

the Karens can assuredly be one of the main props of the new edifice.

I am happy to mention that in recent times there seems to be a better understanding and mutual respect between the Karens and the Burmans than in former times. But as the Karens are not yet well understood their needs are frequently overlooked and ignored. The Karens being naturally quiet and reserved are reluctant to raise their voice to others, except through representatives who are their own people. The Karens do feel that they have not had a due share of representation, consonant with their numerical strength and serviceability. We want to contribute our share to the building of the new self-governing Burma. We desire to do our part as a distinct entity, for only in that way can we bring our own contribution to the progress and the prosperity of our mother country, Burma. To do that we do need political training and experience and also more responsibility in the administration. We are in full sympathy with the desire for a full responsible government. We only ask that we may be able to take our share of the yoke in an effectual way.

No constitution would be satisfactory or would work successfully until and unless we have our rightful share in the Legislature and in the administration of the country.

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The Jews of the East

The Jews of the East, published in Thailand in 1914, presents a view of the Chinese widely held in Southeast Asia. This small booklet caused a sensation at the time of publication since the pen name of the author, "Asavabahu," was sometimes used by King Rama VI (Wachirawut, 1910-1925), the reigning Thai monarch.

The Anglo-Saxon peoples (that is England and America) are inclined to congratulate themselves on the lack of anti-Semitism

in their countries. They parade their sympathy for the Jews, their resentment of the anti-Semitism in other European nations. Apparently they presume that this places them in a position to condemn the various countries in which the Jews have been the recipients of unjust treatment. They forget, however, that in territory under their own jurisdiction an analogous situation exists, differing only from anti-Semitism in that it happens to be called "The Yellow Peril."

When these nations speak of "The Yellow Peril" (by which they mean the danger of an attack by the yellow races upon the white), I must ask the privilege of objecting to the term, inasmuch as they use it generically to include all the races of Asia. As a matter of fact, the danger of which they speak has reference only to the Chinese. In Thailand we have quite as much to fear from the Chinese as the white races have; although at the present time we have not reached the place where we feel that we need to be unduly alarmed about it. That being the case, however, I protest any inclusion of the Thai in the term "The Yellow Peril," for the Thai are not even as much like the Chinese as Europeans are like Jews.

In what way are the Chinese like the Jews? The observing reader has probably already traced likenesses as he has compared those traits of the Jews which I have discussed with the characteristics of the Chinese. But in order that he need not refer to them, I shall recapitulate them as I draw my comparisons. I hope my readers will overlook a certain amount of repetitiousness.

The first point of likeness is "Racial Loyalty." No matter where they live, what nationality they assume, Chinese remain essentially Chinese. But they do not understand such a race loyalty as "patriotism," or "love of country," which is what such a term usually means. Thus we find Chinese registered as nationals of foreign

Kenneth Perry Landon, *The Chinese in Thailand* (New York: Oxford University Press, for the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1941), pp. 34-39. By permission of the author and W. L. Holland, American Institute of Pacific Relations, University of British Columbia.

countries, even within China itself. It is true that registration with a consulate other than one's own for convenience sake is understandable if a person has to live in a foreign country where his own nation maintains no consulate. But registration with the consulates of foreign nations in one's own country is a practice adopted only by Chinese. It serves to show how little national consciousness or love of the homeland Chinese have. But even though they register themselves as being under the sovereignty of a foreign nation, they do not by that act cease to be Chinese: they will be loyal to the new object of their unstable allegiance only so long as it serves their purposes as well as those of their rightful masters for them to be so.

It is their racial consciousness that makes Chinese undesirable immigrants, so far as possible usefulness to the country which they enter is concerned. The purpose of a country in permitting immigration is to swell, by that means, the number of its own citizens. But when immigrants regard their residence in a country as temporary and are unwilling to become citizens, they must be judged to have disappointed the purposes of the country which had admitted them.

There is not a farmer living who welcomes the insect pests which devour his crops and depart leaving his fields dry and bare of grain. In the same way, no country is glad to welcome aliens whose only purpose is to make as large a fortune as possible and then depart, without the slightest intention of returning favors received. It is true that not every Chinese is capable of amassing as much wealth as he desires in order to return to his homeland while he is still young. But it is also true that it is the purpose of each and every one of them so to do. And this attitude certainly does not contribute to their desirability.

