnants, but it refused to disappear. In reality, the Long March of 1934–1935 and the repositioning of the Chinese Communist Party in Yanan, under the new leadership of Mao Zedong, enabled the CCP to survive against the Guomindang and to present its own perspective on the world.

While the external threat of Western imperialism remained, a greater external threat was seen from Japan. As Mao saw it, on December 27, 1935, in *Tactics of Fighting Japanese Imperialism*, “there are unmistakable signs that the Japanese imperialists want to advance into China Proper and occupy the whole of China from a semi-colony shared among several imperialist powers into a colony monopolised by Japan” (1954–56: 1.154). The CCP’s readiness to take the fight to the Japanese had wider internal and external implications. Mao wrote in December 1936, “In the new stage of our national anti-Japanese revolutionary war we will lead the Chinese revolution to its completion, and also exert a far-reaching influence on the Revolution in the East, as well as the whole world” (1954–56: 1.191). By May 1937, the pressure was even

more apparent for Mao: “Japanese imperialism is intensifying its preparations for invading Japan proper . . . exerting her utmost to bring about according to a definite stroke the conditions for subjugating China at a single stroke . . . China is now approaching the critical point of survival or extinction” (1954–56: 1.263). In the face of this Japanese onslaught, Mao thought, in May 1938, that “our enemy is probably still dreaming happily about repeating the Mongols’ conquest of the Sung dynasty, the Manchu’s conquest of the Ming dynasty, the British occupation of North America and India” (1954–56: 2.120). Consequently, the CCP launched and maintained ongoing guerrilla resistance to Japanese forces in northern China, generally more effective than Chiang’s lackluster Guomindang efforts from Chongqing.

As Mao explained in his *Strategic Problems in the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla War*, in May 1938, this was “a war of life and death between a semi-colonial and semi-feudal China and an imperialist Japan” (1954–56: 2.122–23). His argument was that “whilst Japan . . . is a powerful imperialist country which ranks first in military, economic and political-organisational power in the East” (2.123), China had the longer-term advantage as “a very big country with a vast territory, rich resources, an enormous population . . . capable of keeping up a prolonged war . . . Japan cannot overrun China for ever” (2.125, 2.129). His thinking was elaborated in his “On the Protracted War” lectures in May–June 1938. It would be a long war; “there is no short cut” (1954–56: 2.193), in which China needed to “develop guerrilla warfare . . . and wear out the enemy’s armies” (2.193) within China, but eventually the balance would shift. Meanwhile, there were wider alliances to be made outside China, for “Japan is a small country, and her war is retrogressive and barbarous, she will become more and more isolated internationally,” while “China is a big country, and her war is progressive and just, she will enjoy more and more international support” (2.192). Thus, “we can by means of diplomacy bring about the formation of a Pacific anti-Japanese front, with China as one of the strategic units, with the Soviet Union and other countries which may participate in it each also as a strategic unit” (2.196). Still wider trends were discerned: “The protracted and extensive Anti-Japanese War is a jig-saw pattern in the military, political, economic and cultural aspects—a spectacle in the history of war, a splendid feat of the Chinese nation, a world-shaking achievement” (2.197). He felt its ripples would be widespread throughout Asia: “This war will not only affect China and Japan . . . but [will] also affect the world, impelling all the nations, first of all the oppressed nations like India, to march forward” (2.197). Victory would ultimately come to China, but, of course, whose China?

It was in these circumstances that Agnes Smedley continued to profile Chinese Communist vitality in her 1938 book *China Fights Back: An American Woman with the Eighth Route Army*. The Eighth Route Army was none other than the Chinese Red Army, notionally incorporated into the National

Army under the umbrella of the united front cooperation, but in reality still led by Zhu De, and still driving forward the external fight against Japan and the internal fight for Communist revolution, “men of destiny” (Smedley 1938: 141). Smedley was impressed by the CCP military edge in her travels with them between September 1937 and January 1938, and identified their political and social aspirations with her own radical background (Yoshihara 2003: 128–45). She considered that “trained by ten years of warfare in fighting tactics against a foe a hundred times its strength,” it was “an army so thoroughly trained politically that it is a solid, united, disciplines block, and I believe indestructible” (1938: 19). She saw a new China as the force for the future: “The iron Chinese people, destined to decide the fate of all Asia” (141). She also noted Zhu De’s expectations of Japanese conflict with Britain and America, with Zhu asking her, “how long will it be before the second world war begins?” (230). While she was highly sympathetic to the Communist cause, indeed even trying to join the CCP, it was also true that Communist forces did generally pose a more credible, albeit guerrilla-style, resistance to the Japanese than did Guomindang forces. They were the ones sympathetically profiled by New Zealand journalist James Bertram in his *Unconquered: Journal of a Year’s Adventures among the Fighting Peasants of North China* (1939), following his visits there in 1937–1938. It was to Communist China that Anna Strong was drawn in her *One-Fifth of Mankind: China Fights for Freedom* (1938).

A similar Chinese marker for the future, reacting to the humiliating past, was Mao Zedong. In his December 1939 profile “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party” Mao gave a detailed breakdown of China’s “splendid historical heritage” (1970: 165) and its “vast territory” (165), which “after having inflicted military defeats on China, the imperialist countries forcibly took from her a large number of tributary states, as well as a part of her own territory” (375). The swathe of territory and number of countries identified by Mao was impressive enough, but what was also significant was the abject humiliation of China where “even a miserable little country like Portugal took Macao from us” (375). Last, but not least, “they forced China to conclude numerous unequal treaties” (1954–56: 3.79) amid “the bloodstained picture of a feudal China being reduced into a semi-feudal, semi-colonial and colonial country” (3.80). A future CCP government would instead seek out “those nations of the world who treat us equally” (3.98).

One nation of particular concern was the Soviet Union. During the Long March, the Twenty-eight Bolsheviks, Chinese exiles sent in from Moscow, had been sidelined as Mao’s home-based leadership had taken control. The Soviet and Chinese sides “frequently disagreed” over CCP military and political tactics from 1937 to 1941. “In sum, during the Sino-Japanese war, the CCP-Soviet relationship weakened substantially compared to what it had been in the 1920s and early 1930s” (Niu 1998: 50). It was all a matter

of priorities. Mao was loyal enough to the idea of Communist solidarity and indeed respectful of Stalin's general preeminence in the world Communism movement. Nevertheless, "once the CCP leaders decided that they could give priority to their own views and concepts, some of their policies necessarily would diverge from Moscow's" (Niu 1998: 48–49). Mao was blunt enough in October 1938 about the quintessentially Chinese nature of the CCP: "Chinese communists, who form a part of the great Chinese nation and are linked to it by flesh and blood" needed "to turn Marxism into something specifically Chinese, to imbue every manifestation of it with Chinese characteristics" (2.216).

This represented a clear enough and strikingly Sinified (Wylie 1979), rather nationalistic, reworking, but it was mainly ignored in the West. One prominent voice observing China was Edgar Snow. Snow had picked up on these Sinocentric nuances following his visit to Yen-an in 1936, in which his famous *Red Star over China* had already emphasized that the Chinese Communists under Mao were not puppets of Stalin, but had become relatively isolated from the USSR. Snow judged that Comintern influence had been "colossally magnified," since in reality they had been compelled to "limp along as a kind of poor stepchild," receiving meager "amazingly small" financial assistance, it was "rubbish to assert that Russia had been propping up the Chinese Reds" (1937: 387–88). However, his penultimate paragraph concluded that the movement for "social revolution . . . will eventually win . . . and that triumph when it comes will be so mighty, so irresistible in its discharge of katabolic energy, that it will consign to oblivion the last barbarities of imperialism which now enthral the Eastern world" (456), a scenario he admitted that would be "alarming" (456) for some.

Haldore Hanson was also blunt about "the old bogey that Soviet Russia is directing the activities of the Chinese Communists" (1939: 312). By 1941, Snow was noting their "unique" (1941a: 289) position of independence vis-à-vis Moscow-led Communist International, talking in 1944 of the CCP as a "distinctly Chinese offspring of Marxism firmly rooted in the national problems of China's semi-colonial revolution" (1944: 290–91). Western observers continually failed to find evidence of Soviet links, let alone leadership of Chinese Communism. Nevertheless, despite observers like Snow, most Western commentators continually tried to find such evidence, so that "despite the abundance of debunking evidence presented by the early scrutinizers of the communist regions, the myth of Soviet support to the CCP never really died down" and most "Westerners persevered in their quest for Comintern plotters and munitions crates bearing the imprint 'Made in the USSR'" (Shewmaker 1971: 231).

Such supposed "support" of the Chinese Communist Party by the Soviet Union was used by Japan to explain and legitimize its own operations in China. Japan's signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact, and ongoing rivalries

with the Soviet Union in Mongolia and Central Asia, affected its ideological and geopolitical perspectives on China. Soho Tokutomi argued in 1937 that “it is a serious mistake to view this war as a fight between Japan and China,” for “Japan’s concern with regard to China is not focused on China but upon the Soviet Union,” since “the fact is that the Soviet Union is now attempting to bring China and Manchuria into its fold” (De Bary et al. 2005: 807). Consequently, “if China should come under Soviet influence, it would be a serious threat to this country . . . if Communism grows in China, and China comes under the control of the Comintern, then Japan’s position in Asia will be lost” and “Japan itself will be endangered” (807). This was somewhat ironic given the way in which Chiang Kai-shek was also pointing to dangerous links between the Chinese Communist Party and Moscow, as necessitating his own attempts to crush them militarily. The Japanese used the same logic for their own intervention. Consequently, Tokutomi could portray the conflict as something “to save China from Communism . . . we regard this war not as a war between Japan and China but as a war against the Comintern . . . a war with Communism” (807).

By 1940 an impasse had been reached in China. While not winning, or rather not being conclusively defeated, China was still surviving. Edgar Snow’s visit to China in 1941 left him impressed by “the most important and astounding fact of all, when passing judgement on the Chinese Army . . . still standing up and taking it,” long after European countries like France had gone down before the German military machine; “the Dragon went down for the count several times after 1937, but always painfully got to his feet and came back for more” (1941b: 170). The only trouble was that China might have been painfully getting to its feet again, but it remained alone.

In the international system as a whole, there was no united front against Japan. Mao’s analysis in May 1938 had been that victory against Japan would depend on two trends: “The degree of change in the balance of forces between us and the enemy and on the changes in the international situation” (1954–56: 2.186). On the one hand, Japan was allied with Germany and Italy. Britain remained in little condition to intervene on China’s behalf. Indeed, Mao Zedong had acknowledged the dangers of the “‘realism’ of the Chamberlain type that acquiesces in ‘accomplished facts’” (187). Chamberlain’s appeasement policies toward Germany in Europe were indeed matched by similar ones toward Japan and showed a readiness to concede the Far East to Japan in something of a “Far Eastern Munich” (Shai 1974). War with Germany left Britain loath to take on Japan as well. France had been occupied by Germany in the summer of 1940, with its Vichy government in no condition or inclination to stand up to Japan. Under an agreement in September 1940, France gave Japan basing facilities in Indo-China in September 1940, thereby facilitating Japanese operations in southern China. The United States, though taken with the Christian couple image of Chiang Kai-shek

and his wife and concerned about Japan's growing Yellow Peril potential, still politically remained bound by its isolationist fetters in the wake of the Depression. Mao's distrust of the United States and Chiang was evident. He warned in internal party briefings, on June 25, 1941, "the United States and Chiang Kai-shek are plotting a new Munich in the Far East against communism and the Soviet Union" (1954-56: 4.21). Song Qingling similarly warned, in October 1941, of "a Munich in the Far East" (1953: 148). This left the USSR, Mao's ideological external support, in rhetorical terms at least.

