

ANTI-WAR POEMS BY ASIAN POETS:

'WHITE THE BONES OF MEN' *

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About five years ago I read the following poem, an English translation from the Vietnamese-language original by Thich Nhat Hanh, dedicated Buddhist monk, scholar, and nonviolent opponent of both the Viet Cong and the Thieu regime of Saigon—a young man who even now is marked for execution if he dares to return from exile to his native land. The poem's English title is "Condemnation."

Listen to this:

yesterday six Vietcong came through my village.

Because of this my village was bombed—completely destroyed.

Every soul was killed.

When I come back to the village now, the day after,

there is nothing to see but clouds of dust and the river, still flowing.

The pagoda has neither roof nor altar.

Only the foundations of houses are left.

The bamboo thickets have been burned away.

Here in the presence of the undisturbed stars,

in the invisible presence of all the people still alive on earth,

let me raise my voice to denounce this filthy war,

this murder of brothers by brothers!

I have a question: Who pushed us into this killing of one another?

Whoever is listening, be my witness!

I cannot accept this war.

*From the present article, hitherto unpublished, a much briefer popularized version was drawn, and it appeared in *New Letters* (Univ. Missouri at Kansas City), 38(No. 4): 47—63, summer, 1972.

I never could, I never shall.
I must say this a thousand times before I am killed.

I feel I am like that bird which dies for the sake of its mate
dripping blood from its broken beak and crying out:
Beware! Turn around to face your real enemies—
ambition, violence, hatred, greed.

Men cannot be our enemies—even men called 'Vietcong'.
If we kill men, what brothers will we have left?
With whom shall we live then?

Already deeply concerned about American policies in Indo-China, I found this poem poignant and powerful, an authentic native voice of far more significance than even the noblest and most concerned of poems by Western sympathizers could be. I began to wonder: what other east Asian poets during the past two thousand years have expressed their reactions to war? How have they done so: by revulsion, or stoic resignation, or lachrymal description, or flagwaving celebration, or creative coping with the cruxes of war versus peace?

Examining a dozen or more recent anthologies of poems concerned with war,² I found that most editors ignored Asian poets entirely, while two or three collections quoted a few poems only; also, I found no anthology devoted to Non-European poetry confronting war. However, through some book-browsing and correspondence, admittedly far from exhaustive, over 200 poems relevant to this somber theme have come to light, chiefly from poems³ in English translation from China, Japan, Vietnam, India, and Iran. If a publisher or a foundation representative is interested, I'd like the opportunity to edit what appears to be the first extant anthology of Asian war/peace poetry—from Lao Tsze to Thich Nhat Hanh! For the present, may I share with you some highlights emerging from my preliminary explorations.

Virtually the earliest poem extant in Chinese tradition, alleged to come from an unknown writer around 2300 B. C., starts our odyssey of Asian war/peace poetry. Its title (romanized as *Paak Sing* in the

Cantonese a few words of which I retain from my childhood as son of a missionary in Kwangtung) means "The Hundred Names"—referring to the common Chinese surnames equivalent to Smith, Jones, and Brown; in other words, this is a song of the common people: (Hyakumei 百名)

From break of day
Till sunset glow
I toil.
I dig my well,
I plow my field,
And earn my food
And drink.
What care I
Who rules the land.
If I
Am left in peace?

There's abundant evidence, incidentally, that countless present-day Vietnamese farmers, both South and North, would echo these simple words.

From the *Shih Ching*, or Book of Songs, (Shi Kyo 詩經), China's venerated collection of anonymous ballads and poems of the 11th to 7th centuries before Christ, several anti-war poems have survived, the most forthright of which is the plaint of conscripted soldiers to "The Minister of War":⁵

O minister of war,
We are the king's fangs and claws.
Why have you piled on us this misery?
We have no place in which to rest.

O minister of war,
We are the king's claws and teeth,
Why have you piled on us this misery?
We have nowhere to lay our heads.

O minister of war,
Truly you have behaved curiously.
You have piled on us this misery.
Our mothers lack food.

Listen also to the first of three stanzas of a ballad with the motif of the sounds of the wings of flying wild geese:⁶

The wild geese are flying:
Suk, suk go their wings.
The soldiers are on the march:
Painfully they struggle through the wilds.
In dire extremity are the strong men;
Sad are their wives, left all alone.

There are laments of women whose husbands are off to war, and at least one "Dear John" poem,⁷ in which a soldier returning to find his wife unfaithful, complains,

Alas for our bond!
It has not lasted even for our lifetime.
Alas for our troth!
You did not trust me.

And here is a poem, "Epitaph for a Warrior,"⁸ attributed to Confucius himself, the 6th century sage whose heritage still dominates China:

From under the snow the anemones bloom.
With all his heart the child plays. And weeps for it.
To us, who live on the break of the earth's fountain,
Sunrise and sunset are one.

Once more, as always, the river gushes from cliffs,
And, again, the moon courts the women.
Autumn will roll forever his golden gourd,
And forever crickets chirp in the grasses.

Once many firmly drove their horses on the rein.
The glory of a thousand massacres fades.
What remains of heroism? A decaying mound,
On which grow the weeds, red as fire.

Lao Tsze, (Rōshi 老子) the "Old Boy", the other influential Chinese philosopher who (if he really did live around 600 B.C.) wrote the seminal 80 verse-passages of the *Tao Te Ching* (Dō Kyō 道經), or "Book of The Way", incorporated quietistic, if not wholly pacifist, injunctions into several of his poems, such as No. 68:⁹

The best captain does not plunge headlong
Nor is the best soldier a fellow hot to fight.
The greatest victor wins without a battle.
He who overcomes men understands them.
There is a quality of quietness
Which quickens people by no stress:
"Fellowship with heaven", as of old,
Is fellowship with men, and keeps its hold.

Lao Tsze's warning, in No. 57,¹⁰ "The more weapons the people have,
/The more troubled is the state",⁴ might be passed on to the U. S.
National Rifle Association!

As Robert Payne put it, "For four thousand years the Chinese
peasants . . . have hated the arts of war" and yet "seem to have seen
war in a spirit of fatal expectancy, as though they knew it would al-
ways recur".¹¹ This unknown Chinese conscript, for example, captured
in 400 B.C. the authentic grumble of a G.I. whether of the Ch'u Dynasty
or of 1970 A.D.:¹²

Grass withers and likewise we,
marching incessantly, also
lose our strength, yet always
new marches are planned

Now we leave the long grass
envious even of the foxes
dragging their tails in freedom
while we alongside the carts
stamp down the highway, ever
to war

A name magic among early Chinese poets is that of Chu Yuan,
(Chu Yo 中庸), who drowned himself in 295 B.C. because he could not
influence the bad conduct of his prince; the Dragon Boat festivals held
annually commemorate his name. Chu Yuan knew whereof he wrote
when he composed the long poem "Battle," which—though not anti-war
in ultimate theme, yet faces the brutal facts of the wasteful death of
heroes, as in this excerpt:¹³

The warriors are all dead: they lie on the moor-field.
They issued but shall not enter: they went but
shall not return.
The plains are flat and wide, the way home is long.
Their swords lie beside them: their black bows,
in their hands.

From the famous anonymous Nineteen Han Poems composed around the start of our Christian era can be quoted the wistful "Soldier's Song":¹⁴

I joined the army when I was fifteen,
I returned only when my hair was gray.
On the way I met some villagers.
I asked them who was living in my home.
"Far away, over there is your house.
Tombs are built among the pine trees.
The rabbits run in and out of the dog holes,
And pheasants are flying from the roof beams.
In the courtyard grow the wild rice shoots;
The sweet ferns flourish by the wellside".
I cook rice in the grain,
And prepare a soup of ferns.
As soon as the meal is ready,
I do not know who to call.
When I stagger out and look to the east,
Tears fall and wet my clothes.

The poet Ts'ao Ts'ao (pen name for the Emperor Wei Wu-Ti who died in 220 A.D.), left a grim versified lament, "Song of the Graveyard",¹⁵ of which these are the final lines:

Their armour was alive with breeding lice,
Ten thousand families were all wiped out.
Their white bones lay and bleached in the wilderness,
For a thousand leagues not a cock was heard to crow.
Of the people, barely one in a hundred survived,
Remembering this is enough to break your heart.

And probably the most heartbreaking poem of military depredations between this century and the T'ang Dynasty was "War in Chang-An City", by Wang Tsan, who died in A.D. 217:¹⁶

Chang-an in utter confusion
as though wolves and tigers had been
let loose ; and I turned into a refugee
seeking to escape from my own country
to the borders of another ; my home sad
and bitter that I must go ; my friends wishing
to escape with me.

Leaving the city
one saw nothing, for the horror of the surroundings
blotted out all else ; everywhere
the white bones of the dead were
scattered and on the roads were starving women
putting the children they could not feed
into the grass to die ;
the abandoned child cries, yet the mother
dare not turn her head, though herself
shedding tears, saying she knew not where
she would die herself, and surely both
could not keep alive ; and I, rather than
listen to such bitter words, goad my horse
along faster ;
on the South I climb to Pa Ling, looking
back at Chang-an ; then, thinking of the good king
who lies there, long with a broken heart
for the sweet day of peace.