As for the argument that Chinese intermarry with the people of other races, in this they are also like the Jews. To be specific, when a Chinese man marries a Thai woman, that woman becomes a Chinese and adopts Chinese customs in every detail. Their children become Chinese also. But, if a Thai man marries a Chinese woman, the woman continues to be Chinese, while the man finds

himself adopting Chinese ways and performing such acts as fit into the accepted Chinese pattern of life. As for the children, even though they are Thai in name, they are psychologically Chinese. That is, their ways of thought are Chinese; and they recognize this fact by the circumstance that they feel most at home in a Chinese group. There are exceptions, of course; but it is our misfortune that there are fewer of these exceptions than we could wish. In conclusion, then, marriage between a Chinese and a Siamese, regardless of whether the Chinese partner is male or female, works out to the advantage of the Chinese. It was our hope in this matter of intermarriage that the Chinese would put down roots in our country. The opposite has occurred. Nations which have admitted Chinese have invariably been out of pocket as a result of the return to China of such immigrants, with wives and children, whenever opportunity arose. Some immigrants have even gone so far as to send wife and children back ahead of themselves.

Chinese are unwilling to recognize any obligation to the countries in which they reside, or to become citizens of such countries. In this characteristic they are nowise different from the Jews, as I have already described them. If there are privileges to which the native inhabitants of a country are entitled, Chinese immigrants demand them; since they consider it their inalienable right to receive the same preferential treatment accorded citizens. But if an occasion arises on which they are required to fulfill the duties of citizens, they evade such obligations so far as possible.

No doubt you can all remember the time four or five years ago when the Chinese suspended work. Their purpose on that occasion was to protest having to pay THE SAME POLL TAX THAT ALL THAI PAY! Their action corroborates what I have decided to say quite explicitly: the Chinese expect to enjoy all the privileges of citizens without assuming any of the obligations.

Their racial loyalty, which is one of the strongest of Chinese characteristics, is the primary cause, then, of most of their difficulties; as a similar attitude is in the case of the Jews. Such an attitude arouses a sense of apprehension in the citizens of countries in which they reside, and definitely inhibits intercourse on equal

terms between two races. Their feeling of superiority to their neighbors is the essential reason why they have to endure persecutions as often as they do.

The second characteristic of the Jews is found fully developed in the Chinese also. That is: the Chinese, like the Jews, are an ancient race whose high civilization was developed at a time when our ancestors had not emerged from savagery. Through the ages Chinese have been taught to divide mankind into two classes: Chinese and Huan (Barbarians), so called according to their way of thinking. Europeans are as much Huan (Barbarians) to them as other Asiatics or blacks. Since they regard us so, I need not tell you that they have no slightest intention of dealing with us either honestly or honorably. They are likely to think that we exist only to be robbed and cheated. In all their contacts with Huan, Chinese recognize no right or wrong; nor do the Jews in their dealings with Gentiles.

In manners and address they are unfailingly gentle and courteous, but, believe me when I say, their courtesy is a means of deception, and their soft words are a trap, intended to divert attention that people may be by so much the more easily ensnared. If they see that there is an advantage to be gained or a profit to be made, they are eager to ingratiate themselves, and even, on occasion, to seek ways of being useful to us. But when our vision has been somewhat obscured they spit on our heads. Perhaps it is a good thing that we do not understand their language, since we are thus not aware of the way in which we are being execrated, sometimes even to our faces, in the vilest of language. . . .

The methods and practices of the Chinese in matters of making money are without doubt quite as sharp as those of the Jews. If we speak in the usually accepted way, we are wrong to blame the Chinese for their money-making ability. But the Chinese are like the Jews. If they start with the same amount of capital and the same opportunity as people of other races, they get rich much sooner.

There are many reasons why the Chinese are able to make money more rapidly than other people, most of them no different

from those that apply to the Jews (for the Jews are able to do the same thing). According to Chinese thought, money is the beginning and end of all good. There is nothing greater.

Chinese appear to be willing to do anything and everything for money. Only Chinese will exchange even life itself for money. A condemned Chinese criminal who is rich enough can usually hire a poor man to be executed in his stead, for a consideration; something that could happen no place else but China. Chinese are willing to endure every sort of privation for money. Anyone who has watched Chinese coolies eat cannot help but feel a sense of revulsion, since it seems that the food they eat would hardly attract the curs which roam the streets. And if one speaks of the places where they live, it is amazing that so many persons can squeeze themselves into a space so small that the people of no other race on earth could manage to breathe in it. This being the case, it is not surprising that the Chinese can manage to corner most of the available work for themselves. No matter how small the wages, they are ready and glad to accept them, since they know how to sustain life on an incredibly small amount of food. . . .