The Soviet Union had talked of standing up to Japan in the late 1930s. Tangible aid was provided to Chiang Kai-shek from 1937 to 1939: about 1,000 planes, 2,000 "volunteer" pilots, 500 military advisers, credits to buy large amounts of artillery, munitions, and petrol. This was more than any direct aid to Mao's Chinese Communist forces. Mao had written in May 1938 that "the existence of the Soviet Union has especially heartened China in her resistance . . . that China does not fight in isolation is demonstrated not only by world-wide aid in general, but by Soviet aid in particular" (1954-56: 2.177). Border fighting had taken place at the Battle of Lake Khasan near Vladivostok in July-August 1938. This had been renewed the following year when Soviet forces gave Japan a bloody nose during the Battle of Nomonhan that raged from May to August 1939 (Coox 1990). However, this Soviet-Japanese fighting had gone no further. Stalin had quickly made his peace with the Axis Powers. His Nonaggression Pact with Germany in August 1939 was matched by his Neutrality Pact with Japan in April 1941. This Neutrality Pact remained in operation for the next few years, even while the Soviet Union was embroiled in conflict with Germany following the German invasion in June 1940. Both the USSR and Japan wanted to avoid conflict with each other. Stalin was not ready or prepared to take on Japan for the sake of China, particularly when he was faced with potential war on two fronts. Geopolitics came into the equation. Mao had written in 1938 that "China and the Soviet Union are geographically close to each other and this aggravates Japan's crisis and facilitates China's war of Resistance" (1954-56: 2.177). Yet geopolitical imperatives, the war on two fronts against Germany in the West and Japan in the East, drew the USSR away from any direct intervention in China against Japan. The Soviet victory at Nomonhan enabled her to dissuade Japan from northern expansion into Soviet territory; it did not encourage Stalin to drive southward into China against Japan.

As the dust settled on Stalin's accommodation with Japan, China was just barely surviving. Mao was correct in one crucial assessment in 1938: "Once Japan has started her attack on China, if China's resistance has not yet dealt her a fatal blow, and if Japan still has sufficient strength, she will definitely attack South-east Asia or Siberia, or even both. She will play this hand as soon as war breaks out in Europe" (1954-56: 2.238). The Siberian option was tried in 1939. With that blocked, Japan's eyes turned southward to

Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Consequently, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 brought the United States and Britain into war with Japan. China had on paper gained a powerful ally, the United States, alongside whom it could fight, and from whom it could hope for substantial political and strategic gains. However, there still remained various general power-related stresses and strains between China and its American-British allies, as well as two specific issues on either side of the Pacific—ending the Chinese immigration exclusion laws in North America and Australasia, and ending Western extraterritoriality in China. This reflected “the underside of Sino-American relations” in “an alliance full of disappointment and antipathies” (Jespersen 1996: 108).

IMMIGRATION AND EXTRATERRITORIALITY, STRATEGIC REVISIONS

One major issue in the Sino-American relationship was the openly racial nature of the 1924 U.S. Chinese Exclusion Act. The Chinese government kept a relatively low public profile on the issue, though figures from the Chinese Ministry for Foreign Affairs argued that “it goes without saying that if such laws as the exclusion of Chinese were allowed to continue that would constitute a constant cause of friction between China and the United States,” and would “also reduce China's confidence in America's sense of justice as well as her hope of a better world after the war . . . what she [China] expects is the proper recognition that she earns and deserves” (Shen 1942: 49–50).

The heated congressional debates over changing the Chinese Exclusion Act provided valuable material for Japanese propagandists (Dower 1986: 167). The adjustment in December 1943 to allow up to 105 Chinese eligible for naturalization to immigrate to the United States each year was a minimal and revealing enough response. As Bruno Lasker noted, though designed to counter the “impression of unabated American prejudice against Orientals as such . . . the bill does not place China, in the matter of immigration, on an equal footing with other nations” (1943: 203). Meanwhile, other American commentators pondered a possible Chinese realignment against the West as a result of its alienation caused by the immigration issue in the United States. For some it was a question of a Chinese threat to block its huge markets to postwar American access, a negative peril as it were. For others it was a more overt threat of tipping the military-strategic future, so that “a rather arcane debate about immigration laws soon came to involve the old visions of the Yellow Peril, but now in a concrete setting that pointed to the way in which China might tip the scales one way or another in a global conflagration” (Dower 1986: 168).

In the House of Representatives, Carl Curtis of Nebraska considered, “Suppose the Chinese do capitulate and join Japan, then all Asia is apt to go

with her,” and “then you will have a race struggle in which we are hopelessly outnumbered that will last, not for one year or five years but throughout the generations to come” (US 1943a: 8597). Elsewhere in the House of Representatives, Walter Judd of Minnesota had recently returned from some ten years as a medical missionary in China. He envisaged China’s crucial role in the postwar world as one where “there cannot be a great war between the white and coloured races in the next ten years, or the next 100 years, or the next 300 years, if we keep ourselves—the white people—and the Chinese, the largest and strongest of the coloured peoples, on the same side” (US 1943a: 8633). However, this was a delicate situation, with Judd citing the Roman Catholic Bishop of China, Paul Yu-Pin, who had written in 1943 on the consequences of America not repealing its anti-Chinese exclusion laws. The bishop had argued then that “China will keep in the fight until Japan is defeated . . . but if your attitude of superiority continues” and if America “is fixed in her determination to look down upon the colored races, I can foresee only a prospect which makes me tremble at its horrors. In that case the next war would almost inevitably be a war between races” (Dower 1986: 169). Here, the Citizen’s Committee to Repeal Chinese Exclusion warned in its 1943 tract “Our Chinese Wall” that “without China’s good will, we shall incur the risk of another war in which white supremacy may be openly challenged by the Oriental races” (Thorne 1978: 180).

One distinctive voice raising cross-Pacific race issues was that of W. E. B. Du Bois. From his radical black activist perspective, Du Bois was concerned about how “the greatest and most dangerous race problem today is the problem of relations between Asia and Europe, the question as to how far [quoting Kipling] ‘East is East and West is West’ and of how far they are going to retain the relation of master and serf,” within which “in this present war and alliance there has occurred little to reassure China” (Du Bois 1944: 451). This was “because of the deep-seated belief among Europeans and Americans that yellow people are the biological inferiors to the whites and not fit for self-government” (451) and Western “racial contempt poured upon the yellow peoples” (452). As such, “the ‘Yellow Peril’ as envisaged by the German Emperor William II has by no means passed from the subconscious reactions of Western Europe . . . and ‘our [American] way of life’” (453).

One episode in China’s relations with the West ended as Britain and the United States finally renounced extraterritoriality in 1943 (H. Chiu 1985; Ku 1992–93: 1994). Although virtually agreed upon in principle during the 1930s, any effective action had been shelved in the face of Japanese expansionism and general inertia, from both Chiang Kai-shek and the West. Nevertheless, it remained an issue. Wysten Auden and Christopher Isherwood’s report from Sian, on April 8, 1938, had Chinese sources taking it for granted that “extraterritorial rights would have to be abolished, of course” (1973: 135). John Bent’s treatment was unsympathetic, dismissing “Tang Liang Li’s

well known obsession with sovereign rights, and the unequal treaties—an obsession unfortunately shared by a considerable class of ‘returned students’ and Kuomintang politicians” (Bent 1938: 139). Nevertheless, as the editor of the *Japan Times*, and a mouthpiece for the Japanese Foreign Office, pinpointed in December 1939, concerning the system of Concession Settlements and extraterritoriality, “there is doubtless considerable anger against the entire system of imperialistic enterprises as practiced in China, with its implied stigma of racial inferiority and backwardness” (Go 1939: 394). The demands of Chinese participation in World War II and Allied rhetoric on freedom and equality presented a “glaring incongruity” where “the question of extraterritoriality continued to haunt the Foreign Office” (L. Chan 1977: 271) during 1942.

Chiang Kai-shek had of course welcomed the West’s renunciation of Unequal Treaties extraterritorial rights at the start of 1943. He told his Political Council, on October 31, 1942, “One of the deepest causes for gratification we and our fellow-country men find in recent events is, of course, the [forthcoming] abolition of the unequal treaties,” seeing this as “deliverance from the shackles that have bound it for a hundred years . . . a period of repeated national humiliations . . . the vindication of our national honour” (Chiang and Chiang 1943: 43). His message for the army and people of China on January 11, 1943, was “we have transformed an inglorious anniversary [100 years after the Treaty of Nanjing] into an occasion of national rejoicing” (54). Mao Zedong’s perspective was different. His two-fold response came on April 24, 1945. On the one hand, “the Chinese people welcome the fact that many foreign governments have renounced the unequal treaties and concluded new, equal treaties with China” (Mao 1954–56: 4.303). On the other hand, Mao argued that “the conclusion of equal treaties does not mean that China has actually won genuine equality. The Chinese people can never depend solely on the favour of foreign governments for such actual and genuine equality,” but “should win it chiefly through their own efforts . . . otherwise there would be only sham independence and equality” (4.303). This was a call for revolution and political transformation within China.

Wen Zao, the Chinese Vice-Consul at Melbourne, had stressed democratic credentials in his book *Two Pacific Democracies China and Australia* (1941), yet Australian sensitivities to Chinese immigration remained noticeable during World War II, and became entangled in the other highly charged issues of extraterritoriality and operation of the Unequal Treaties. When Australia came to set up its own Legation in China, Lord Caldecote, the UK Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, already advised them on July 21, 1940, that “it is probable that any Chinese Government which emerges from Japanese hostilities will be uncompromising on recovery of China’s sovereign rights and abolition of extraterritoriality” (DAFP 1980: 44). The Australian War Council meeting in August 1941 recorded “the resentment by China of

the possession of extraterritorial rights by foreign Powers and the pressure which had been brought to bear to secure the surrender of them" (DAFP 1982: 59). Although the Prime Minister Robert Menzies judged that "China was likely to press this point . . . it could be said that when the war was over and peace restored that it was not likely we could resist a request on these lines," given that the official Australian position was "a desire to see China play its strategic role in Asia and the Pacific as a great nation" (60). However, while the Australian government could accept the abrogation of its own extraterritorial rights in China, it also felt concerned about a potential Chinese resurgence and renewed pressure against its own immigration barriers. Consequently, British and American moves during 1942 to renounce extraterritoriality generated concerned Australian discussions.

On October 24, 1942, Canberra told Britain's Deputy Prime Minister Clement Attlee that Australia "does not propose that this draft treaty should extend beyond extraterritoriality . . . as the Government in the United Kingdom is aware maintenance of the existing immigration system in Australia is regarded by the public as essential for economic and social reasons" (DAFP 1983: 138). Consequently, Frederick Eggleston, the Australian Minister to China, advised Herbert Evatt, the Minister for External Affairs, on November 25, 1942, that "I have been guided in my advice by the desire to avoid a public controversy either here in Australia or elsewhere on the question of immigration restriction" (170). In part this was, as he admitted, the fact that "we have, in Australia, a certain number of discriminations against the Chinese" (170), which could be threatened by any general acceptance of "equality of treatment" clauses. Consequently, "if it comes to the point we should be prepared to take the stand on the principle that immigration is a subject of domestic jurisdiction . . . I would refuse point blank to discuss the relaxation of our restriction policy during the war" and "say that if the Chinese want they can take it up after the war . . . meanwhile, it would be better to talk of our 'immigration policy' and not a 'White Australia' policy" (170).

British and American renunciation of extraterritoriality on January 11, 1943, brought increased pressure on Australian diplomats and politicians to change their restrictive "white Australia" immigration policies. Eggleston felt, "there is no doubt in my mind that the Chinese intend to raise the equality of treatment" (DAFP 1983: 233). The following month, February 1943, Eggleston was in discussions with the Chinese government, where "he pressed that Australia should associate herself with promises for the future by the signing of additional articles" (262). The crux of the issue was simple for Eggleston on March 3, 1943, "we have one vital issue—the issue of immigration—on which we must be firm . . . this may cause a good deal of ill-feeling which we must face and handle when it arises" (284).