From the fifth century A.D. comes this plaint by Pao Chao, modulated
with a dignity and restraint that makes it timeless :¹⁷

Have you not seen the young men
Going off to the wars ?
They have turned into white-haired exiles
Because they can never return.
Their homes are hidden in the distance,
Cut off by night and day.
Rivers and mountain passes
Bar them off from their world.
The desert wind moans sadly,
Scudding white clouds.
Poignant the flutes of the nomads
In the bitter, frontier air.
The music fills them with sadness,
But what are they to do ?
Climbing a hill and gazing south,

For a while they are young again.
Trampled under nomad horses,
They will see their families no more.
Man runs a rough road through life—
But what is there to say?
Ravaged by endless sorrows,
They get to their feet with a sigh.

As we reach the T'ang Dynasty, the Golden Age of Chinese poetry, incontestably the most significant of all Asian poets of the war/peace motif appears, Tu Fu (To Hō 杜甫), whom both Chinese and most western scholars universally consider China's greatest man of letters. Robert Payne compares Tu Fu with Baudelaire, in possessing "an extraordinary tenderness and sensitivity, especially towards suffering As his own sufferings increased, we become conscious of a somber power and of a terrible expanding awareness. In this sense he is universal no one else would have dared to sum up all human history, as he saw it, in six Chinese characters so charged with meaning that they burst out of the page with the effect of an explosion:

Blue is the smoke of war, white the bones of men".¹⁸

This line (to which I am indebted for part of my article's title), comes, incidentally, from a short and perhaps minor poem, "Lament on the Battle of Ching-Fan", reporting a disastrous defeat of the imperial forces in 756 A.D. at the hands of the Tartars. The Chinese scholar William Hung gives the contextual lines from that poem in these words.¹⁹

Now smoke covers the hills, ice the river, and desolation the fields. Black is the smoke left over the camps, and white are the bones of our dead.

Among Tu Fu's poems there are enough relevant passages to usurp the entire space of this sharply-abridged presentation; perhaps his "A Song of War Chariots"²⁰ compasses most strongly the widest range of imagery and emotions:

The war-chariots rattle,
 The war-horses whinny.
 Each man of you has a bow and a quiver at his belt.
 Father, mother, son, wife, stare at you going,
 Till dust shall have buried the bridge beyond Ch'ang-an.
 They run with you, crying, they tug at your sleeves,
 And the sound of their sorrow goes up to the clouds;
 And every time a bystander asks you a question,
 You can only say to him that you have to go.
 We remember others at fifteen sent north to guard the river
 And at forty sent west to cultivate the camp-farms.
 The mayor wound their turbans for them when they started out.
 With their turbaned hair white now; they are still at the border,
 At the border where the blood of men spills like the sea—
 And still the heart of Emperor Wu is beating for war.
 Do you know that, east of China's mountains, in two hundred
 districts
 And in thousands of villages, nothing grows but weeds,
 And though strong women have bent to the ploughing,
 East and west the furrows all are broken down?
 Men of China are able to face the stiffest battle,
 But their officers drive them like chickens and dogs.
 Whatever is asked of them,
 Dare they complain?
 For example, this winter
 Held west of the gate,
 Challenged for taxes,
 How could they pay?
 We have learned that to have a son is bad luck—
 It is very much better to have a daughter
 Who can marry and live in the house of a neighbour,
 While under the sod we bury our boys.
 Go to the Blue Sea, look along the shore
 At all the old white bones forsaken—
 New ghosts are wailing there now with the old,
 Loudest in the dark sky of a stormy day.

Equally tragic, but on a smaller and more personal scale, is Tu Fu's
 "The Bailiff of Shih-Hao",²¹ underlining the remorseless recruiting cal-
 lousness of those days:

I came to Shih-hao village and stayed that eve.
 A bailiff came to press-gang in the night.
 The old man, hearing this, climbed o'er the wall,
 And the old woman saw the bailiff at the door.

Oh, why was the bailiff's voice so terrible,
 And why the woman's plaint so soft and low ?
 'I have three sons all at the Nich-cheng post.
 And one just wrote a letter home to say
 The other two had in the battle died.
 Let those who live live on as best they can,
 For those who died are dead for evermore.
 Now in the house there's only grandson left;
 For him his mother still remains—without
 A decent petticoat to go about.
 Although my strength is ebbing, weak and low,
 I'll go with you, bailiff, at the front to serve.
 For I can cook breakfast for the army, and
 I'll march and hurry to the Ho-yang Front'.
 —So spake the woman, and in the night the voice
 Became so low it broke into a whimper.
 And in the morning ere I resumed my way,
 I said good-bye to her old man alone.

"The Boy Who Did Not Come Home" is a short lyric, charged with a sympathy which Walt Whitman in his short elegy "Reconciliation" would again capture over a thousand years later:

Ho-Chien is still a fighting area
 and your bones lie in the deserted city ...
 ... a good
 All-round lad you were, lovable, clever;
 and now the dead earth has lain over
 your face these three years; the grasses
 shooting up again each springtime; the kindly
 breezes blowing over you.

Passing by another dozen poems by Tu Fu equally pertinent and aesthetically masterful,²³ we end with a dramatic monologue on a theme frequently exploited by both Chinese and, as we shall see, Japanese poets, the wife's longing for her absent soldier husband; this poem's title is deceptively commonplace, "Washing and Pounding Clothes":²⁴

I know that you will not come back from war.
 Still, on this stone
 I pound your cloak while you must die afar
 And I alone.
 Here in this bitter autumn chill I dream
 You may be warm
 Although the heart's chill that I suffer seems

An equal harm.
How can I cease from toiling, since I pray
This coat may come
To the Great Wall you guard, while I must stay
In our cold home?
Each sinew in my woman's body pounds
Your garment fair:
Listen! You may even hear these sounds
Out there!

Tu Fu's beloved friend and fellow-poet, Li Po (Rihaku 李白), the Anacreon—or the Byron—of Chinese T'ang poets, dwelt far less often and less deeply on the spectacle of war: yet, living in the same tempestuous 8th century of increasing civil wars, he did write some notable poems reacting to conflict, especially one aptly titled “The Nefarious War”:²⁵

Last year we fought by the head-stream of the So-Kan,
This year we are fighting on the Tsung-ho road.
We have washed our armor in the waves of the Chiao-chi lake,
We have pastured our horses on Tien-shan's snowy slopes.
The long, long war goes on ten thousand miles from home.
Our three armies are worn and grown old.

The barbarian does man-slaughter for plowing;
On his yellow sand-plains nothing has been seen but blanched skulls
and bones.

Where the Chin emperor built the walls against the Tartars,
There the defenders of Han are burning beacon fires.
The beacon fires burn and never go out.
There is no end to war!—

In the battlefield men grapple each other and die;
The horses of the vanquished utter lamentable cries to heaven,
While ravens and kites peck at human entrails,
Carry them up in their flight, and hang them on the branches
of dead trees.
So, men are scattered and smeared over the desert grass,
And the generals have accomplished nothing.

Oh, nefarious war! I see why arms
Were so seldom used by the benign sovereigns.

More quiet and nostalgic is Li Po's "The Moon over the Mountain Pass", but the macabre note is still strong:²⁶

The bright moon lifts from the Mountain of Heaven
In an infinite haze of cloud and sea
And the wind, that has come a thousand miles,
Beats at the Jade Pass battlements ...
China marches its men down to Po-teng Road
While Tartar troops peer across blue waters of the bay ...
And since not one battle famous in history
Sent all its fighters back again,
The soldiers turn round, looking toward the border,
And think of home, with wistful eyes,
And of those tonight in the upper chambers
Who toss and sigh and cannot rest.

But let us leave Li Po with a very characteristically muted and imagistic note, in his four-line poem titled "A Song of War":²⁷

Before the Peak of Returning Joy the sand was like snow.
Outside the surrendered city the moon was like frost.
I do not know who blew the horns at evening,
But all night long the boys looked toward their homes.

Other Chinese poets of the later T'ang and succeeding dynasties wrote occasional poems on the war/peace motif.²⁸ Reluctantly I select only three or four among a couple of dozen relevant poems encountered, and start with this anonymous poem which vibrates acutely between agony and the happiness of reunion—"Return to Ki-Ang Village":²⁹

On New Year's Day I begged audience.
The king was, as always, gracious to me.
He granted me leave, leave until spring.
To wife and children I am going.

In the west the red sun goes down.
The sparrows make a noise around the door.
I am at my goal. Beyond the bushes smiles brighten.
With pennants like a ship my house is before me!

My wife! My child! Here I am once more!
I cannot find words, and can only weep.
This citizens' war tears the limbs of our land apart,
And gallows instead of trees stand in the field.