There is no kind of work that they will not do, provided that they are paid for it. Let it be ever so vile, but recompense them for it, and they will do it. In matters of money the Chinese are entirely devoid of morals and mercy. They will cheat you with a smile of satisfaction at their own perspicacity. And they are quite capable of robbing and killing in the most brutal fashion for two or three dollars. They have the most devious ideas imaginable for accomplishing embezzlement or dacoity, by land or by sea.

Is it necessary for me to offer examples to illustrate this shameless attitude toward crime of the Chinese in matters pertaining to money? I am sure that the employees of insurance companies could tell many a tale that would illustrate my point well. Who has not heard of some of the dishonest practices used by the Chinese in matters of bankruptcy? Whenever a company has debts that have become uncomfortably large, it goes into bankruptcy. A little later a new company appears on another street. The owner of the new company is the same as the owner of the former com-

pany. According to commonly accepted ethics, bankruptcy is an unsavory process and reason enough for loss of reputation. But the Chinese (or the Jews) approve of it as a smart practice to be used by the clever and the knowing.

Maybe there are those who will object to this indictment on the grounds that the Chinese are Buddhists. But, Chinese are Buddhists to no greater extent than Jews are Christians. Just as the Jews have never been able to swallow the teachings of Jesus Christ about covetousness, the Chinese are unable to act according to the precept of the Buddha, which likewise forbids covetousness. . . .

Another point relative to my claim that the Chinese are no more Buddhists than the Jews are Christians: it is true that in China there are religious observances and temples, but in Palestine there are churches and Catholic priests also.

In a play called "The War God" of which Israel Zangwill is the author, there is a character called "Karl Blum," who is confidential secretary to the Chancellor, Count Torgrim. Karl Blum has changed his religion and become a Christian. As a result of this action he has secured the position of confidential secretary and right-hand man to the chancellor. Further, through his position he has had the opportunity of securing gifts from people seeking government positions, who have been only too glad to oblige. Blum remains a Christian so long as the chancellor remains in power. When, in due time, the chancellor loses his post, Blum discards his Christianity immediately as one would throw off a cloak which one has donned as a temporary convenience, and returns to the observance of the religion of his ancestors. This play is a strange one in that it was written by a Jew, himself, without a doubt, like Karl Blum in character. Zangwill wrote it to show the typical Jew as he is.

At this very time there are many Chinese Karl Blums. Only there has not yet been a Chinese to write such a play about them. Adherence to a religion, which most of us regard as important because it forms our sense of right and wrong, Chinese regard as merely a matter of convenience. If it is to their advantage to do so,

Chinese are glad to adopt Buddhism or Christianity or Mohammedanism or Hinduism. They will worship any god or any madness at all if only in so doing they derive a profit. To sum up: the Chinese have only one god, more precious to them than all other gods together, and that is the GOD MONEY. Chinese hold that the external observances of any religion are unimportant. Only let them hold fast to the GOD MONEY, who is the one lord. . . .

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In Defense of the Chinese

Few statements better answer the attacks against the Chinese in Southeast Asia than the following piece written in 1962 by Teodoro M. Locsin, for the Philippine Free Press. The article predates by less than two years the enforcement of a law which "nationalized" the retail trade. By insisting that retail outlets be Filipino-owned, the government essentially excluded the Chinese community from its major source of income.

Today, a Chinese may not be a farmer. He may not engage in certain professions. The law nationalizing the retail trade would eventually keep him out of that business. To stay in business, Chinese merchants have paid out millions of pesos in bribes to Filipino officials, the Mayor of Manila has disclosed. For a while, every crook in the police or in the army could make money by accusing a Chinese of subversive activities if he did not come across. We do not know whether the practice is still going on; perhaps not. Chinese businessmen are continually threatened with cuts in their import allocations. The Chinese may go into industry, for not enough Filipinos are doing that yet; there is an economic vacuum to be filled. But if Filipinos follow the Chinese into industry, Congress may be expected to pass a law throwing the Chinese

Shubert S. C. Liao, ed., *Chinese Participation in Philippine Culture and Economy* (Philippines: n.p., 1964), pp. 385-388.

out of it. The Chinese may not do this, may not do that—what are the Chinese, finally, to do?