Looking across the Pacific, William Hodgson the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, cabled the Canadian authorities, on November 27,

1943, to register Australian “concern” that Canada’s treaty ending extraterritoriality included “vague general propositions which may be used as a basis for China’s calling into question so fundamental a national policy as that of ‘white Australia’” (604). As the war moved against Japan and postwar scenarios emerged, Eggleston judged, on February 8, 1944, that Chinese desires to end extraterritoriality had wider aims: “They have betrayed an intention to go distinctly beyond it and secure reciprocal rights of migration” (DAFP 1988: 111) to Australia. Consequently, on January 6, 1945, Evatt presented the Australian Cabinet with a draft Treaty with China, abrogating extraterritorial rights, but where “reciprocity of rights” under its Article V had been “carefully drafted in the present text to make it clear that no change in the present policy concerning immigration into Australia from China is granted, or contemplated” (DAFP 1989: 4).

As can be seen, discussion of extraterritoriality and immigration had been affected by the diplomatic and political issue of China’s general wartime standing as one of the Allied nations. Jespersen described it as “crusading together, the glorious war years” (1996: 59–81), although in reality it was a much more ambiguous period.

PERCEPTIONS OF CHINA’S STATUS AS A GREAT POWER AND MILITARY ALLY

China’s immediate response on news of Japan’s bombing of Pearl Harbor was for Sun Fo, president of the parliament the *Yuan*, to assert that the forthcoming postwar world would be primarily “a world of America, Britain, China and Russia” (Thorne 1985: 8). Subsequent commentators have recognized the importance of this moment. For Kirby, this partnership “brought the Republic [of China] into the very centre of global power politics” (1997: 444). Iriye considered that “China found herself once again a part of the globalized Anglo-American alliance to prevent the axis domination of the world” (1986: 527), in which “China’s position now seemed far more secure, its destiny bound up with that of America and Britain . . . whilst itself becoming one of the key powers in the world” (1986: 528).

However, China’s own wartime record did little to change dismissals of China. Some military observers had already been disenchanted by China’s military weaknesses, reporting from Chongqing in 1941 that China might have made peace with Japan, a scenario that would “give the Japs free access to the resources of China and the manpower of China, thus fully developing the long predicted ‘Yellow Peril’” (Fenby 2003: 369). General Joseph Stilwell, sent to China to head the Chinese war operations (Van de Den 2003b), felt constrained in 1944 in describing Chinese war efforts: “It would of course have been undiplomatic to go into the nature of the military effort Chiang Kai-shek had made since 1938. It was practically zero” (Stilwell 1972: 316). In part, that

was because of the decrepit nature of the Guomindang regime, but in part it was due to strategic culture, Daoism molding “the fundamentally defensive attitude of the Chinese . . . fixed and set by long years of custom . . . a new spirit had to be built up” (318–19). In connection with such traits, Van De Den discerns “the influence of Orientalist views on Stilwell” (2003a: 10), whereby defensive strategies “stood for emasculation, backwardness, degeneration, passivity, traditionalism, lack of discipline and deceit” (10).

Even though racked by ongoing civil war, corruption, and military inefficiency, China was nevertheless an “ally” for the West. In the American media Luce was ready to extol China’s military value and political credibility during World War II (MacKinnon and Friesen 1990: 7–22), if need be over the heads of more sceptical reporters on the spot. Indeed, from a slightly different angle, Pearl S. Buck was already talking in 1941 of *The Secret of China’s Victory*, where “China is, I believe, the strongest nation in the world today, solely because the spirit of her people is so strong. They have . . . endured as a nation for thousands of years” and “they are alive today after four years of modern warfare” (1970: 145). Despite Japanese pressures, “the Chinese have found a way to live that keeps them alive and perpetually maintaining themselves against a modern nation. It is a spectacle, a wonder, a miracle” (145). In one sense Buck could be seen as an interwar sentimental “American Exotic” (Spence 1999: 165–85) painting a picture of the “China Mystique” (Leong 2005: 12–56). In another sense Buck reflected the actual situation of China’s long struggle against Japan, where “the Chinese are bearing the whole brunt of the world war and bearing it alone . . . with far less territory than England has at her command, with far less equipment for war, with less of everything except splendid morale, China fights on alone” (1970: 145). Within the swirl of different war zones, she thought China’s role should not be underestimated since “it is danger to us if China becomes the powerhouse for Japan,” given “the value of that part of Asia that is China, strong in its people, fertile in its soil, rich in its resources” (144). Geoculturally, “China, the nation that has never fought an aggressive war, is living today, and China has something to teach us all about peace as the foundation for long life” (146).

Some public acknowledgment was given to China’s present and future role in the wake of American entry into World War II, following Pearl Harbor. The Moscow Declaration of October 1943 included, following American insistence, China as one of its four signatories. To some extent there was a “United States sponsorship of China as a great power” (Thorne 1978: 425). During World War II Roosevelt talked of China as one of the “the Four [Global] Policemen” at the Teheran Conference in November 1943; alongside the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. Following that, Chiang Kai-shek and his wife were invited to the Cairo Grand Summit in December 1943, along with Churchill and Roosevelt. Chiang’s appearance at

Cairo, along with his wife, was rather “stage managed” (Van de Ven 2003a: 43), a “symbolic” presence, which “gave the impression that the leaders of China had joined the ranks of the first circle” (Jespersen 1996: 14–15), but was “a formal status devoid of the substance of power” (Tsou 1963: 59). In retrospect, the Cairo Conference provided “the high point of Anglo-American-Chinese collaboration” to be “followed by disappointment and disillusionment” (Iriye 1986: 534), a “turning point” (Sainsbury 1985) for the worse for Chiang, as other military priorities increasingly took precedence over the China Theater. Geopolitically China became more marginal for Allied strategy, while politically Chiang became marginalized within Allied policy making. Chiang was invited to no further Allied Grand Summits.

Disagreements over China’s power and the status to be accorded to it were noticeable between Britain and America, where “one of the most salient disputes between Britain and the United States throughout World War II was over the issue of a ‘strong China’” (Xiang 1995: 3) with regard to immediate wartime military strategy and postwar political planning. Churchill was sceptical about China’s real wartime capacity, where he “never disguised his scorn at the idea of China as a world power” (Iriye 1986: 532). His officially minuted note, of October 21, 1942, to Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden on America’s Four Power Plan was that “as to China I cannot regard the Chungking [Chongqing] Government as representing a great world-Power” (Churchill 1948–54: 4.119). Similarly, Churchill told Alexander Cadogan on March 22, 1943, that “China is not a world power equal to Britain, the United States, or Russia, and I am reluctant to subscribe to such statements” (4.504). British reluctance to accept the idea of a “strong China” was noticed by the U.S. administration. Franklin Roosevelt and Cordell Hull told British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, on March 22, 1943, that they “thought Churchill had made a serious mistake in his speech yesterday by not mentioning China amongst the great powers” (FRUS 1963: 35). In China, the British ambassador, Horace Seymour, noted on January 12, 1945, how “political gossip is again rife in Chungking [Chongqing]. A topic much discussed is the alleged unwillingness of HMG [Britain] to see the emergence of a strong and prosperous China” (Xiang 1995: 10).

In turn, Churchill was struck by the American focus on China. He told General Archibald Wavell, on January 23, 1942, “I must enlighten you upon the American view. China bulks as large in the minds of many of them as Great Britain . . . if I can epitomise in one word the lesson I learned in the United States, it was ‘China’” (Churchill 1948–54: 4.120). Churchill recorded how “I found the extraordinary significance of China in American minds, even at the top, strangely out of proportion. I was conscious of a standard of values [in the United States], which accorded China almost an equal fighting power with the British Empire,” and which “rated the Chinese armies a factor to be mentioned in the same breath as the armies of Russia”

(4.133). On Churchill's part, "I told the President how much I felt American opinion over-estimated the contribution which China could make to the war" (4.133). Interestingly enough, some of the older Yellow Peril themes could be seen in Churchill's account of discussions with Roosevelt, who warned Churchill "there were five hundred million people in China. What would happen if this enormous population developed in the same way as Japan had done in the last century and got hold of modern weapons?" (Churchill 1948–54: 4.119). Churchill's response was that this was too futuristic: "I [Churchill] replied that I was speaking of the present . . . but that he [Roosevelt] must not expect me to adopt what I felt was a wholly unreal standard of values" (4.119) regarding China's potential for power.

Indeed, Churchill did not mince words concerning China's power, or rather lack of it. He told Eden, on August 23, 1944, "that China is one of the world's four Great Powers is an absolute farce. I have told the President I would be reasonably polite about this American obsession, but I cannot agree that we should take a positive attitude on the matter" (Churchill 1948–54: 6.605). In a nod to the future, Churchill could add that "the latest information from inside China points already to the rise of a rival Government to supplant Chiang Kaishek, and now there is always a Communist civil war impending there" (6.605). China was further notionally recognized as one of the postwar Great Powers, allocated one of the five Permanent Member seats on the Security Council being set up for the emerging United Nations. Churchill's Foreign Secretary Eden considered "it was absurd . . . to have China as a permanent [Great Power] member of the Security Council" (Churchill 1948–54: 119). As the war came to an end in 1945, Churchill was still holding that the idea of a strong China was "a great American illusion" (4.119). These sentiments were partly based on Churchill's cool analysis of Chinese power, but also emotive images. As his doctor Moran noted at the Cairo Summit in 1943, "to President [Roosevelt] China means four hundred million people who are going to count in the world of tomorrow. But Winston thinks only of the colour of their skins; it is when he talks of . . . China that you remember he is a Victorian" (Moran 1966: 131). Moran thought Churchill seemed stuck in a time warp: "He has scarcely moved an inch from his attitudes towards China since the days of the Boxer revolt," and was ready emotionally but also politically to dismiss the Chinese as those "little yellow men" (559).

For some observers, this official American recognition of China's Great Power status was superficial. Pearl Buck recognized in her 1943 essay "Where the Chinese People Stand" that "American friendship for China has now reached a popular height which brings it to the verge of sentimentality" (1970: 204). However, she saw this as only something "to compensate somewhat for the practical inadequacies of our behavior toward the Chinese," as shown in "the failure to insist that China be treated as an ally equal to England and Russia . . . the fact that China is being relegated to a third-rate place both in war

and in peace” (204–05). Elsewhere she felt that “it is not too late to insist on China’s equal partnership with ourselves and Britain and Russia. But unless we take a stand soon it will be too late,” for “as things are going now, China will not have a real voice at the peace table . . . if China is not heard at the peace table, Asia will burst into flames someday, too soon” (230–31).

Amid hopes of attaining Great Power status, China’s prestige was particularly damaged during 1944 as Japan’s Ichigo Offensive rolled through Guomindang areas in southern China, chewing up about 500,000 crack Guomindang soldiers and a quarter of its factories. A Foreign Office comment, on July 7, 1945, was that “the effect of the virtually unopposed Japanese advance was to make Chinese of all classes both despondent and humiliated,” since “they alone of all the Allied nations were still meeting defeat. Significantly, the press abroad now only referred to the Big Three, not the Big Four as hitherto” (DBPO 2002: 3; see also Shai 1984: 22–25). In retrospect, “Japan’s Ichigo offensive inflicted a devastating defeat upon the Nationalists. It revealed to all Chinese and to the world how terribly the Nationalist army and government had deteriorated during the preceding seven years of war” (Eastman 1986b: 580–81). Admittedly, Garver saw “quite impressive . . . wartime diplomatic accomplishments” (1992: 27) by China, where “China’s payoff” was “diplomatic support for China’s emergence as a great power” (24). However, such success proved a “bitter victory” (Hsiung and Levine 1992). It was an overstretch that internally ceded much ground to the Communists; a “tragic paradox of Chiang Kaishek was that . . . he failed [in the subsequent internal war] by winning [in the external preceding war]” (Garver 1992: 28).