I must race, bloody, a thousand miles;
On a thousand gallows I saw myself blown away.
It already is night. Come, wife, let the lamps burn,
And let us silently look into each others' eyes.

A late T'ang poet whose homely, disarming verses have been widely translated into English is Po Chu-I (Haku Raku Ten 白樂天) (died 846 A.D.); one of his poems is on a theme that Tu Fu, basically loyal to authority as he was despite misgivings about militarism, would never have chosen. "The Old Man with a Broken Arm" is a dramatic reminiscence by an 88-year-old patriarch who matter-of-factly recalls what he did when about to be forcibly recruited for the army:

In the depth of the night, not daring to let anyone know
I secretly took a huge stone and dashed it against my arm.
For drawing the bow and waving the banner now wholly unfit,
I knew henceforward I should not be sent to fight in Yun-nan.
Bones broken and sinews wounded could not fail to hurt.
I was ready enough to bear pain, if only I got home.
My arm—broken ever since; it was sixty years ago.
One limb, although destroyed,—whole body safe!
But even now on winter nights when the wind and rain blow
From evening on till day's dawn I cannot sleep for pain.
Not sleeping for pain is a small thing to bear,
Compared with the joy of being alive when all the rest are dead...

Po Chu-I tells the story, lets it stand, makes no judgment. No doubt he would be as bald and impartial about American objectors to the Vietnam conflict who emigrate to Canada.

Since the 4-line poem is titled, "Written in the year Chi-Hai" or A.D. 879, we have exact dating for Tsao Sung's famous epigram, perhaps for its length the most widely-known anti-war poem in China:

The submerged country, river and hill, is a battleground.
How can the common people enjoy their wood-cutting and
their fuel-gathering?
I charge thee, Sir, not to talk of high honours;
A single general achieves fame on the rotting bones
of ten thousand.

Also a quatrain of this period, but more tender in its irony, is the

well-known second "Lung-Hsi Song", by Ch'en T'ao:³²

They vowed to sweep away the barbarians without regard to self;
Five thousand in their furs and brocades perished in the
Tartar dust.
Alas! their bones lie beside the Wu-ting river....
They still live in their ladies' dreams in Springtime.

The tenth-century poet, Tu Hsun Hao, composed a brief sardonic poem titled "The Taoist Monk", which serves ambiguously to recall³³ to mind our quotations from Lao Tsze a millenium and a half earlier:

In all the four seas
There is war,
Death and destruction,
Fire and sword;
And nowhere
Is peace to be found.
In the monastery
Of Chiu Hua,
Living in a dream world
All his own,
There stands a Taoist monk
With head bowed down
In prayer
Before a smiling god.

Many Chinese scholars regard the eight or nine centuries following A.D.1000 as a relatively sterile and imitative period in production of poetry, even though hundreds of poets left thousands of titles during these dynasties. However, to at least one Western reader's sensibility the following poem, "The Locust Swarm", written around the beginning of the 13th century by Hsu Chao, is unique and haunting in its Poesque surrealistic eerie mood:³⁴

Locusts laid their eggs in the corpse
Of a soldier. When the worms were
Mature, they took wing. Their drone
Was ominous, their shells hard.
Anyone could tell they had hatched
From an unsatisfied anger.
They flew swiftly towards the North.
They hid the sky like a curtain.
When the wife of the soldier

Saw them, she turned pale, her breath
Failed her. She knew he was dead
In battle, his corpse lost in
The desert. That night she dreamed
She rode a white horse, so swift
It left no footprints, and came
To where he lay in the sand.
She looked at his face, eaten
By the locusts, and tears of
Blood filled her eyes. Ever after
She would not let her children
Injure any insect which
Might have fed on the dead. She
Would lift her face to the sky
And say, "O locusts, if you
Are seeking a place to winter,
You can find shelter in my heart."

And the somber wistfulness of this 14th-century poem by Kao Ching-Ch'iu may be an apt prelude to 20th-century Chinese verse about war ;
it's a dramatic monologue entitled "I Hold Watch":³⁵

I climb on the city wall
and look into the distance.
Darkened by wind and dust,
the far-away land grows hazy.

The stream and the mountain
protect our city.
The signal fires flicker
from all the wall towers.

When will
the trespassing cease?
From a hundred dead remain
only handfuls of earth.

With dew and rain
Now on all sides flourish
only wild thistles
on the millet-acres.

The far-away fields of slaughter
are not to be seen.

And still I comprehend
the need of man.

The horses are skittish
in the whistling west wind.
The drums rumble
as the sun sets.

The water rushes
along the foot of the wall below:
So streams the song
forth through all time.

As a transition into our brief excursus in recent Chinese poetry about war and peace, it is appropriate to present "Song of a Soldier",³⁶ by a poet who died in 1921, but might have been equally at home a thousand years before. He was known as The Monk of Eight Fingers because he had dedicated two fingers to Buddha by holding them in a flame.

At thirteen I followed the army and garrisoned a border town.
Five thousand iron horses marched together.
At the Great Wall we fought; all perished.
I have no desire to have my portrait in the Hall of Clouds.

With broken banners in my hands the setting sun:
"Heroic souls, follow me back to your village homes".
Suddenly a skeleton arose and talked like a man:
"Honorable Sir, take this letter to my mother and father.

"Tell them I am in exile, a ghost among new ghosts;
Tell them I am far from home, a wanderer—
They do not know whether I am alive or dead,
And tell my wife not to suffer for my sake".

During the 1920's Wen Yi-tuo, an influential modern Chinese scholar and poet of increasingly leftist sympathies who was murdered by Kuomintang soldiers in 1946, wrote this symbolic and ironic protest,³⁷ entitled "Early Summer Night":

The setting sun leaves the poet to the dreary night,
And he reminds her: "Reveal all your secret treasures".
The violet sky spills broken pearls,

He believes they should be strung together
As adornments upon the breasts of death.

Claws of cold undertow comb the withered hair of starved willows,
Wringing out their reflections from the pond in slivers of gold.
Halfway up the hill there is a fallen cypress, hunchbacked.
Her dark bony fists shake defiance at the sun.
The sleepless toads are overcome with weariness,
The village dogs bark in mournful, inquiring tones.
How can the nerves of thieves stand up to the strain?
A fire-swallowing, mist-spitting dragon climbs the iron stairway
With "War" engraved on the gray uniform, hoarsely shouting, sobbing.
The clapper of a great bell comforts the world,
Saying, "Sleep in peace", but who believes in the bell?
O God, knowing the pass the world has come to,
Are you not shuddering, O most benevolent God in the skies?

I must be forgiven a brief digression here. On the lookout for 20th-century Chinese poetry bearing on this theme, I examined H. T. Tsiang's booklet published in 1929 under title of *Poems of the Chinese Revolution*.³⁸ It was prefaced by a brief statement from Upton Sinclair, who wrote, "The exploited races of the world are awakening and demanding the rights of human beings. Here is a young Chinese student whom the American authorities sought to deport and to deliver to the executioner's axe at home". The booklet contains six extremely overwrought manifestoes in exclamation-point-specked verse by this young communist poet, together with a lurid verse-drama titled "Canton Soviet" portraying the bloody repression by the "white" military in Canton, China, of the abortive communist uprising there during three hectic days in December, 1927. Besides being far too long to quote, Tsiang's hysterically revolutionary poems call for bloodier reprisals against the Canton overlords, and thus are only borderline to the purpose of this presentation. But I suddenly shot back in memory to a frightening night over forty years ago when, clambering over the tile roof of my parents' missionary dwelling in a suburb across the Pearl River from a Canton partly in flames, I as a young teen-ager was armed with wet burlap and a bucket of water to quench any burning bits of debris dropping onto our roof from the conflag-

rations not too far distant! It was the night of the 1927 "Red" rebellion. Two mornings later I rode in a rickshaw through the city's burned and looted streets, gasping at sight of hundreds of dead bodies, almost all communist rebels or civilians shot down or axed by the nationalist general's forces who'd regained control. I am perhaps almost the only American now alive who saw with my own eyes at least a bit of what young Mr. Tsiang so agonizedly portrayed in his booklet; and I was too young then to know what it was all about. I wonder what happened to the poet...

Except for several shrill propaganda shouts allegedly from Chinese fighting the Japanese in the 'thirties,³⁹ I have found little poetry focused on the war/peace motif except those hostile to the Chiang Kai Shek regime before its final fall in 1949.⁴⁰ It is well known that Mao Tze Tung himself has been an accomplished poet utilizing traditional forms for his trumpet calls to follow the Red banner; but in one poem, "Kunlun", of 1935, Mao's mood is uniquely tranquil and optimistic; addressing the huge snowy mountain, he says:⁴¹

To Kunlun now I say:
Neither all that height
Nor that much of snow are needed.
Could I but draw the precious sword that leant upon the sky
To slice you into three bits,
Giving one to Europe,
One to America,
And leaving one in China;
That peace may come,
Your warmth and coolness shared by all.