Not that they are not doing pretty well, in spite of restrictions. Everything has been tried to put the Chinese down; he keeps getting up. The Chinese community is richer than ever and can therefore afford to bribe more Filipino officials. . . . The Chinese response to every nationalistic challenge has always been adequate. Practice in overcoming difficulties makes perfect; the tougher the Filipinos get, the keener the Chinese become. Nationalistic laws are creating a group that keeps getting smarter and smarter. Eventually, there would be no alternative left but to resort to massacre. But that has been tried many times before and has always failed.

Laws are futile; bloodshed won't work. What are Filipinos to do with the Chinese? Repression has not only failed; increase of it may produce domestic and international complications. There are perhaps 500,000 Chinese nationals in this country. Some of them are Communists, others Nationalists; all are trying to make a living. They are here to stay; it is impossible to throw them out of the country.

What is to be done? More repressive legislation, perhaps, may finally ruin the Chinese, but what would be the consequences of that ruin? There would be 500,000 Chinese unable to leave the Philippines and prevented from making a living in it at the same time. The situation can only be described as explosive.

If the Chinese are pressed hard enough, they may be expected to cry for help—either from Nationalist China, or, if it proves impotent to help them, from Communist China; with its more than half a billion people and an increasingly modern army, Red China may be expected to do something about the plight of the Chinese in the Philippines; it could justify intervention in Philippine affairs before mankind. No nation could very well tell Red China to do nothing for 500,000 human beings for whom life is slowly made impossible; not even the United States, so hostile to the Communists and all their works, could tell Red China not to intervene. As a matter of fact, to forestall such intervention in the Philippines,

the United States itself may be forced to make representations with the Republic—to let 500,000 human beings live.

Repression means trouble. Massacre won't work. It is time, surely, to try something other than discrimination or force. Perhaps, Christianity is the answer to the question that this Christian nation has found so vexing for centuries.

We propose a Christian solution to the problem with a certain hesitation. Once, we wrote advising the Catholics of a certain province not to throw stones at a Protestant gathering no matter how ill-mannered the Protestants were—no matter what the provocation. It did not seem Christian to us. The Catholic paper, "The Sentinel," promptly attacked us for being anti-Catholic. We do not know what we shall be called for proposing a Christian solution to the Chinese problem, but we have no alternative; it is the only way to avoid chaos. We hate to think of what would happen if the 500,000 Chinese in the Philippines should become desperate. So here goes . . .

What is a Christian solution?

Well, to put it as simply as possible, we should not do to the Chinese what we would not have the Chinese do to us. If the Chinese violate our laws, jail them. Do not drive them into breaking the law through repressive legislation; then they would have no alternative but to break it.

THE ENIGMA OF SHYLOCK

If a Chinese cannot be a farmer, a professional, a merchant, a miner, what is he going to do? Beg? That, or go berserk. There is industry, into which he is being invited to enter, but if he prospers there, should he not expect to be driven out of it? What is a Chinese to do?

It is said that he puts Filipinos out of business by unfair trade practices, by combinations, through monopolies, etc. The thing to do, in such a case, is to go after him for breaking the law on trade practices; thus the U. S. government goes after American

trusts. Nationalization only forces the Chinese to use Filipino dummies—there is always a plentiful supply of this commodity. The cut the dummy gets means an increase in price. In the end, it is the people who pay.

The Jews were the Chinese of medieval England; they made money and suffered the same fate. Religious scruples prevented Englishmen from making money with money; the bankers had to be Jews. They performed a service; they became prosperous; they were persecuted. . . .

Shylock is an enigmatic figure. Is he the hero or villain of Shakespeare's play? The villain? But who had made him villainous? The beastly conduct of Christians drove him mad. . . .

. . . Here is an indictment of Christian practice unparalleled in literature. The villain is human nature; the only thing that can keep it in check is Christian charity, and who should show it more appropriately than Christians?

In the Philippines, Christian Filipinos have made the Chinese what they are, the object of Christian complaints, the object of Christian acts of repression. If Chinese businessmen hurt Filipino businessmen, that is not right—but who hurt whom first? Who is the villain? The reconciliation of the two peoples should be the aim of legislation, not their further alienation.

A Christian solution to the Chinese problem may well prove the greatest national experience since independence.