At the time, Guomindang figures were more than ready to look forward to improved prospects for China as a result of its role in World War II. Sun Fo, in a speech to the Staff College on July 9, 1942, and published in his *China Looks Forward*, reckoned, “after five years hard fighting, our international status is much improved. We are no longer the object of ridicule and contumely from all and sundry. It can be foreseen that after our victory over Japan, China will command even greater respect in the world” (1944: 149). In Sun Fo’s mind, China’s sense of humiliations from the previous decades was set to change: “from now onwards we should no longer think of ourselves as a weak, inferior nation . . . Our countrymen should therefore no longer harbour an inferiority complex, or abase themselves” (151, 153). China’s position was also set to change: “When we have won the war, our greatness will again be restored” (153). In Sun Fo’s view, but also in his aspirations, “we shall not only regain our status of fifty years ago—that of the senior State in Asia—but we shall regain the leading and stabilising role in the Orient that was ours for more than two thousand years” (152–53) as the Middle Kingdom. “Fifty years ago” would take China to its pre-1894 defeat by Japan; “two thousand years” ago would take it back to the heights of Middle Kingdom preeminence.

Some indicators of a growing Chinese presence were apparent in Chiang Kai-shek's 1943 tract *China's Destiny*. In this wartime publication, Chiang stressed that "because of the important part that China's war of resistance has played in the whole international situation, the Powers' estimate of us has been steadily raised with the progress of our war" (1947a: 136). He felt that "Great Britain, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, had come to realize the great power of the Chinese nation," which had "held in check one of the most formidable of the world's robber nations" (136–37). China's people remained its basic asset, with the "increase of its population, the Chunghua [Chinese] nation has grown in size and strength, and at the same time has expanded its territory" (3). His analysis looked to the past, both for inspiration from China's historical glories and warnings about outside threats. China's decline had been keenly felt: "The encroachment of the foreign powers led to the conclusion of the unequal treaties which imposed on China an endless series of national humiliations . . . the people of the whole country must regard it as a national humiliation" (23). As such, "they should not cease from struggle, to remove the disgrace and to save the country, until China's territorial integrity has been completely restored" (8). His view of earlier diplomacy was "if we are hesitant, servile, and indolent, as we were at the close of the First World War, then our lost rights may not be recovered" (1947b: 201; also 1947a: 197).

Chiang's sights went further than just regaining sovereignty within China. Over and above that, "he constantly and persistently demanded a larger role for China in the shaping of global strategy looking to the future" (Tsou 1963: 105). His Political Council was told, on October 31, 1942, "the Washington Conference made China one of the four main powers . . . yet the degree to which our national reconstruction and strength are inadequate in comparison with other powers must fill us with a sense of unworthiness," so "we must go about discharging our responsibilities towards the world by building up our strength" (Chiang and Chiang 1943: 44). Postwar Great Power status was a must for Chiang, to "march forward on a basis of equality with our Allies, sharing with them the responsibility of rebuilding the world, securing the peace and liberating mankind . . . fulfilling the new destiny of the Chinese nation" (Chiang 1947b: 106–07). Unease outside China was in part acknowledged but dismissed by Chiang, since "[China] has not been actuated by any desire for 'the leadership of Asia,' as some sceptical critics have imagined" (Chiang 1947a: 231). Instead, Chiang argued that China's own experience of imperialism meant that "an independent and strong China will in no case seek to inflict upon other nations the pains and sufferings which she herself has experienced," and "much less does China want, after Japan has been defeated, to inherit the mantle of Japanese imperialism or to become the 'leader of Asia'" (231).

General Chinese criticisms of Western imperialism were felt and seen as something of a specific threat to the British presence in India. This came to

the surface during Chiang's trip to India in February 1942. Churchill's worries about a "pan-Asian malaise spreading through all the bazaars in India" (Thorne 1978: 8) and reluctance to allow Chiang to visit Gandhi were exacerbated further by Chiang's public support for Indian independence, and Chiang's attempts to get Roosevelt to put pressure on Britain. It is true that Chiang subsequently muted this particular stance, as he became more immersed with the Chinese situation vis-à-vis Japan and his Communist rivals. Nevertheless, subsequent discussion groups under the auspices of Sir Olaf Caroe, of the Government of India External Affairs Department, saw threatening expansionist tendencies at play in China, as cited in their paper "Modern China's Asiatic Empire" (Thorne 1978: 8).

Although Chiang publicly rejected the idea of Chinese expansionism—past, present or future—in reality Chinese aims during the war were for greater projection of its own power. If Japanese imperialism and Western colonial spheres were to be broken, then China would naturally reemerge as a potentially hegemonic Middle Kingdom for the region. Chinese attempts to carve out an effective sphere over Siam was one sign of this, as was the zone of occupation established for northern Indo-China, political maneuverings with Korean and Indian political figures, and the 1944 Foreign Ministry proposal for China to head a postwar regional organization that would "have the authority to decide long-term policies of the United Nations toward Japan, Korea and Siam" (B. Reynolds 2001: 179; also Liu 1996, 1999).

WESTERN COMMENTS ON CHINA'S POSTWAR ROLE

The question of China's postwar role arose in the midst of World War II. Such was this notional boosting of China's role that the U.S. State Department conducted reviews of postwar scenarios for China amid its immediate war planning. At one meeting in March 1943 at the State Department, some participants were blunt in their worries. Senator Elbert Thomas's fears were classic Yellow Peril thinking: "Genghis Khan got into Europe, and we can loose in Asia a force so great that the world will be deluged and there will be no way to prevent it" (Thorne 1978: 291). Representative Charles Eaton expressed the fear that "eventually the United States might be pushed off the map too" amid a "racial war between the yellow men and the white men of the future" (Iriye 1981: 142). May 1943 saw the Security Technical Committee return to the issue of postwar scenarios where Amry Vandenbosch argued that "containment" (Iriye 1981: 145) of China might become a key postwar issue due to the presence of millions of diaspora Chinese throughout Southeast Asia.

Similar postwar speculations came in George Keeton's *China, the Far East and the Future*, where "when the war is over a radical readjustment in the relation of the white races to the peoples of the Far East will be required if

further difficulties are to be avoided,” in which “China will occupy a pivotal position after the war in the relations of these states with the Western world” (1943: 232). In looking forward to Japan’s eventual demise, Keeton foresaw a greater Chinese international presence, where “China can and will mobilise an army well exceeding ten millions. If necessary, double that number could be raised . . . of this army, a number will be veterans of five to ten years’ standing” (269). Consequently, “for the first time in modern history China will be a considerable military Power . . . she will be the leading Power in the Far East,” and “that is going to necessitate profoundly different habits of thought about China, her future and her place in a world system” (269).

Official American policy was generally more positive in envisaging China’s postwar role than was Churchill’s. Roosevelt, for a mixture of military, political, and idealistic reasons, continued to publicly call China one of the Big Four, not only for its role in the ongoing war but also for projected postwar frameworks. The State Department’s Security Sub-Committee paper “Protocol of a Proposed Four-Power Security Agreement” (August 1943) on postwar scenarios suggested “that their united action . . . will be continued for the organization and maintenance of peace and security . . . and the inauguration of a general system of security” (Iriye 1981: 135). The protocol was subsequently accepted at the Anglo-American Quebec Conference in August 1943.

Roosevelt’s thinking here was a combination of IR idealism and realpolitik. He argued to Anthony Eden, on March 27, 1943, that “the real decisions should be made by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China, who would be the powers for many years to come that would have to police the world” (FRUS 1963: 39). The Americans were insistent on this Chinese presence, arguing that “China, in any serious conflict of policy with Russia, would undoubtedly line up on our side” (39). In conversation with Eggleston, in November 1944, Roosevelt told the newly appointed Australian ambassador in the United States that “Winston [Churchill] was forty years behind the times on China and had not sufficient respect for the Chinese,” whereas “the President said he wanted to keep China as a friend because in forty or fifty years China might easily become a very powerful military nation” (DAFP 1988: 660–61). Forty or fifty years later would bring the China threat concerns to the forefront in the 1990s!

As U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull put it, “Toward China we had two objectives. The first was an effective joint prosecution of the war” (1948: 2.1583). In the longer-term, “the second was the recognition and building up of China as a major power entitled to equal rank with the three big Western Allies, Russia, Britain, and the United States, during” but also “after the war, both for the preparation of a postwar organization and for the establishment of stability and prosperity in the Orient” (2.1583). In a postwar balance of power, “I never faltered in my belief that we should do everything in our

power to assist China to become strong and stable,” for with the collapse of Japan, “the only major strictly Oriental power would be China . . . consequently, if there was ever to be stability in the Far East, it had to be assured with China at the centre of any arrangement that was made” (2.1587). Stilwell, amid his attempts to revitalize the Chinese army, felt that after the war “China could take the lead in the organization of an Asiatic League of China, Indo-China, Siam, Burma, and India,” in which “the Pacific Ocean would be controlled jointly by the United States and China, with no conflicts of interest in the Dutch East Indies, Australia or the Philippine Islands” (Tsou 1963: 75). Roosevelt’s discussions with Britain in March 1943 argued that globally China should be “one of the four controlling powers after the war” (FRUS 1963: 37), and that regionally China should be one of the international trustees, alongside the United States, over Korea, and “help police Japan” (35). As such, Chinese troops were even envisaged occupying the major island of Shikoku, part of Honshu, and part of an internationalized Tokyo (X. Liu 1996).

American officials on the ground in China were already reflecting on Communist claims in the postwar period. Such American comments on Chiang Kai-shek’s government were often scathing. On January 19, 1943, Stilwell famously blasted Guomindang China as “the Chinese cesspool. A gang of thugs with the one idea of perpetuating themselves and their machine cowardice rampant . . . colossal ignorance . . . this rotten regime” (1972: 190). John Service’s lengthy analysis, on June 20, 1944, profiled a “bankrupt” and “authoritarian” regime following “suicidal policies” with a leader showing “growing megalomania and his unfortunate attempts to be ‘sage’ as well as leader—shown, for instance, by ‘China’s Destiny’” (China White Paper 1967: 567–68). In reality, such a government was heading for collapse: “The government structure is being permeated and demoralised from top to bottom by corruption, unprecedented in scale and openness,” fostered by “a decadent regime which by its existing composition and program is incapable of solving China’s problems” (568–69). John Davies was similarly scathing, on November 7, 1944, about Chiang’s “dispirited shambling legions, his decadent corrupt bureaucracy, his sterile political moralisms” (China White Paper 1967: 573). The worry for them was that the United States would tie itself to support of Chiang Kai-shek, a choice to be remade in Cold War Asia. Service warned, on October 10, 1944, that “in present circumstances, the Kuomintang is dependent on American support for survival . . . encouraged by our support the Kuomintang will continue in its present course, progressively losing the confidence of the people and becoming more impotent” (China White Paper 1967: 574).

Conversely, many of their comments on the Communist alternative were sympathetic. For Davies, on November 7, 1944, “Chiang’s feudal China can not long co-exist alongside a modern dynamic [Communist] government in

North China. The Communists are in China to stay. And China's destiny is not Chiang's but theirs" (China White Paper 1967: 573). Davies acknowledged on January 4, 1945, the Communist's "positive and widespread genuine support. They have this support because the [Communist] governments and armies are genuinely of the people" (China White Paper 1967: 567). As to future international relations, crosscurrents within the Communist movement were discerned. Service considered, on April 7, 1944, that "Chiang may be contributing to Russian dominance in eastern Asia by internal and external policies which, if pursued in their present form will render China too weak to serve as a possible counter-weight to Russia," in which "the Chinese communists have a background of subservience to the U.S.S.R, but new influences—principally nationalism—have come into play which are modifying their outlook" (China White Paper 1967: 565).