Would that he, and we also, could regain that spirit—of "Kunlun".

Kuan Chao's poem of the 1940's, "Address to the dead Soldiers of Marshal Chiang Kai Shek",⁴² is charged with harsh sympathy. It begins:

The march in the four directions of the wind
Is now no longer for you. Now you each lie
Within four planks of spruce.

The speaker describes the sweating efforts of the grave diggers, and the corporal's satisfaction over being able to sell the rations of these corpses "That will give meat and brandy for him"; the poem ends:

And so you shall lie, comrades to the right and to the left,
Comrades under you, and comrades soon also above you.
Wind and rain will dig out your bones, and those of you
Who waited out a short life for freedom,
Those who did not want to lie here, beloved friends,
Soon will come the wild dogs, who will carry you away from here.

Yuan Shui-p'ai (born 1908), writing under the pen-name Ma Fan-t'o in Hong Kong during and after the second World War, was known for satiric and even humorous verse, but this poem, based on a news item in 1947, bites more deeply—and recalls Po Chu-I's "Old Man With a Broken Arm" written a thousand years earlier. An old mother⁴³ speaks:

It's snowing hard,
The river froze.
We finished the nation's war, but now we fight our own people.
Conscription could not reach rich men.
It only reached after my son, over twenty years old.

I entreated heaven, heaven did not respond;
I pleaded with the earth, the earth had no power.
I begged other people, but no one sympathized.
I cried my eyes dry, dreading the arrival of dawn,
For at dawn my son was to report to the army camp.

While my son was asleep,
And the neighborhood lay in total silence.
"Ah, my son,
Don't blame your mother for being too cruel,
Don't blame your mother for being too cruel."

I took needles,
Two steel needles,
And plunged them into my son's eyes.
He screamed and the blood spurted out.
"Ah, my son, they don't take a blind man in the army!"

The poet Ai Ch'ing may typify many rebellious Chinese poets, and also, sadly enough, the ironic fate meted out to revolutionists who took "the hundred flowers" of freedom of speech seriously during early years of the Mao regime. Ai Ch'ing was with the Red army at Yen-an during the 1930's, and held high posts when the communists attained power in 1949—but he was purged in 1957.⁴⁴ The long symbolic poem, "Snow Falls on China", composed probably in the year 1939, well portrays his sympathy with the common folk he assisted:⁴⁵

I tell you, I too
Am a descendant of farmers;
Like you, my face
Is etched with pain....

and his picture of stricken China ends with this wistful yearning:

O China
On this lampless night,
Can my weak lines
Give you a little warmth?

As Professor A.R.Davis of the University of Sydney grimly puts it, ⁴⁶ "...poetry, like other literary forms in China, has been firmly harnessed to the propaganda machine" since the 1940's. Skimming of a dozen recent issues of the English-language literary periodical exported by Peking, *Chinese Literature*,⁴⁷ reveals a dreary banal parade of poems mostly ending with "Long live Chairman Mao" or "Mao Tsetung thought arms me!" No wonder Ai Ch'ing and several other Chinese poets with imagination and creativity are not published any more.

When we turn to the island empire of Japan, it first appears almost a contradiction in terms to anticipate serious poetry on the war / peace theme because, as Donald Keene explained to me, in classic Japan "there was really no tradition of expressing oneself on intellectual ideas in poetry. Poetry was almost exclusively 'poetic'; that is, it was written in the approved modes with the approved poetic diction, and these modes did not include mention of war in any connec-

tion".⁴⁸ This proviso explains the slimness of a peace-protest anthology of Japanese verse before the twentieth century.

Yet in the great early verse-collection, the *Manyoshu*, plaints by frontier guards twelve centuries ago (if taken literally as from the lips of soldiers) do touch on the human condition even if without question of loyalty to their Emperor whose borders they guard. For example, in the year 755 A.D. a guard named Akimochi Mononobe pens this *tanka*:⁴⁹

The dread imperial command
I have received: from tomorrow
I will sleep with the grass,
No wife being with me.

The poignant urge to ensure self-identity captures a young officer, Kasa Kanamura, as he faces probable death in battle:⁵⁰

This is the arrow which I, a warrior, shot,
Lifting up the bow-end:
Let it remind those who find it
To talk of me forever.

Moving a few centuries past the static courtly era of the Heian dynasty, and past the bloody feudal wars, we encounter a *tanka* by Prince Munenaga, of the early 14th century, as follows:⁵¹

I never dreamed
That I should handle bows and arrows night and day,
And should devote my heart and soul
To arms I had not even touched before!

In 1488 A.D. three notable Japanese poets met at Minase, to match wits and sensibilities in composing "linked verse", of 100 interlocked segments. At one point in this "Minase Sangin", the poets Sogi, Socho, and Shohaku wrote successive lines on the theme of the disastrous Onin Rebellion which a dozen years before had devastated the city of Kyoto; here are the eight relevant verses:⁵²

Even plants and trees
Share in the bitter grief
Of the ancient capital.

The sad house where once I lived
Is now but a remembrance.

Let this keepsake
Of a mother not long dead
Bring consolation.

As Harold Henderson, leading American *haiku* scholar, reminds me, "In Bashō's time—and practically all of the Tokugawa period—there were no wars in Japan, internal or external. So there seems to have been no urge to write *haiku* (which deal primarily with 'this moment') on the 'war/peace' motif".⁵³ Concerning the famous *haiku* by Bashō which reads

Ah! summer grasses!
All that remains
Of the warriors' dreams.

Dr. Henderson warns that even this wistful lament is "rather a lament for futile 'glories' than an objection to war as such".⁵⁵ R.H. Blyth reminds us that Bashō, in 1689 A.D., was visiting the spot where the old hero Yoshitsune had committed suicide five hundred years before.⁵⁶ Perhaps closer to a philosophic reflection on war *per se* is part of a *gatha* by Seccho, another Japanese poet:⁵⁷

Scheming ministers and fierce generals, —where are they now?
The cool breeze of a thousand leagues alone knows.

An 18th-century *senryū* by Ryomei may bring acutely to mind the all-too-frequent occasions during the 1960's when strafing by American helicopters accidentally killed their own GI's or Arvins in action:⁵⁸

He died
From the fire of his own troops
And of the enemy.

A young military officer, Koshiro Fujita, killed in 1865, left this short ironic poem:⁵⁹

To fret at the time, to bewail the age—how pointless!
More sense in howling at the moon or fashioning rhymes
on flowers.

Should anyone come to camp and ask for me today,
Say that the general went to bed drunk and has not yet wakened.

Japan's Emperor Meiji, who in mid-19th-century brought about abolition of the Shogunate and restored imperial power, is credited with 100,000 poems, of which at least a few meditate on the peace theme, like this *tanka* written during the Russo-Japanese war in 1904:⁶⁰

Surely in this world men are brothers all,
One family!
Then why do winds and waves on all the seas
Rage stormily?

One of the Emperor's generals, Ryu Saito, also wrote *tanka* during this same conflict; here is one entitled "My Field Glasses":⁶¹

Quite unaware that they are within range
Of my field glasses,
Some enemy soldiers are eating lunch.
How lovable they look!

Whether our general subsequently trained a battery of cannon on these placid diners is not mentioned!

The poet Takuboku Ishikawa, who died in 1914, composed a *tanka* whose somber implications are left unstated:⁴²

A very rusty pistol came out,
As I was digging
A hummock of sand
With my fingers.

One of the most noted twentieth-century Japanese women poets, Akiko Yosano, captured a girl's agony in words not limited to the lips or heart of a Japanese, as this first of five stanzas of her "Do Not Die, My Brother" will testify:

Ah, I weep for my brother:
Do not die, my dear brother!
You, the youngest in our family,
Are beloved by our parents.
Did our father and mother teach you to hold a sword
To kill other persons?
Did they bring you up until you became twenty-four

To die, to kill other human beings?

And, in a similar way anticipating Carl Sandburg's famous free-verse poem, "A.E.F.", about "a rusty gun", an early 20th-century woman poet, Aya-ko Nakahara, uttered a sentiment not the less significant because her countrymen later violated it:⁶³

May swords become quickly
Rusted completely,
For the honour and glory
Of the world of mankind!

Sosei, in 1938, was perhaps as explicit as a poet dared to be during a period of rising tensions, since (as Dr. Henderson recalls) "From 1941 on, anti-war *haiku* were suppressed by the government, and many anti-war poets were arrested"; Sosei wrote,⁶⁴

I buried my comrade
With tears today,
Wild geese flying high.

The poem "Ascension," by the symbolist-realist poet Mitsuharu Kaneko, surely could not have been published in war-time, but does serve to assure us that not all Japanese youth were whole-souled in favor of the Second World War:⁶⁵

Today is execution day for the pacifists.
Escaping from the gunfire as their corpses topple,
Their souls have ascended to heaven
To proclaim injustice and iniquity.