Speculation about China's greater postwar role could become expectations and assumptions for some. At the Institute of Pacific Relations, Thomas Bisson's study *America's Far Eastern Policy* at the end of 1944 predicted that alongside the postwar collapse of Japan, "a second [postwar] great change will be the rise of China to a position of leadership in eastern Asia . . . with the restoration of its territories and achievements of juridical equality" (1945: ix), from which "China will emerge from the war as the largest and most important sovereign nation in the Far East . . . The effects of this new situation on American Far Eastern policy will be profound" (6). China's changed position would operate at various levels; in other words, "in the international arena, China will have won the fully sovereign and equal position which it has painfully struggled during the twentieth century" (156), but also "will permanently alter the power relations of the Far East" (159). Moreover, at the global level, "as a leading member of the United Nations, it [China] will be participating in all the major decisions affecting the [global] peace. It will at once take its place as chief representative of the Asiatic peoples in the new world organization" (156).

Robert Payne's *China Awakes* pointed to similar internal and external crosscurrents in Chinese politics. One entry, on January 9, 1945, evoked the assertion from the start of the century by the Qing reformer Zuo Zongtang to Robert Hart that "you are all too anxious to awake us and start us on a new road, and you will do it; but you will regret it, for once awakened and started, we shall move faster and farther than you think; much faster than you want" (Payne 1947a: 29). Amid the trials and tribulations of conflict, on April 13, 1945, Payne asserted that "China is on the verge of self-discovery. It is true that she is awake at last, but at what cost have these blood-trimmed eyes been opened! Better almost would have been to sleep this western nightmare away" (87). Classic Yellow Peril undertones were apparent.

Similar macroshifts were discussed by Lawrence Rossinger. His conclusion to his book *China's Crisis* was that "the rise of China to a position of

international prestige is one instance of the great shifts of power that have been accelerated by the Second World War" (1945: 219). However, he felt "there is, in short, a striking discrepancy between China's real strength and its rank in world affairs" (219). On the one hand, "China's inclusion among the Big Four is based on its long resistance and ability to survive despite all the blows directed against it" (219). Yet on the other hand, "it is obvious that China's actual military power is far inferior to that of the United States, the U.S.S.R and Britain, and in the immediate post-war period will be below that of France and a number of other [Western] countries" (219). The answer to remove this discrepancy lay in the "strong American diplomatic support [which] has made good the difference" (219). Meanwhile, a China overly weighed and represented in international organizations might be a danger in terms of other weak countries demanding equally high status, of China being unable to carry out the heavier burden of "responsibilities" notionally due from a great power, and of such organizations like the United Nations thereby becoming discredited and marginalized.

Such longer-term speculations went side by side with immediate political decisions being made by the outside powers *vis-à-vis* China. At Yalta, in February 1945, the postwar map of Europe and Asia was decided upon by the Big Three. Chiang was, pointedly and humiliatingly, not invited, to a conference that "as the Chinese correctly judged then and since, put an end to the concept of China's full partnership in world affairs" (Iriye 1986: 538). Instead, secret agreements were made by Roosevelt and Churchill to get Stalin's military intervention against Japan. This included returning to the Soviet Union its previous privileges and holdings at Port Arthur, Dairen, and the Manchurian railways, "major blows to China's post-war aspirations" (Spence 1990: 482). Rapid military deployment into and across Manchuria, and the seizure of these assets, took place following the Soviet declaration of war against Japan on August 8, 1945. The Chinese Communist Party was ambivalent about the Soviet actions. The Soviet Union looked more concerned about its own strategic and territorial interests than with proletarian solidarity with Chinese comrades. Thus the Agreement of Alliance and Friendship (August 26, 1945), drawn up between the USSR and the Guomindang, seemed to accord the Guomindang legitimacy as well as confirming for the Soviet Union its Yalta gains in China.

Soviet support for the Chinese Communist Party in Manchuria was hesitant and limited. On the one hand, there was some transfer of equipment. On the other hand, preparing to evacuate Manchuria, the Soviet Union could also instruct the CCP to vacate Manchurian cities in November 1945 and let Guomindang forces take possession. This prompted an outraged retort from Peng Zhen, head of the CCP Northeastern Bureau: "The army of one Communist Party using tanks to drive out the army of another Communist Party . . . can this kind of action be acceptable?" (Westad 1998: 7). Two

lessons were apparent in this for the CCP leadership—namely, that the CCP's position of weakness vis-à-vis the Soviet Union meant that “the party had to work even harder to align its policies with those of the Soviet Union,” to prove itself as a worthy ally, while still recognizing that “the party could not, under any circumstances, depend on Soviet support to attain its ultimate goal of political control of China (Westad 1998: 7). Power and perception—indeed, perceptions of power—were at play.

China's Guomintang regime also enjoyed ambivalent fortunes with its Western wartime allies, Britain and the United States. The Foreign Office memorandum on “Present China Situation and on British and American Policies in China” (July 7, 1945), as initialed by Foreign Secretary Bevin, was wideranging in its ruminations. Images and perceptions were acknowledged: “There is a latent xenophobia in the background and there are still doubts about our true feelings about Chinese unity and strength” (DBPO 2002: 15). China was still seen in relatively passive terms as dependent on outsiders, but there had been shifts within China's relations with the Western powers. Thus, “comparing China's foreign policy . . . with her attitude of ten years earlier, nothing is more striking than her dependence on America and acceptance of American leadership . . . in the cultural, diplomatic, economic, financial and military field,” so that “in the diplomatic sphere, where ten years ago we naturally took the lead, we now wait anxiously to see what the American Government may do” (9) in China. Lord Killearn's Foreign Office memorandum the following year made a similar point that “it doesn't take long in China to learn the dominant role there which America is playing. Nothing is new in that—save that during and since the war the Yanks have replaced us as the first Power in the land” (DBPO 2002: 47).

On the one hand, the United States played some direct role in China during August-September 1945, moving into certain key strongholds of the Japanese—notably, Shanghai, Canton, and Beijing—as well as airlifting more than 110,000 of Chiang's best American-trained troops into Manchuria from the Burmese border, literally over the heads of local CCP forces in the countryside. As it was, those crack troops, Chiang's best divisions, “entered the North-east never to re-emerge . . . a blunder that would come to haunt the generalissimo” (Pepper 1986: 728). On the other hand, American forces were not to be deployed anywhere else in the interior, with the American administration still trying to broker some sort of domestic accord between the CCP and Guomintang. China's fortunes still seemed to be affected, yet ultimately now not shaped, by outside forces. In short, neither the Soviet Union nor the United States was committed to sustained support for either side within China. China was neither quite important enough, nor close enough, for either emerging superpower to decisively and fully commit itself. Given the ongoing civil war and the reluctance of outside powers to decisively intervene in China, the result was a growing postwar paralysis in China, “what

these developments meant was that China, which was to have played a leading role in Asian and even world affairs after 1945, entered a period of eclipse” (Iriye 1986: 545).

RACE, POPULATION, AND IMMIGRATION RESURFACE ACROSS THE PACIFIC

For the British Foreign Office, there was a paradoxical uncertainty shown on July 7, 1945, concerning whether a strong or a weak China was wanted. On the one hand, “while we have an obvious interest, from the point of view of commerce alone in the recovery by China of economic and political stability, experience has taught us that we have a political and strategic interest also,” for “a weak and unstable country anywhere is a standing temptation to aggressors and a potential menace to world peace. This is particularly true in the case of a huge agglomeration like China where all the major Powers have interests” (DBPO 2002: 14). Yet, “an unfriendly China can be a source of much trouble in our Far Eastern territories, like Malaya and Burma, where large Chinese populations reside” (14). Similar nuances were reflected in the postwar analysis of British Malaya. Wilfred Blythe, Secretary for Chinese Affairs in the Malay Civil Service, noted in March 1948 how “the Chinese, like other races, are firmly convinced of their racial superiority . . . European prestige has suffered considerably . . . partly though the emergence of China to the semblance of a World Power” (BDEE 1995: 3). The “stage had been reached at the time of our re-occupation of Malaya, when Chinese Leftist leaders walked into Government offices and greeted British administrators with ‘You First Class Power—me too’” (3).

Roosevelt warned, in January 1945, about the racial nuances that could attach themselves to American-Chinese diplomatic relations and “the importance of turning the Chinese away from anti-white race attitudes which could easily develop” (Thorne 1978: 539) in a postwar setting. Postwar racial stresses were already evident in the preparations for the San Francisco Conference set to meet on April 9, 1945. The Chinese delegation called for world organizations to maintain racial equality. In echoes of the kind of diplomacy evident in the Treaty of Versailles, the Australian and New Zealand governments coordinated their positions in their paper “Racial Equality and Chinese Immigration.” In the event, although racial equality as a general principle was reaffirmed, the conference’s “domestic jurisdiction clause” enabled Australia and New Zealand to retain their anti-Chinese “white” immigration policies.

The logic of Australia’s policy hearkened back to the earlier Yellow Peril fears of earlier decades, as clearly indicated by Arthur Calwell, Immigration Minister from 1945 to 1949 and later leader of the Australian Labor Party from 1960 to 1967. Sensitivities over Asiatic immigration remained high in Australia (Gilmour and Warner 1948). Calwell’s logic in maintaining barri-

ers against Chinese immigration was “we do not want a repetition of the race riots that occurred with the Chinese on the goldfields” (1972: 122) in the previous century. However, such sentiments and policies were not just a thing of the past. He vigorously defended maintaining Australia’s postwar retention of its “White Australia” policy; “some people call me a racist because I am proud of the blood that flows through my veins. I am proud of my white skin, just as a Chinese is proud of his yellow skin,” but “Australian people will continue to resist all attempts to destroy our white society. I reject, in conscience, the idea that Australia should or can ever become a multi-racial society and survive” (117). In classic Yellow Peril terms that had been used in the Pacific countries for decades, he still emphasized that he did not want Australia to be “flooded by hordes of non-integratables” (118) from China and elsewhere in the Orient. Demographic concerns were also discernible in New Zealand, with Foreign Minister William Dodge telling the New Zealand parliament in 1946 that “we must populate for the purpose of strength; if we are to justify our occupation of this lovely land, we must be prepared to hold it against the cramped and hungry millions of the East” (Brawley 1995: 237).

Across the Pacific, William Morton’s 1946 discussion of “Canada’s Far Eastern Policy” showed how traditional racial perceptions from the interwar years still continued after the war. On the one hand, this eminent historian argued that “the Far East is of major importance in the external affairs of Canada” and looked forward to “the day when the Far East may demand more consideration than Canada has yet given it . . . in expanding its trade with Asia and the Pacific” (1946: 243). Yet, on the other hand, there was a continuing problem for Canada, that “with the Asiatic peoples on the other hand, Canada faces the problem of establishing relations based on recognition of racial equality” within which “the free immigration of people” would be “raising the danger of popular resentment being stirred by large Asiatic immigration” (247–48). Canada did finally repeal the 1923 Chinese Exclusion Act (McEvoy 1982) in 1947. However, all this did was to place the Chinese under the same restrictions as other Asians, prohibiting *the landing in Canada of any immigrant of any Asiatic race*, with the exceptions of wives and unmarried children of Canadian citizens under eighteen years of age.

Parliamentary debate was revealing enough. In a widely cited speech on May 1, 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King told MPs that “large scale immigration from the Orient would change the fundamental composition of the Canadian population,” and that “any considerable Oriental [in other words, Chinese] immigration would, moreover, be certain to give rise to social and economic problems of a character that might lead to serious difficulties in the field of international relations” (Canada 1947: 2646). Despite the ultimately meaningless formal abolition of the 1923 Chinese Exclusion Act, its assumptions remained intact in the wider immigration restrictions. After all, Edmund Fulton, from Kamloops, had asserted the following day

that “I have the support of the Prime Minister’s own statement for this, for Canada to say that we would prefer to have one type [in other words, white Caucasian] rather than another [yellow Chinese]” (Canada 1947: 2699). Such opinions were disputed. William Irvine, from Cariboo, did admit, on May 2, 1947, that “how we treat our citizens of Chinese origin is not a matter for British Columbia alone; it is a national matter, a matter in which the whole good name and honour of Canada is involved” (Canada 1947: 2704). In addition, it can be argued that it was an international matter between Canada and China, albeit muddled by the disintegration of Chinese governmental authority. Irvine also noted that “those who are defending the discrimination have no desire to inflict any hurt upon any member of the yellow race, but they do so” (2705). Indeed, they did so; they also inflicted insult ultimately upon China as well. The dropping of this “White Canada” immigration policy, as was the case in Australia, had to wait until the 1960s.

Ultimately, such cross-Pacific currents had a common thread of concern about China’s demographic presence, the shadow of its 500 million people undergoing dramatic and uncertain change, in a shifting international system. Consequently, Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby’s perception in *Thunder out of China* was that “to expect stability in China in our generation would be childish. China must change or die. Within our time she must transfer half a billion people from the world of the Middle Ages into the world of the atomic bomb” (1946: 298). An “eloquent” book written with style and polish, with an “iconoclastic approach to Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist government” (Jespersen 1996: 130–31), it sold well in the United States, impacted Chiang’s external credibility in America, and so attracted Luce’s ire and contrasting eulogies (Jespersen 1996: 131–40) of Chiang through Luce’s *Time* machinery.

Thunder Out of China looked beyond Chiang to the future, a potential transformation where “the future has seldom challenged any country as it challenges China today . . . the greatest number of human beings in the world with one collective history. This human mass is so large . . . a mystery to its own scholars” (White and Jacoby 1946: 299). Within that setting of impending change, “for half a century the world has fretted about the ‘China problem,’ statesmen of great powers have spent decades of their lives pondering China’s role in their imperial plans” (316). However, “from a Chinese point of view the problem is different: What can China do about the world? What can she do about the aggression of her neighbors?,” for “China cannot plan and cannot hope until she lives in a world that treats her as an equal, not as a subject” (316).

China’s potential was as a role model and harbinger, where “what will be happening in the rest of Asia tomorrow is being worked out in blood in China today” (320), and where “China today has almost succeeded in freeing herself from the yoke of the foreigner . . . she stands one step ahead of the

rest of Asia . . . it is impossible to halt the revolution going on in China" (321). In such an Asiatic vein, Robert Payne's *China Awakes* quoted an enthusiastic Chinese student from Thailand: "We shall discover Asia for ourselves . . . There's no Yellow Peril. There is just Asia for the Asiatics . . . in China, we carry on our fratricidal wars, forgetting that if we had peace the whole of Asia might be looking to us for advice" (1947a: 254). China's "fratricidal" civil war was about to be rapidly concluded.

WHOSE CHINA?

In spring 1946 Gilbert Hubbard's *Measuring-up China* could "await the outcome of the great sectional conflict between the Kuomintang and the Communists," but still recognize that a "chauvinism of a pretty emphatic kind prevails" in Guomintang circles, as "applied to some passages of [Chiang Kai-shek's] *China's Destiny*" (1946: 99). Such comments were not isolated. Robert Payne was still noting a year later how *China's Destiny* had been a work of "strange doctrines" (1947b: 157), quite "immature, vicious in its attacks on the West" (158) in which Chiang "employs something of the techniques of Adolf Hitler, capitalizing upon the unequal treaties" (159). Already Chiang's wartime polemics were fading as China's postwar capacities were being exposed to harsh comparative light, despite Luce's attempts otherwise at *Time*. While reckoning on an immediate "vastness of the gulf which separates China's military capacity from that of the U.S.A, Russia or Great Britain," Hubbard judged that "a more practical view of China in relation to Far Eastern security would surely see her not primarily as a neutral 'policeman' of the area," but instead "as likely to be involved as one of the principal parties in any threat to world peace which might breakout in that part of the world" (100).

The profile "China: Progenitor and Novice of Our Modern World" by N. Ze, struggling at the National Resources Commission of China, was quite scathing. For Ze, "she [China] still displays before the world the most pathetic spectacle struggling to stand on her own feet . . . complicated by the impact of the irresistible civilization of the West" (1946: 155–56). Amid her weaknesses, Ze looked further: "On the outer level the world at large is to take careful notice of the historical destiny of China, so that the very historical struggle of that nation will serve as an unmistakable guide for future world adjustment" (156). In such settings, "China . . . must constitute a vital part in the structure of a new world order since no world community can enjoy any reasonable degree of stability unless the disquieting sounds of China's grave problems vibrate in the direction of normalcy" (159). China's potential, as always, was there, for with "one quarter of the world's total population, with vast natural resources and raw materials," and "with a reservoir of historical experience advantageous for international cultural unity, China cannot and should not be

left hugging the left side of the road while the rest of the world moves on in the opposite direction” (159).

China’s postwar situation was anomalous, facing “eclipse.” China “seemed to occupy a back seat in the drama of world politics and post-war economic development” (Iriye 1986: 541). A sense of impending change was palpable. Killearn’s comments, on June 11, 1946, at the British Foreign Office were, “What was new to me was to note how irritated and impatient the Americans are growing with the Chinese, just as the Chinese are with the Americans. I suspect the honeymoon is over and that a process of mutual disillusionment has set in” (DBPO 2002: 47). He felt, not incorrectly, “China is in a mess—politically, militarily, financially, socially . . . the financial muddle is atomic . . . there is a general feeling there is going to be an almighty crash sooner or later” (46–7). Killearn’s “crash,” White and Jacoby’s “thunder,” and Dodge’s “volcano” were pointers to the dramatic political changes coming to the fore in China, with the resumption of the Chinese civil war in the wake of Japan’s defeat, and the increasingly likely victory of Chinese Communism and its attitudes to the West and its relationship with the Soviet Union.

British analysts, like their American counterparts, were rapidly seeing the Soviet role as a crucial question to settle. In the Foreign Office, Esler Denning’s briefing to the Labor Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, on October 18, 1946, was that “Russia has up to the present been content to play a waiting game in the Far East. She already has a defensive zone in Sinkiang, Outer Mongolia and Manchuria, and China proper would only be a secondary defence,” but that “the Soviet Government has taken no overt line in the [domestic] Chinese political situation . . . there is at present no reason to suppose that Russian policy in the Far East is motivated by aggressive as opposed to defensive designs” (DBPO 2002: 61–62). Bevin wrote “agreed” on the analysis.

On the other hand, some British analysis portrayed a more disturbing trend. The advice to Prime Minister Attlee from the British ambassador in China, Ralph Stevenson, on November 23, 1946, was careful. Stevenson thought the images that “the Chinese Communists are more Chinese than Communists and more agrarian reformers than Communists are misleading. I would be prepared to accept them as possibly a fair description of the rank and file of the party supporters in China,” but he was convinced that “the leaders of the party are Communists, first and last all the time. They can thus be trusted to not only follow the ‘party line’ in all circumstances, but automatically to serve the best interests of the Soviet Union” (DBPO 2002: 71). Stevenson’s thoughts to Denning in March 1947 were that “faced with the unpleasant prospect of dealing with a Communist Government on the Soviet Satellite model . . . the whole situation in the Pacific would be radically altered to the grave disadvantage of Britain and America” (DBPO 2002: 90–91). Interestingly enough, Stevenson did not particularly want a decisive Guomindang victory since “it would not be to our advantage that

the Kuomintang should hold undisputed sway over China. Fundamentally they are just as hostile to foreign interests as the Communists are to Western democracy" (91).

American policy in postwar China was uncertain over what to do, and who to fully support. Indeed, the CCP were sending friendly enough signals to the United States. The Marshall Mission was told by Zhou Enlai in January 1946, "The democracy to be imitated in China should follow the American pattern . . . we Chinese Communists, who theoretically advocate Socialism as our ultimate goal, do not mean nor deem possible, to carry it into effect in the immediate future" (FRUS 1972: 152). Zhou reportedly said, "It had been rumoured recently, that Chairman Mao is going to pay a visit to Moscow," but Mao had said "he would rather go to the United States, because he thinks that there he can learn lots of things useful to China" (152). Were such CCP feelers disinformation or were they sincere? In any case, it would still seem significant that Zhou's elaboration came back onto China's future strength where "in saying that we should pursue the American path, we mean to acquire U.S. style democracy and science, and specifically to introduce to this country agricultural reform, industrialization, free enterprise and development of individuality . . . so that we may build up an independent, free and prosperous China" (152). Any direct American military intervention was a concern for the Chinese Communist party and its sympathizers. Song Qingling's sense, on July 23, 1946, was "the first flame of world conflagration is burning today in our land," as "the reactionaries inflame a civil war which they cannot win . . . they hope that civil conflict in China will incite war between America and the USSR, and thus at last crush the Chinese Communists" (1953: 163).

Despite some American aid, albeit limited and at times ambivalent, Chiang's military-political situation dramatically deteriorated, as CCP forces opened full-scale offensive operations in November 1946; "decisive encounters" (Westad 2003) were now unfolding. The collapse of those overstretched Guomintang forces in Manchuria ensued during 1947. Mao was ready enough, in October 1947, to blast America's real, but limited, support to the Guomintang government: "Chiang Kai-shek has not hesitated to sell out our country's sovereign rights to foreign imperialists" in general, and specifically to "to collude with the U.S. armed forces so that they should remain in Tsintao [Qingdao] and elsewhere and to procure advisers from the United States to take part in directing the civil war and training [Guomintang] troops to slaughter his own fellow countrymen" (1972: 337). Various materials were indeed coming from the United States: "Aircraft, tanks, guns and ammunition for the civil war are shipped from the United States in great quantities. Funds for the civil war are borrowed from the United States on a large scale" (337), but despite such American ground force involvement, its troops were not forthcoming. The American troops at Qingdao became the "the anticlimax of

an ill-starred Sino-American encounter” (Guo 2001) as they were reduced and then eventually withdrawn in the face of growing friction with Communist forces.

Come 1948, Chiang Kai-shek was invoking graphic imagery in his attempt to gain full-scale American intervention. Demography was a background feature; Chiang noted that “the importance of Asia’s position in the world and of China’s in Asia is too obvious to need superfluous remarks,” although he did pinpoint that, globally, “of the 2,100,000,000 population, the Asiatics number over 50 percent and of the 1,100,000,000 population of Asia, the Chinese claim one third” (China White Paper 1967: 893). China’s latent power made it a big prize: “The future of Asia revolves around China its decisive pivot, it is the communist principle that in order to control Asia it is essential to control China” (893). For many, Chiang’s government was doomed.

Nevertheless, various Western voices were still ready to spring to Chiang’s defence. By 1947, with civil war still raging between Chiang Kai-shek’s Guomindang government and Mao’s Communist forces, William Bullitt’s “Report to the American People on China” presented in *Life* on October 13, 1947, had China as a bone of contention for the international system, rather than an actor in its own right, where “to prevent the domination of China by any nation which might eventually mobilize the four hundred and fifty million Chinese for war against us is a vital interest” (Bullitt 1968: 338). Cold war bipolarity was evident; the USSR, “using the Chinese Communists as instruments of Soviet Power politics, is striving to reduce China to the status of a Satellite . . . in our own self-defence, therefore, we must act to prevent Soviet domination of China” (338). Conversely, the CCP could see the Guomindang as an American tool, and a sign of China’s weakness.