In grief, their spirits have begun to relent,
Calling from the edge
Of a great four-cornered ice-floe,
Turning to a rainbow flickering in the dark.

Bombs have exploded; fireworks have crackled:
Their souls, sent drifting to one corner of heaven,
Turned into mist, into spume, into cloud-drifts,
To stain the sky with blood that is still hot.

Reaction to an American air raid on a Japanese city is caught in a sequence of three *haiku* by Kato Shuson, who in a headnote recalls

the circumstances: "Carrying my sick brother on my back I wandered in the flames with my wife in search of our children". Out of this ugly and torturous experience are distilled these three delicate poems:

In the depths of the flames
I saw how a peony
Crumbles to pieces.

Cold winter storm—
A safe-door in a burnt-out site
Creaking in the wind.

The winter sea gulls—
In life without a house,
In death without a grave.

Since that ghastly morning of August 6, 1945, when the Enola Gay dropped an A - Bomb that took the lives of 200,000 Japanese men, women, and children—the overwhelming majority civilians—a revulsion of conscience has spurred the writing of thousands of poems by poets of every nation on earth, but especially by the Japanese themselves. If the following *haiku* seem in English translation rather bald and aesthetically unpolished, remember that each was written by an actual victim of the Hiroshima bombing, and some of the authors have since died of leukemia or other bomb-created disorders:

Under a blind star
One reed
Still lives.

The spot where the bomb fell
Looks like
A speechless eye.

A baby sucks
The blood that trickles
From its mother's breast.

The shower of cicada voices—
I am blind,
They say my husband is dead.

Undressing to the waist,
"It's too hot, Mama",
And he spoke no more.

In Hiroshima
Salvias are in bloom,
Believing in mankind.

One citizen of Hiroshima, Shineo Shoda, composed a sequence of seventy *tanka*, some of which are shrill cries of anguish, others more artistic and aesthetically evocative:

Under the blazing sun
on the wilderness of cinders and ashes
stands one tree, burnt black.
Under the blazing sun, to the tree
comes a woman, to hang herself.

These big bones
must be the teacher's.
Around them,
gathering in a circle,
little skulls are found.

A load of coal?
No, it is the remains of these
who could once sing and love.
In a black heap
They are carried away on a truck.

A *haiku* from Hatsumi Tsukamoto, a third-year student in a Hiroshima primary school, reads like this in English:

The moment the A-bomb fell,
Day changed into night,
And men and women into so many ghosts.

From a longer adult poem by Eisaku Yoneda, "The Sand on August 6",⁷⁰ can be extracted these disturbing lines:

The blood of men and women has soaked into everything, into
every grain,
And the grains are their very bones ground into atoms.
As the bell begins to toll,
Each grain of sand will start to breathe its hot breath.
They are fanned to fire, like so many sparks.
Or are they stirring? are they starting to revive?

As Yoneda ends his poem, each grain symbolizes a call for world peace.

Recently staged in Hiroshima was an ambitious cantata, music composed by Masao Oki for a libretto based on a sequence of powerful poems by Sankichi Toge, of which this is one, "At a First - Aid Post":⁷¹

You
Who have no channels for tears when you weep
No lips through which words can issue when you howl
No skin for your fingers to grip with when you writhe in torment
You

Your squirming limbs all smeared with blood and sliming sweat
and lymph
Between your closed lids the glaring eyeballs show only a thread
of white
On your pale swollen bellies only the perished elastic that held up
your drawers
You who now can no longer feel shame at exposing your sheltered sex
O who could believe that
Only moments ago
You were all schoolgirls fresh and appealing

In scorched and raw Hiroshima
Out of dark shuddering flames
You no longer the human creatures you had been
Scrambled and crawled one after the other
Dragged yourselves along as far as this open ground
To bury in the dusts of agony
Your shrivelled hair on scalps bald as the brows of Buddhist saints

Why should you have to suffer like this
Why suffer like this
What is the reason
What reason
And you
Do not know
How you look nor
What your humanity has been turned into

You are remembering

Simply remembering
 Those who until this morning were
 Your fathers mothers brothers sisters
 (Would any of them recognize you now if they met you)
 Remembering your house where you used to sleep wake eat
 (In a single flash all the flowers on your hedges were blasted
 And no one knows where their ashes lie)
 Remembering remembering
 Here with your fellow creatures who one by one gradually
 stop moving
 Remembering
 Those days when
 You were daughters of mankind

A macabre authority invests this short poem by Tamiki Hara,
 an A-bomb victim who survived the Hiroshima disaster but committed
 suicide five years later when he found himself crumbling from disease
 in long-term effects of the bombing:⁷²

In the fire, a telegraph pole
 At the heart of the fire.
 A telegraph pole like a stamen,
 Like a candle,
 Blazing up, like a molten
 Red stamen.
 In the heart of the fire on the other bank
 From this morning, one by one,
 Fear has screamed
 Through men's eyes. At the heart of the fire
 A telegraph pole, like a stamen.

Back in 1948, on the occasion of Japan's new Constitution con-
 taining a pledge never again to build up a big standing army, thousands
 of young poets competed in a contest to compose *tanka* in the spirit
 of the new peace program.⁷³ Though many of these verses, at least in
 English translation, seem only crudely-expressed cries for new inter-
 national goodwill, others succeeded in fusing emotion and imagery in
 phrases more moving than mere propaganda; Teru Akimoto, for
 instance, writes as follows:⁷⁴

Gone are the days
 when clear blue skies

meant only the fear of
sudden and violent deaths.

Chiyoko Machida, the wife of a husband dead in the World War, sublimated her bereavement in these lines:⁷⁵

As I wandered through
the spring meadows
remembering the days with him...
I met an orphan who
in a dirty hand
Held a fragrant lotus-flower.

This severely abridged survey of Japanese poetic responses to the war/peace theme may be appropriately concluded by quotation of a short but haunting poem by Shiro Murano, wellknown professional critic and poet; it's titled "Black Song":⁷⁶

From eyes, from ears,
Blackness pours;
Melted in the night,
Flesh gushing from my mouth,
What can it be,
This black song?

Here no dawn reaches:
A vacuum
In the earth's shade,
No tree, house, dog.
And here, a heart
That will not die,
That will not sleep,
Singing, singing.
Friends of the world,
Listen to its song,
Black song of peace.

Finally, after these brief surveys of the war/peace theme in Chinese and Japanese poetry (and with no space available to explore the not-unproductive fields of India and the Moslem Middle-East countries on this topic), we turn for a glimpse at poems from seven centuries in the history of a small Indo-Chinese nation now suffering most hideously from the ravages of war—Vietnam. A million human beings

have died in Vietnam, north and south, almost 50,000 of them being American youths. The outcry in verse has been insistent and agonized, as we shall see.⁷⁷ But Vietnam has faced earlier oppressors and invaders—chief of them being China.

The poet Ly Dao Tai, born in 1254 A.D., wrote these lines which may be entitled “Pity for Prisoners”:⁷⁸

They write letters with their blood, to send news home.
A lone wild goose flaps through the clouds.
How many families are weeping under this same moon?
The same thought wandering how far apart?

In the 16th century Nguyen Binh Khiem meditates in a resigned mood reminiscent of Tu Fu and Li Po eight centuries earlier:⁷⁹

Will there ever be peace again, as in the old times?
Be sorry for both sides: they keep on fighting.
Brooks of blood everywhere, avalanches of bones.
Terror sends the fish to the bottom, the birds to the thickets.
What good does it do anyone?
I have cast lots. I have seen how the horse will cross over;
Undertake nothing except precautions against foxes.
Why waste breath talking about the world?
It's better to be drunk and singing poems by the river.

Another Vietnamese poet of the same era, Phung Khac Khoan, ends⁸⁰ his complaint with an ambiguous but perhaps more optimistic note:

War, no end to it, people scattered in all directions.
How can a man keep his mind off it?
The winds dark, the rains violent year after year,
laying waste the land, over and over.
After all, a man can make up his own mind
whether to act or not. They cut each other's throats
for the world. I can't take much interest in it.
Who is it that moves the clouds and permits the sun to shine?
He speaks, he smiles, he goes on bringing peace to the world.

In the course of a remarkable long poem, “Calling the Lost Souls,” the 18th century poet Nguyen Du addresses in one stanza the Chinese overlords who were oppressing Vietnamese:⁸¹

You sat and planned out battles,
 Schemed for command,
 Blew up thunder and lightning,
 Killed millions to make your glory.
 Battles turned wrong, a stray arrow, a chance bullet,
 And your blood on the field, your flesh rots.
 You hover near the sea, in distant lands,
 Your bones unclaimed, lying who knows where?
 Who understands storm and winds,
 Darkness dropped on the earth?
 No one mourns you, no one prays.

In another stanza he speaks to the drafted foot-soldiers, starving and neglected, finally dying, and the passage ends:⁸²

Your souls are like fire-flies now,
 Crying, sad in the darkness, for justice.

Another poet of that period, Dang Tran Con, spoke for Vietnamese women just as Japanese and Chinese poets have done, in "Lament of a Warrior's Wife":⁸³

When war blows dustily over the earth
 It is women who suffer:
 Oh heaven, so blue, so high,
 Whom shall we blame?....

As we reach the 20th century, one or two of the laconic quatrains⁸⁴ penned by Ho Chi Minh, later premier of North Vietnam, recall to us his youthful months spent as prisoner of the Chinese. "Jail Pastoral" is one such evoked mood:

When I came the rice was pale green.
 Now it's cut and in the barns.
 Peasants laugh,
 I hear them, here, across the rice fields.

And, as testimony to his ironic courage, here is "Uncle" Ho's "Farewell to My Tooth":

You're hard, friend. Proud.
 Not soft like my tongue.
 We've shared the bitter and the sweet,
 But now you go west, I go east.

The undeclared war of the 1960's has spurred into articulate protest (I have uncovered not one poem supporting this war, either from American or from Vietnamese poets) many Vietnamese voices, some of whom despite threats and censorship have been heard significantly. Tru Vu,⁸⁵ contemporary poet, represents an increasingly vocal "third front":

I am neither a communist
nor a nationalist:
I am a Vietnamese.
Is it not enough?
For thousands of years
that's what I've been:
don't you think that's enough?
And Vietnam in flames
and mothers who weep
and youngsters who suffer
and all the terminology we use to kill each other!
O River,
we stand on our respective banks,
our fallen tears mingling.

Early in this past decade Thai Luan, another modern poet, published this sardonic poem, entitled, simply, "Life":⁸⁶

Many an American said
We have to kill for another year in order to have peace,
In order to have peace, do you hear that, younger brother?
One year, or two years, or ten years,
I don't mind.
If this boy dies, we still have another;
Smaller boys will grow up, in time.
More guns, more bullets, more boys.
O people who never fear hunger and death,
Come, to be our advisers and to help us to kill us.

Poetic thrusts in this mood, and ones even more shrill with indignation could be quoted by the page, but I regard the "Ubi sunt" wistfulness of the following poem, "Devastated", by a young Vietnamese poet named Trung Sinh, as ultimately more powerful — it was published just three years ago:⁸⁷

Bamboo creaking in the wind,
Smoke hanging in the air,
Whose voice in the wind
is whispering what?

The jackfruit out in the garden,
The lime tree in front of the gate,
Withered leaves falling,
Desolation, darkness, silence . . .

Of the noise of the chickens hopping about the nest,
Of the squeals of the hungry pigs,
Of the hum of the fans winnowing rice,
Not an echo.

One heap of ashes, charcoal,
Lying still, not speaking,
Thinking of the beam, the roof,
Seeing only the sad pillars standing alone.
Gone the dragonflies,
The birds and their greetings.
Gone the charming voice
Of the showy magpie.
Gone the young girl
Washing garments by the brook.
Gone the youngsters
And the summer noon song.

As a superb final note on which to end this introduction to the war/peace poetry of eastern Asia, the same Vietnamese major poet whose voice was heard on our first page is again speaking, in his brief but memorable poem, "Recommendation":⁸⁸

Promise me this day,
promise me now
while the sun is overhead
exactly at the zenith,
promise me.

Even as they
strike you down
with a mountain of hate and violence,
even as they
step on your life and crush it

like a worm,
even as they dismember, disembowel you,
remember, brother,
remember
man is not our enemy.

(Footnotes and Bibliography follow.)

FOOTNOTES

(See bibliography for full titles and publishing data for references cited here by author's name only.)

¹*The Cry of Vietnam*, p. 14.

²The bibliography lists seventeen titles of war/peace anthologies published between 1917 and 1972. Of these, ten included one or more poems by Asian authors. (Note asterisked titles.)

³A number of poems relevant to the war/peace theme were found in preliminary surveying of verse volumes representing India and the Middle East; but the present paper restricts itself to China, Japan, and Vietnam.

⁴Henry Hart, *The Hundred Names*, p. 37, reprinted in Bates, p. 117.

⁵Burton Watson, *Early Chinese Literature*, pp. 220-221, finds most of the war/peace poems of the Shih Ching among the *hsiao ya* odes, 74 in number and focused on topics of satire and complaint; these follow the 160 *feng* odes or folk ballads; the remaining two categories are the *ta ya* odes, on Chou history, etc.; and the final 40 *sung* hymns. This poem is from Payne, p. 46; it is also in Waley, *Book of Songs*, pp. 118-9, and in Fassmann, p. 11. Also, from "The Songs of Pei" section, see "Mao Mount" (McNaughton, p. 67); from "The Songs of Wang," "He's to the War" (*ibid.*, 68); from "The Songs of Ngwei," "Over the Hills" (*ibid.*, pp. 68-69); from "The Minor Courtly Songs: The Deer Sing Decade," "Pick a Fern" (*ibid.*, pp. 70-71); and from "The Old

Capital Decade," "Lily Bud," and "Cranes and Geese" (*ibid.*, pp. 72-73), the early lines from the last-titled poem being

Your sons are on the march,
We fight and sweat in the wilds

but the final one of the three stanzas making a notably modern semantic thrust:

Cranes and geese, still flying,
Cry, grieving Knaw! Knaw!
There are those, intelligent men,
That speak of us sweating and beat.
There are those, ignorant men,
That speak of our "glory" and "aims."

⁶Waley, p. 118; there are two more stanzas.

⁷Waley, p. 113; the wife's marriage-vow is given in the quatrain preceding, and there are three stanzas preceding these.

'For good or ill, in death as in life;
This is the oath I swear with you.
I take your hand
As token that I will grow old along with you.'

Other soldier-plaints include "What plant is not yellow?" with its bitter comment (Davis, p. 2):

Heigho, for us soldiers!
We alone are not treated as men.

See also poems in Waley, pp. 120; and "We marched to the East Mountains and did not/ Come back," in Wells, p. 180; also poem No. 167 in Wells, p. 184; poem No. 181, in Wells, pp. 184-5.

⁸Fassmann, p. 20; I have not found this poem in other collections.
(Translation from the German by Joan Foss.)

⁹Witter Bynner's translation, in Bates, p. 7; a more formal version is that by D. C. Lau, p. 130. Other sections in the *Tao Te Ching* pertaining to war and force include Nos. 30, 31, and 69.

¹⁰Paul Carus' translation, in Yohannan, p. 348. From No. 76 come these lines, in Yohannan, p. 349:

Therefore he who in arms is strong will not conquer.
When a tree has grown strong it is doomed.

¹¹From the introduction, p. ix, in Payne's *The White Pony*; also, p. vii.

¹²Bates, p. 92, translation by Rewi Alley.

¹³Lines 10-13 of poem beginning "We grasp our battle-spears," in Waley, *170 Poems*, pp. 39-40; also in Giles, p. 299, Eberhart, pp. 28-29, and (under title "Pro Patria Mori") in McNaughton, pp. 141-142.

¹⁴Frodsham, p. 7; Payne, pp. 113-114; Lai Ming, p. 116; Rexroth, p. 5; Miller, p. 21.

¹⁵Frodsham's introduction states that "during this age of war and murderous intrigue.....from the end of the Han onwards the Chinese poet, obsessed by the skull beneath the skin, discusses little else. A real graveyard poetry develops....." (pp. xxiv-xxv). Ten lines precede this quoted poem-passage, in Frodsham, pp. 28-29; see also Fassmann, p. 28. Note a similar poem, "The Ruins of Lo-Yang," by Ts'ao Chih (192-232 A. D.) (McNaughton, pp. 212-3).

¹⁶Bates, p. 41, translation by Rewi Alley; also Kenseth, p. 8; Cromie, p. 12. See also, in Frodsham, pp. 26-27, the same poet's "Poem of Seven Sorrows," in which the fleeing official meets a starving woman

Who had left her suckling child to die in the grass.
She turned her head to listen to its crying.
But brushed away her tears and would not return.

¹⁷Frodsham, p. 151 and McNaughton, pp. 216-217; see also "The Weary Road," Frodsham, p. 150. Among later Han dynasty war poems, see the long and agonized poem, "Poem of Sorrow" by the captive woman poet Ts'ai Yen (fl. A. D. 190), *ibid.*, pp. 9-13; the plaint by Juan Chi (210-263) with its key lines,

In vain I heard the boom of the metal drum.
Life in the army makes a man unhappy,

ibid., p. 66; and the philosophic poem, "You halt your troops....," by Hsi K'ang (223-262), *ibid.*, p. 71. There is also the famous Han folk-song, "Fighting South of the Castle," a monolog by a dead soldier who offers a grisly invitation,

Tell the crows for me:
Welcome, feast yourselves!
Lying unburied in the wilds,
How could my rotted body be spared?

See Liu, pp. 46-47; Eberhart, pp. 30-31; Payne, p. 112; Cromie, p. 7; and McNaughton, pp. 197-198.