Western policy makers frequently used bipolar frameworks to evaluate China’s domestic turmoil. Cold War parameters like the 1947 Truman Doctrine meant that the outcome of China’s civil war was increasingly interpreted through the global bipolar rivalries of the United States and Soviet Union. Consequently, the Wedemeyer Mission conducted its analysis, on September 19, 1947, of China against the perceived threat of an “imposition of totalitarian ideologies . . . in the Far East” (China White Paper 1976: 766) by the Soviet Union. Thus, “this spreading internecine struggle within China threatens world peace,” through “a Communist-dominated China which would be inimical to United States interests” (773). Geopolitical considerations were apparent in Wedemeyer’s worry that “the existence of an unfriendly [Communist] China would result in denying us important air bases for use as staging areas for bombing attacks as well as important naval bases along the Asiatic coast,” while, conversely, “its control by the Soviet Union or a regime friendly to the Soviet Union would make available for hostile use a number of warm water ports and air bases” in which “our own air and naval bases in Japan, Ryukyus and the Philippines would be subject to relatively

short range neutralizing air attacks" (809). The only problem was that "the only working basis on which the national Chinese resistance to Soviet aims can be revitalized is through the presently corrupt, reactionary and inefficient Chinese National Government" (814). His recommendations were to give extensive aid to the Guomindang government, but not commit U.S. troops, drawing the parallel with the foreign interventions in the Spanish Civil War and with it the dangers of a third world war. China in its own right was often not considered of great significance. George Keenan's Policy Planning Staff verdict, on September 7, 1948, sent as a memorandum to the secretary of state, was that "regarding China's power potential; in any war in the foreseeable future China could at best be a weak ally or at worst an inconsequential enemy," though "the allegiance of China's millions is worth striving for" as a pawn in the Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union (FRUS 1973b: 147). China was little more than "a vast poorhouse" (147).

However, geocultural points could be stressed in a longer-term setting, rather than the immediate ideological frameworks that were becoming established in the Cold War environment of the late 1940s. Thus, John Fairbank warned Americans that "the greatest error that Americans can make is to look at China but think only of Russian expansion . . . China has a life of its own" (1948: 3). In one sense China was weak and relatively powerless, far from being any peril, since "however we look at it, modern China in its equipment and modern plant is a small show. In industrial production is smaller than Belgium, in air and sea power negligible, in the gadgets and equipment of American life not as big as a middle western [American] state" (7). Instead, the challenge was from a more subtle cultural-civilizational direction: "When one-fifth of the human race has developed during a period of four thousand years a way of life which is unique and *sui generis*" and "is then brought into instantaneous radio communication from the rest of us, the world community is confronted with a major problem of social adjustment" (7). This posed a structural challenge: "Our danger lies in China's instability within, and the uncertainty of her future. A country which is in permanent state of revolution is not a factor for international stability. Our problem is to forecast her future" (14). Such ponderings of future uncertainty had been the pattern throughout China's Century of Humiliation.

The United States reached the end of a road during 1948. There was increasing recognition that Chiang's regime was in trouble. Within the international system, the State Department's "Policy Statement on China," of September 27, recognized that "as one of the five permanent members of the Security Council, China is nominally a great power. Despite its interval of weakness and disunity, China's indirect and at times direct, influence on international developments is sufficiently effective to require special consideration by the U.S." (FRUS 1973a: 621). Potentially of course, Guomindang China provided another vote in the Security Council, to be used against the

Soviet Union: “In the final analysis it [China] tends, as a rule, to follow our lead in the [UN] Security Council and the General Assembly,” although with regard to Japan it acknowledged, “In the Far Eastern Commission the Chinese have in general been somewhat less inclined to support the U.S.” (621). Unfortunately, as the State Department conceded, there was “the administrative inefficiency of the national Government,” in which “incompetent and corrupt officials occupy high posts” (613). It also acknowledged concerns in Guomintang circles that “we are abandoning China, our war-time ally, in favor of rebuilding Japan, a common enemy, as a bastion against the USSR” (613). This was not an unreasonable surmise of American strategy, of the U.S. cutting its losses in Guomintang-led China and redeploying elsewhere against a Communist Soviet Union, and indeed against the likely emergence of a Communist China.

Chinese sensitivities toward Japan had remained high in the immediate aftermath of World War II. During 1946, the Nationalists pledged to send troops to help in the occupation, with Chiang Kai-shek asserting, on March 13, 1946, that a minimum of 15,000 of his troops would soon be occupying Japanese cities (Cathcart 2006: 32). However, American planners were not eager to dilute their own influence over the occupation. Moreover, the increasing confrontation with the Communists stretched Chiang’s Nationalist armies far too thin for such deployments. Chinese troops never went to Japan in any significant numbers. Admittedly, China was a member of the notional governing bodies in Japan, the Far Eastern Commission (FEC), and the Allied Council on Japan. In reality, these bodies were of little significance, with power directly channeled through Douglas MacArthur’s American machinery and presence.

Comments from American diplomats about China were forthright during 1948. Lewis Clark at the American Embassy in Beijing was telling Washington, on November 8, 1948, that “the Government’s power and economic position have so deteriorated that we seriously question its ability to survive for long. There is just no will to fight in the Nationalist Government armies and in high official circles there is only befuddlement” (FRUS 1973a: 552). Jack Cabot, Consul-General at Shanghai, described on December 30, 1948, the “unfolding drama here in China” (FRUS 1973a: 707)—a “morass into which we are sinking” (715), with China saddled with “such a rotten [Guomintang] government” (718). It was one where the “same old grafters still occupy the same old positions,” and where “the same old traditions of face, squeeze, Oriental indirection . . . and all the rest have been rigidly observed” (709). In short, “the Nationalist Government has botched the job” (709). Uncertainties remained, however, over the “Communist” nature of the Communist Party. Cabot noted, “We do not know whether and to what extent the Chinese communist leaders are more Chinese than Communist,” but “of one thing we can be certain, the vast majority of rank and file Com-

munists think of themselves as Chinese before thinking of themselves as Communists” (711). Ambassador Stuart, on the other hand, commented on December 9, 1948, about Mao’s emerging alignment with Moscow with dismay: “Mao Tse-tung is doubtless the leader of the so-called nationalist clique” in the CCP, but now “completely sided with Moscow as regards foreign policy” (637). This was an understandable comment in view of Mao’s public leanings toward the Soviet position in the Cold War, but was also, in retrospect, erroneous bipolar analysis, given the Sino-Soviet split that emerged in the late 1950s.

In the wake of the Wedemeyer Mission, and the continuing advances of Communist forces during 1948, British officials were increasingly concerned with China’s future, partly with regard to Hong Kong and partly with regard to the role of a Communist China in the international system. Amid the Berlin blockade and Communist unrest in Burma and Malaya, Montgomery of Alamein, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, was worried. He strongly advised Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin on August 18, 1948, that a “surge of Communism is raging in the Far East. It has its origins in China . . . and so the general picture is sombre, if not black,” faced as Britain was by “Communism and racial antagonism . . . in the end it comes down to a question of [Chinese] manpower” (DBPO 2002: 162–63). Bevin told the British cabinet, on December 9, 1948, that “Communist domination of China will only be a matter of time . . . in general, it may be expected that communist successes in China will stimulate Communist movements throughout the [Asian] area” (DBPO 2002: 176, 174). The cabinet meeting held a few days later, on December 13, considered Bevin’s memorandum on China, agreeing that, amid uncertainties, “no firm conclusions could be reached at this stage on the ultimate nature of Chinese Communism or of the relationship between the Chinese Communist Government and the Soviet Union” (DBPO 2002: 187). Consequently, “it would be unwise to pursue a policy which might have the effect of gratuitously driving a Chinese Communist Government into the arms of the Soviet Union” (187).

The actual nature of Chinese Communism continued to be vigorously debated in British circles. Christopher Warner, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State and head of the Information Policy Department, questioned Stevenson’s cautions against “overt actions” against any incoming Communist regime. For Warner, on January 13, 1949, this was “no line at all” (DBPO 2002: 198), needing to be replaced by a “British controlled covert central organisation disseminating material through China” (197). He stressed that the Communist leadership were but “an instrument of Kremlin imperialism . . . the Chinese communist movement being directed from the Kremlin as are all other Communist parties” (198). However, it was far too late for Britain to be thinking of trying to reverse the tide of events within China. By the end of January 1949, Beijing had fallen to CCP forces.

China's dynastic cycles had in effect taken another turn; the "Mandate of Heaven" had fallen away from Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang and beckoned for Mao's Communists.

From India, Krishna Menon's advice, on January 5, 1949, to the British government was that the emerging CCP regime "will not necessarily be dominated by Russia. It seems doubtful whether Russia will be able to stroll in and 'take over' China as she has done in the countries in Eastern Europe," for "China is too vast, too different ethnically and culturally to be absorbed by Russia even in an ideological sense" (DBPO 2002: 201). Various nuances were apparent: "While China will thus retain her independence in a large measure at home, she will probably adapt her foreign policy to that of the Soviet Union" (201), that "any hostility toward a Communist-controlled China by other countries will tend throw it more into the Soviet orb" (202), and that "indeed it may be that Communist China may be the first to provide a national counterweight to the USSR" (201). In retrospect, his analysis was accurate enough on these points. However, as to South Asia, "India need not therefore fear any serious anger from China directly in the near future" (201–02). The war between India and China in 1962 was to show otherwise.

Bevin had recognized, on December 9, 1948, that "the only Power which could contribute financial, material and military resources for counter action against the Chinese Communists in China is the United States, but it seems unlikely that such counter action will be taken" (DBPO 2002: 170). Thus, the United States did not militarily intervene directly on the Chinese mainland in the final fall to Communism during 1948–1949. At the time, "Atlanticists" held sway in the U.S. administration, with Europe paramount in their minds. Consequently, the Joint Chiefs of Staff listed China a lowly thirteenth out of its list of sixteen countries considered with regard to the national security of the United States, and the State Department considered that to "lose China" would be "deplorable" but "not catastrophic" (W. Cohen 1980: 15; see also Khong 1996: 181–84). Indeed, the official *China White Paper* of August 1949 was seen by many as an American distancing from Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist cause. In Britain, Bevin described the U.S. *White Paper* as "liberally castigating the Nationalist Government of China" (DBPO 2002: 344), replete as it was with acknowledgment of Guomindang corruption and incompetence, and with some speculation on Chinese nationalism reasserting itself within the Chinese Communist Party against the Soviet Union at some time in the future.

Certainly, the independence of the CCP, and of the newly emergent China, remained doubtful in American eyes during 1949. The U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Walter Smith, merely described how "Soviet control has been extended over . . . Northern China . . . these conquered provinces must now be held in submission, and millions of their peoples are impatient and

resentful of Soviet rule . . . of foreign rule over people who are familiar with the devices of puppet governments” (1950: 314). On July 30, 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson denounced and dismissed the CCP leadership: “The communist leaders have forsworn their Chinese heritage and have publicly announced their subservience to a foreign power, Russia . . . the Communist regime serves not their [Chinese] interests but those of Soviet Russia,” whereby “the Communist regime [in China] lends itself to the aims of Soviet Russian imperialism and attempts to engage in aggression against China’s neighbors” (China White Paper 1976: xvi–xvii). In retrospect, these judgments were highly flawed ignoring Mao’s general Sinocentric perspective and the muted disputes already rumbling between the two leaderships. Instead, the formal alignment of Communist China with the Soviet Union seemed the more noticeable trend, seen in Mao’s famous declaration, June 30, 1949, that “we must lean to one side” in the international system, and ally with the Soviet Union. A preliminary visit by Liu Shaoqi, the second in command in the CCP hierarchy, to Moscow from June to August 1949, saw pledges of loyalty to Stalin and the Soviet Union. All of these assessments of China had taken place as Chiang’s Guomindang power was crumbling. Despite some Soviet hesitancy, the Yangzi line was crossed in April 1949 by CCP forces, the Second and Third Armies directed by Deng Xiaoping. The CCP’s concluding drive southward during 1949 brought the successive falls of Nanjing in April, Shanghai and Wuhan in May, and Canton in October.

Han Suyin’s insider-outsider comments in October 1949 were succinct. Imagery was prominent, including “fatalism, inscrutability, serenity, these figments of Western imagination . . . they lose the reality of China in the myth of a Cathay old enough to charm them” (1952: 146) but also old enough to be consigned to the backwaters of historical progress and political equality. Looking to the past, Han pointed to “the historic-minded Chinese, haunted by the past and memories of the Great White Injustice” (1952: 148). This was juxtaposed with an “old China hand”—Mr. Franklin—and his stereotypical views that “I’ve never known a Chinaman yet who wasn’t crooked one way or another . . . the Chinese have never been able to run anything themselves, and they never will” (238). Han found that typical of the “perpetual half-unconscious resentment of the whites *en masse* which is the unspoken atmosphere of many a Chinese [white “old hands”] gathering” (239). Looking forward, she also flagged China’s “urge towards assertion, and the inevitability of its revolution” (146). As it was, Han’s profile of China and the West was written at that very moment, October 1949, when change had become inevitable. Mao Zedong himself had famously proclaimed *at the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference*, on September 21, 1949, that “our nation will never again be an insulted nation. We [the Chinese People] have stood up” (1977: 17). In short, China’s Century of

Humiliation was, finally, over. The formal graphic proclamation of the People's Republic of China, the PRC, came on October 1, 1949, from the Gate of Heavenly Peace in Tiananmen Square, Beijing. China, as the PRC, was now to stand up in the international system. After the establishment of the PRC, though not a member of the Communist Party, Song Qingling became the PRC Vice-Chair—in other words, vice-president. Song Qingling's sister Song Meiling followed her husband Chiang Kai-shek onto Formosa (Taiwan), as the Republic of China, the ROC, survived in that regained fragment of China. The post-1949 story of the People's Republic of China in the international system is, though, another story (Scott 2007). Suffice to evoke Napoleon's famous apocryphal words: China, the PRC, would indeed now "shake the world."

EIGHT

Legacies

*Chinese people feel that they are unique in national humiliation.
Only China can go from so high a civilization to be the lowest of the low,
the Sick Man of Asia, and back again . . .
the master narrative of modern Chinese history
is the discourse of the century of national humiliation.*

—Callahan, 2004

*China has been the victim of repeated aggression and pillages . . .
as many as 1.8 million square kilometers were also taken away from Chinese territory.
This was a period of humiliation that the Chinese people can never forget . . .
this is why the people of China show such strong emotions . . .
concerning our national independence, unity, integrity of territory, and sovereignty.*

—General Li Jijun, 1997

THE CENTURY OF HUMILIATION is often said to have ended with the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The Chinese Revolution of 1949 was also, in Fitzgerald's view, very much about China's "quest for dignity" (1999a), a quest to reverse not just the conditions but also the images imposed on China during its Century of Humiliation. Certainly, the half century after 1949 has seen China rise within the international system. By 1950 Chinese troops were holding American troops at bay in Korea; by 1964 China had exploded its own nuclear bomb and was seen as a dangerous rogue state. Yellow Peril imagery and demographic mutterings were at play in the Sino-Soviet split of the 1960s. By 1971 the United States was engaging the PRC as a partner within the emerging U.S.-Soviet-China great power triangle. By the 1980s modernization was transforming China's economic base and relationship with the world. The 1990s saw frequent

evocation of the “China threat” in the United States. Talk also arose of the twenty-first century being “China’s Century.”

A two-fold legacy can be seen with regard to China’s Century of Humiliation—a subsequent focus on the immediate past of humiliation, but also a focus still further back beyond it to older Middle Kingdom glories (Scott 2007: 7–14). From this confluence of recollection has come the continuing paradox. China feels hypersensitive about any issues of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and respect precisely because of its period of humiliation. Yet its attempts to reverse such humiliation lead to classic IR security dilemma dynamics of mutual spirals of distrust and misperceptions in the international system. In retrospect, the two-fold legacy of the Century of Humiliation has been widely recognized; there is a continuing “strategic” issue around such “remembering” (Gong 2001a), about “memory and history . . . issues of identity in [China’s International] Relations” (Gong 2001b). Callahan noted, “Chinese people feel that they are unique in national humiliation. Only China can go from so high a civilization to be the lowest of the low, the Sick Man of Asia, and back again” (2004: 206). Hunt, in considering Chinese foreign relations in a historical perspective, argued that “the century of humiliation which constitutes the negative pole of Chinese experience” is “inextricably joined to a positive pole defined by recollections of the imperial past . . . its great dynasties of Han and Tang . . . as a standard (or perhaps a national myth) of cultural achievement and international power and influence to live up to” (1984: 38–39). The one feeds into the other, reflecting yin-yang dynamics.

It is not difficult to discern this legacy of the Century of Humiliation. Mao’s famous “standing up” speech in September 1949 in many ways set the scene for how that legacy, or lesson, of the Century of Humiliation was used, through “encoding the personal experience of individual shame and [national] racial humiliation in the language of Marxism-Leninism” (Fitzgerald 1999a: 51). Mao’s vision, while wrapped in Marxist rhetoric, was also intensely Chinese, with earlier periods of history brought into play. There was the immediate past, “the oppression and exploitation by foreign imperialism” (1977: 16), the subject of this study. Yet, there was also the beckoning future, “ours will no longer be a nation subject to insult and humiliation . . . our national defence will be consolidated . . . and no imperialist will ever again be allowed to invade our territory again” (17–18). Instead of the outside world humiliatingly dominating and directing China, it was China that could challenge the world. Deng Xiaoping also frequently pointed to what could be learned from the Century of Humiliation. Respect was a crucial feature of China’s old preeminence and notably lacking during the Century of Humiliation. For Deng Xiaoping, on September 16, 1989, “the Chinese people will not be intimidated . . . they felt inferior for more than a century, but now . . . they have stood up” (1984–94: 3.316). Respect was a key feature—to retain, lose, or regain. Mao was born in 1893, Deng in 1903. Both spent more than

half their long lives seeing China's humiliation firsthand during the first half of the twentieth century before achieving power in 1949, and it was an experience and vision deeply affected by China's international fortunes, or rather international misfortunes, during its Century of Humiliation.

Subsequent politicians and military figures continue to evoke the Century of Humiliation. Though slightly more removed from the Century of Humiliation than Mao and Deng, Deng's protégé, newly appointed General Secretary Hu Yaobang, was direct enough. The *Beijing Review*, on September 13, 1982, reported his comments to the CCP National Congress: "Being patriots, we do not tolerate any encroachment on China's national dignity . . . having suffered aggression and oppression for over a century, the Chinese people will never again allow themselves to be humiliated as they were before." Third Generation leader Jiang Zemin also used memories of the Century of Humiliation to full effect. The recovery of Hong Kong was seen by Jiang, on July 2, 1997, as "the redemption (*xuechi*) of one hundred years of national humiliation" (D. Wang 2003: 422; also Knight 1999). Military figures used humiliation period discourse to political purposes. PLA General Li Jijun reiterated how "over the last 150 years, however, China has been the victim of repeated aggression and pillages," where "as many as 1.8 million square kilometers were also taken away from Chinese territory. This was a period of humiliation that the Chinese people can never forget" (1997: 2, 3). Consequently, "this is why the people of China show such strong emotions in matters concerning our national independence, unity, integrity of territory, and sovereignty" (2, also Chu 1996). For Li, "this is also why the Chinese are so determined to safeguard them under any circumstances and at all costs" (1997: 3). Thus, the bottom line was still that "for the Chinese government and people, issues concerning our national sovereignty are not subject to reconciliation or negotiation" (5).

It can be argued that by the 1990s China's Century of Humiliation left a legacy not just as a strong personal memory for the PRC political elite, but also as a tool to be used by governments. This is not to argue that evocation of the Century of Humiliation was an artificial creation by the state. Rather, its existence made it something to be picked up, used, and thereby further entrenched in the collective memory of China. Certainly, evocations of China's Century of Humiliation became all the more prominent in the 1990s, as the CCP wrapped itself in a cloak of nationalism to replace its previous revolutionary Marxist-Maoist tone. That humiliating period from the "weaker" past was to be used to create and shape a "stronger" future, "History as a mirror" (Hu Shen 1991). In explaining the Patriotic Education Campaign of 1994, Liu Jichang argued, "In some way, humiliation can be a kind of treasure. It can encourage and inspire us to wash out the humiliation. Today, what we fear really is not to know the humiliation" (Durham 2004: 17) from the past. Consequently, "'do not forget'—*wu wang*—became the

mantra of the *guochi* [humiliation] writing of this decade” (P. Cohen 2002: 2). In his own trips Callahan found, “The more I looked for national humiliation discourse, the more I found it” (2004b: 199) in China during the 1990s. For him, “National Humiliation unproblematically dots texts (in both Chinese and English) about Chinese identity and politics . . . the master narrative of modern Chinese history is the discourse of the century of national humiliation” (204). As such, “the past is commemorated as a nationalist performance in international space” (204). Gries’s focus on China’s “face [*mianzi*] nationalism,” was centered on images and perceptions, where “the vital issue is not what China’s international status actually was, but rather what contemporary Chinese think it was and how they feel about it . . . to get at the goals of contemporary Chinese nationalists, their feelings are more important than historical evidence” (1999: 64). There, “China’s international identity is defined in terms of a nationalistic view of modern Chinese history, in which China was brutally victimized in a hostile and threatening world” (71) during its Century of Humiliation. It is in this sense that Garver was right in arguing that “modern Chinese nationalism arose from a sense of shame, born of the humiliation that the West and Japan inflicted upon China in the nineteenth and early twentieth century” (1992: 3). This is, indeed, the political base that the PRC inherited in 1949. The question arises, how far will it continue to shape Chinese nationalism in the twenty-first century?

The PRC leadership may be using and fostering humiliation discourse, but it is not creating it; it already exists. Outside the state, the *China Can Say No* literature of Zhang Xiabo, Song Qiang, and others that surfaced in 1996 “is grounded in deeply etched personal experiences of national humiliation,” with the Chinese authors arguing that it was only in terms of this strongly perceived national humiliation that “we can understand why China’s writers have been crying out to the heavens for a hundred years now: ‘when will China become great and powerful’ to which the answer is only when China finds the courage to stand-up to the outside world to stand firm and say ‘No’” (Fitzgerald 1999a: 51). This was, of course, signally what China had not been able to do during much of its Century of Humiliation. Sovereignty issues (S. Kim 1994) remain particularly sensitive for the PRC, precisely because of China’s sovereignty having been battered and twisted during its Century of Humiliation.

The Fifth Generation leadership, which will take over from Hu Jintao around 2012, will be the first ones to have been born after the proclamation of the PRC in 1949—the first to have been born after the Century of Humiliation. In that sense the impact of that period will be less, as perhaps the still more distant model of Middle Kingdom glories becomes more prominent. Yet collective memories last for generations and centuries. The Century of Humiliation has already entered China’s national psyche, and, strengthened still further by its evocation in the 1990s, will still influence Chinese national and

international attitudes. China's Century of Humiliation also remains significant for the international system, as China's rise stands all the more in contrast to that. China's rise may be a regaining of previous preeminence, but that was a long time ago. For the international system, the rise of China is all the more startling because of its juxtaposition with the Century of Humiliation.

The twenty-first century opened with two rather paradoxical events. On the one hand, in Beijing the PRC's National People's Congress agreed to establish National Humiliation Day, officially styled National Defence Day. Unfortunately, it was unable to choose between July 7, the anniversary of the Japanese invasion of 1937, or September 7, the date of the Boxer Indemnities of 1900. On the other hand, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tang Jiaxuan could also finish the twentieth century by looking forward to how "the twenty-first-century bell will be sounded. Farewell to a hundred years of humiliating history. Hundreds of millions of children of the Yellow Emperor will stride vigorously and proudly ahead into the threshold of the new century" (2001: 73). Thus, as Hu Jintao and the new Fourth Generation leadership took over in 2002, and the twenty-first century beckons, a leading question remains how far China's earlier Century of Humiliation will be ingrained on the national political psyche of China and its leadership. How far will China look past beyond the Century of Humiliation to its preceding days of Middle Kingdom respect—be it in terms of IR soft power prestige or hard power control? Time will tell. From the point of view of the international system, the multifaceted potential of China during its Century of Humiliation, its demographic pool, its economic resources, its military potential, have come to the surface with a vengeance as the twenty-first century unfolds. That challenge is also another story (Scott 2008).

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