¹⁸Payne, p.185. Tu Fu's original line comprised seven Chinese characters, a linking verb coming between the first and second major words. In Cantonese romanization, the line would be as follows:

Ching (see) Fòng Yeèn Baak `Yan Gwút

in Mandarin, the line would be as follows:

Ching (shǐ) Fūng Yèn Bāi Rén Gōu

(For aid in this transcription I am indebted to Mr. Pat Welsh, young scholar in Chinese at Kansas University, Lawrence.)

¹⁹Hung, p.102. Rewi Alley, in his *The People Sing*, p.150, translates the two lines as follows:

Now, the snow has covered
the hills, and the rivers are frozen;
Smoke from the beacon fires rises black
And men's bones lie whitening ...

²⁰Miller, pp.31-32, in Witter Bynner's translation; Bynner, pp.138-139; Hung, pp.64-65; Birch, pp.240-241; Wells, pp.48-49; Cromie, pp.10-11; Liu (with Chinese original on opposite page), pp.45-47; Hart, *Hundred Names*, pp.123-125; Liu Wu-Chi, pp.82-83; Payne, pp.193-194; McNaughton, pp.326-328.

²¹Lai Ming, p.162; Payne, p.197; Wells, p.45; Birch, pp.239-240; Giles, pp.340-341; Hung, p.141; Liu Wu-Chi, pp.83-84; Cromie, pp.13-14, in translation by Rewi Alley.

²²Rewi Alley, *The People Sing*, p.128. McNaughton, p.328, prints Alley's translation of Tu Fu's "Night in the Pavilion by the River": "I worry about war ..."

²³For instance, see Tu Fu's dramatic monologue of a bride distressed about her husband's departure to be swallowed up in the maw of civil wars, "Parting of a Newly Wedded Couple," Wells, p.47; Hung, p.141.

There is another poem, complementary to this, "Parting of an Aged Couple," in which the old husband faces the imminent death of his wife and himself from a world where "Woods stink of corpses in decomposition" and "Human blood encrimsons all the land," Wells, pp.109-110; Payne, p.196; Hung, p.136.

In addition, from Hung's book on Tu Fu note the following numbered poems (numerals in Roman in original): 30-34, 59, 65-69, 70-72, 74, 79, 83, 119, 235, 247, 296, 323, 349, 361, 369; from Wells, pp.45, 49, 50, 104.

See also comment on Tu Fu in Hu, Pin-Chiang's *Li Ch'ing Chao*, pp. 60-61.

²⁴Wells, p. 45; Hung, pp. 152-3. See also "Lament of the Frontier Guard," McNaughton, pp. 317-318.

²⁵Cromie, p. 14; Bates, p. 153 (translation by Shigeyoshi Obata); also, under title of "Fighting South of the Ramparts," Birch, 228-229 (translation by Arthur Waley), with anonymous first century poem in correlation; also, under title of "The Long War," Eberhart, p. 43-44; Steiner, p. 138 (Waley's translation). McNaughton's rendering (pp. 324-325) supplies a more biting translation of the final four lines quoted in the text:

Lieutenants, privates
 stain the grass and weeds.
Generals! Secretaries!
 what good does this do?
So we know:
 these so-called "arms"
 are really murderer's tools.
Benevolent men
 seek for them
 neither use nor excuse.

²⁶Eberhart, p. 45 (translation by Witter Bynner after Kiang Kang-hu); Cromie, p. 9; Liu, p. 27 (in his version lines 7 and 8 are far more grim):

... The lot of soldiers is death,
 And from the battleground none has ever returned.

²⁷Payne, p. 176; McNaughton, pp. 353-354, attributes this to Li Yi (d. 827). Other war/peace poems by Li Po could include "A Soldier's Wife," and "After the Battle," Hart, *Garden of Peonies*, pp. 48, 39; "The Curse of War," Fassmann, p. 31; "Lament of the Frontier Guard," Eberhart, pp. 42-43 (translation by Ezra Pound); "The Taking Up of Arms," Ayscough and Lowell, p. 84.

²⁸For example, Kao Shih's (b. 765) long "Song of the Yen Country," Bynner, pp. 31-32; Li Chi's "Marching Song," Jenyns, p. 53, Bynner, p. 38; Wang Ch'ang Ling's songs at "Frontier Post," Jenyns, p. 26; Cheng T'ien's (d. 698) "Turkestan," Bynner, p. 11; Yang Ch'ing's (d. 692) "War," Hart, *Peonies*, p. 72; "The Arrowhead," by Li Ho (d. 817), Payne, p. 240, Birch, pp. 282-283; also from Payne, pp. 220, 231, Li Hua's long "Old Battlefields" and Lu Lun's brief but poignant "On Meeting a Sick Soldier"; widely known

was Wang Han's "Song of Liangchow," Bynner, p. 151, Payne, p. 229; Cromie, p. 11; McNaughton, pp. 350-351. See also (in McNaughton, pp. 355-356), Liu Chung-yung's "Soldiers' Grief."

²⁹Fassmann, p. 39 (translated from the German version by Joan Foss).

³⁰Anderson, pp. 228-229; Liu, pp. 82-85 (with Chinese original); also see comment in Liu Wu-Chi's *Chinese Literature*, pp. 89-90. Also see Po Chu-I's "The Prisoner" (written in 809 A. D.), Waley, *170 Poems*, pp. 188-190, Benet, pp. 564-566; "Sum Festmahl der Armee," Fassmann, p. 38.

³¹Davis, p. 28; Fassmann, p. 38; an unorthodox free translation by Kwok and McHugh can be found in *Why I Live on the Mountain; 30 Chinese Poems from the 'Great Dynasties.'* (reprinted in Cromie, p. 15).

³²Davis, p. 29; Giles, p. 386; this short ballad can be heard on Folkways Record No. FL9921.

³³Hart, *Garden of Peonies*, p. 90.

³⁴Rexroth, *100 Poems from the Chinese*, p. 135; Cromie, pp. 5-6.

³⁵Fassmann, p. 43 (translation from German version by Joan Foss); the poet's dates are 1336-1374. See also the early 15th-century poet Liu Chi's dialog between a soldier and his wife, Davis, p. 58; Wei Su's "Lungtou Waters," Alley, *The People Sing*, p. 160.

³⁶Payne, p. 297 (translation by Wang Shen Shih).

³⁷Payne, p. 300 (translation by Ho Yung).

³⁸I have seen a xerox transcript (courtesy of the Swarthmore Peace Collection, Swarthmore College, Penna.).

³⁹See, for instance, Joy Davidman's *War Poems of the United Nations*, published in 1943 during World War II... it contains several bellicose folk-songs and poems on the Japanese-Chinese conflicts, pp. 53-57. There are some poems reflecting the war against Japan in south-west China, by Tu Yun-Hsieh (b. 1920?), Hsu, pp. 243-247, especially his grim words from "A Dead Soldier," pp. 251-252. Note also the "Drummer of Our Time," T'ien Chien (b. 1914), whose war poems against the Japanese, Hsu, pp. 322-331, were later followed by ones involved in China's internal revolution.

⁴⁰Hsu's volume is the most fertile source for dozens of such poems, by the major modern Chinese poets, with helpful introductory material by Dr.

Hsu; Payne, pp. 300-321, also quotes such poems, with an introductory page or two, pp. 295-296.

⁴¹Wong Man, pp. 34-35 (the second of two stanzas); others of Mao's poems are more doctrinaire, or belligerent. See Payne, pp. 319-320; Hsu, pp. 361-366; McNaughton, p. 814.

⁴²Fassmann, pp. 162-163 (translation from German by Joan Foss), the entire poem being 33 lines long.

⁴³Hsu, pp. 410-411 (he writes under pen-name of Ma Fan-t'o).

⁴⁴See Hsu's discussion, pp. xxxviii; Goldman, pp. 174-176, also p. xi.

⁴⁵Shimer, pp. 99-100 (the poem is 75 lines long); see also Hsu, pp. 293-320. "He Died a Second Time" is perhaps the longest and most strong poem.

⁴⁶Davis, introduction, p. lxx; Hsu, introduction, pp. xl-xliv; Payne, p. 296, "Immense quantities of propaganda verses have been written... there are accounts of some forty million verses written in the province of Szechwan alone..."

⁴⁷Based on browsing through issues 1 to 12 (1969-1970) of *Chinese Literature*, issued by Foreign Languages Press, Peking.

⁴⁸Donald Keene, in a personal letter dated October 10, 1970.

⁴⁹*Manyoshu*, p. 250 (No. 764). See the comments about the guards and their verses, *ibid.*, introduction, p. lviii. Other "frontier guard" poems are included in the following numbered series: 533-537, 767-786, 852-854, 857-862.

⁵⁰*Manyoshu*, p. 97 (No. 283); "Composed on Mt. Shiotsu."

⁵¹Miyamori, p. 442; Prince Munenaga was the eighth son of the Emperor Go-Daigo.

⁵²Keene, *Anthology*, p. 320; a contemporary anti-war poem of the same period is also quoted, *ibid.*, p. 27.

⁵³Harold Henderson, in a personal letter dated October 7, 1970.

⁵⁴Blyth, *Haiku*, Vol. III, p. 309; Keene, *Anthology*, p. 369, quotes from Bashō's context in *The Narrow Road of Oku*.

⁵⁵Henderson's letter, again.

⁵⁶Blyth, *op. cit.*, 309-310.

⁵⁷Quoted by Blyth, *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 311.

⁵⁸Blyth, *Senryu*, p. 492; also quoted, p. 480, is a *senryu* in slighter satiric

vein, by Goro :

The soldiers,
Marching in the heat of the day,
All have the same face.

⁵⁹Keene, *Modern Japanese Literature*, p. 53 (in translation by Burton Watson; the original was in Chinese).

⁶⁰Miyamori, p. 537; see others by the Emperor, pp. 540, 541, 558.

⁶¹Miyamori, p. 688-689.

⁶²Ishikawa, p. 26, in Shio Sakanishi's translation; also see the tanka by Ishikawa in Miyamori, p. 733.

⁶³Aya-ko Nakahara's poem (she was born in 1878) is quoted in Miyamori, p. 798. The poem preceding, by Akiko Yosano, has an explanatory subtitle note, in substance as follows: "Worrying about my youngest brother who is in the corps which is enveloped by the enemies at Ryojun." It first appeared in *Myojo* [Lucifer / Hesperus], New Poetry Group, Sept. 1904, ed. Kan Yosano, pp. 51-52, Tokyo: Shin Shi-Sha (reprinted by Rinsen-Shoten in Kyoto in 1964). (English renderings courtesy of Mrs. S. A. Hayashi, of Kobe College.)

⁶⁴In Henderson's letter, drawing on the haiku in Blyth, Vol. II, p. 207.

⁶⁵Bownas and Thwaite, p. 199. See also Kaneko's bitter "Mount Fuji," in Shiffert, pp. 66-67. Kaneko's complete poems, Vol. II (poems composed primarily on war-protest topics, between 1934 and 1945), of course contains "Ascension" in the original Japanese, pp. 286-287. This volume, incidentally, is rich in anti-war poems (the poet is not responsible for these English titles' wording). Most celebrated is Kaneko's "The Shark" (1937), pp. 37-54, of which the following lines are an English rendering of notable excerpted portions:

The sharks do not eat ... they are full,
Their stomachs are filled with men: arms, legs, bodies ...
Are the warships only floating in solemn dignity?
No, no, no, they are full now...

Their stomachs are full now--with dead bodies, they cannot digest...

Also see "The Foam" (1937), pp. 16-21; "The Song of the Dawn," pp. 149-152; "The Bay," 156-159; the remarkable poem "The Parachute," pp. 171-175; the grim "Dogs," coming in 1940 out of Japan's war in Manchuria, pp.

175-180; "The Bullet," pp.188-189--featuring a bullet (pigeon of peace!) finding final refuge between bone and flesh of its nesting (or victim); "Mountain Ambush" (its opening lines limning a gruesome sketch of a long-dead seated Chinese soldier with his eyes eaten out by hawks), p.189 (written in 1937); "Perspective on War" (written in 1944), pp.189-194; Most of the remaining anti-war poems in Vol.II were written in 1944 or 1945: "A Bowl of Rice," pp.199-201; "Song of the Dead Body," pp.203-207; "The Cherry Blossoms," pp.213-217; "Falcon" (a vivid protest against the firebombing of Tokyo in 1945), pp.217-211; "The Song of Loneliness," pp.231-242; "Battle at Sea," p.265; "The Mold," pp.267-269; "Song of the Mollusk," pp.271-272; the ironic "Message of the *Fukusuke*" (the popular Japanese folk figure, a bigheaded dwarf ordinarily considered to bring good luck), pp.276-277; "Hell-fire," pp.279-281; "The Imp (*Oni*) and the Poet," pp.285-286; "Nero and the *Chou* King," p.289, and a second poem similar, pp.290-291; "The Son of a Peach (*Momotaro*)," pp.292-294, dealing with the *kamikaze* pilots; "The Fiend," pp.294-299; and finally "The Sobbing Ghost," pp.299-305.

⁶⁶Shimer, p.125; Keene, *Modern Japanese Literature*, p.382.

⁶⁷Provided by Lynne Shivers; English translations were by Takahashi Horioka in 1948.

⁶⁸The sequence is entitled "Sange" and I have seen it only in typescript form, kindly supplied by Dr. Miyao Ohara of Hiroshima, Japan.

⁶⁹From "Genshi-Gu mo no Shita Yori," edited by Sankichi Toge (who died in 1953), published by Aoki Shoten; another unusual poem in the small collection is by a third-year primary student, Hideo Yamaguchi. Reprint courtesy of Dr. Miyao Ohara.

⁷⁰Miyao Ohara, ed., *The Songs of Hiroshima*, pp.14-16. The same poet symbolically paints the future, in "Be Beautiful, River . . .," *ibid.*, p.54, the last of eight lines being

"The river burns on in red flames, forever."

⁷¹Toge, called "the poet of the H-Bomb," died in 1953 of the bomb's after-effects. The musical production, *Give Back the Human*, produced in 1962, was reprinted in *No More Hiroshimas*, vol.10, No.1 (January, 1963). Toge's poem was again reproduced in *Poetry Nippon* (special issue, summer issue),

No. 11, 1970, pp. 2-3. The translation into English is by James Kirkup and Fumiko Miura.

⁷²Bownas and Thwaite, p. 221; also by Tamiki Hara is "Glittering Fragments," given on the same page, with its key line,

"Strange rhythm of human corpses."

⁷³*A Hundred Poems by a Hundred Poets of Peace*, Feb., 1949 (xerox courtesy of Swarthmore Peace Collection, Swarthmore College, Penna.).

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 19. A more didactic *tanka* is by Ryoichi Iga, p. 49:

A beautiful land will rise
 in the east,
As we dump our arms
 and till our earth
And probe the treasures
 of the sea.

⁷⁶Bownas and Thwaite, p. 210. From the same volume, see this poet's haunting "Present Winter," pp. 211-212; and note Kaoru Maruyama, "Gun Emplacement," p. 203; the communist poet Jun Okamoto portrays Tokyo's ruins after surrender, "Under the hazy, blossom-laden sky," p. 207. In this context note the modern Chinese poet, Ai Ch'ing, whose powerful revolutionary poem, "To Hiroshima," in 1955, shows his sympathy (Hsu, pp. 318-319; it ends, "Today--Silence, please, everybody,/ Let Hiroshima speak.").

In the Guests' paperback volume, *Post-War Japanese Poetry*, naturally a number of relevant titles may be cited: "Nights" by Eiji Yamazaki, pp. 34-35; "Rice" by Tadashi Amano, pp. 38-39; the haunting "Funeral Train" by Yoshiro Ishihara, p. 45; "the Foot of the Mountain" by Hajime Kamimura, p. 42 (in which the poet complains that once-flawless Mt. Fuji is now "dirty"--

a firing-range for the U. S. army
where live shells throw up the dust...);

the same poet wrote "That Morning in Samarkand," pp. 46-48; the surrealistically thoughtful poem, "In a Light Breeze," pp. 55-58, by Saburo Kuroda; "Saigon, 1943" by Nobuo Ayukawa, pp. 63-64, and also "Maritime Graves," pp. 64-65 (these two poems might also be cited in connection with the Vietnamese war poets two decades later--see final pages of this paper); reflecting the Hiroshima bomb tragedy, "A Newer Hell" by Toyochiro

Miyoshi, pp. 75-76; the "concrete" poem "Anti-War" (an arrangement of three *kanji* characters) by Seiichi Niikuni, p. 99; "An Owl Looks Down" by Ryusei Hasegawa, pp. 121-122; the eerie "The End of the War to End all Wars," by Koichi Iijima, pp. 124-125, with three characteristic lines,

The bloodshed's stopped
but all the blood's still circling in the sky
like strangers wondering at the calm.

The poem by Masami Horikawa, "Letter from an Old Friend: 15 August," pp. 128-129, refers to the date of the ending of the Japan-America conflict in 1945; finally, Taijiro Amazawa's "Blood Sunday," pp. 151-152, captures the A-bomb horror with casually sinister images--"Badges of scrap iron were passed from hand to hand."

In the paperback volume edited by Shiffert and Sawa (in addition to the poem "Mount Fuji," pp. 66-67, cited in footnote 65 above, by Kaneko), see "Broken Glasses," by Shinkichi Takahashi, p. 97; "At the Boundary of Life and Death," by Jun Takami (reflecting the earlier Japan-China conflict "on the border of Thailand and Burma"), p. 107; "The Discarded Horse," by Hitoshi Anzai, p. 118; and perhaps Shigenobu Takayanagi's *haiku*, p. 176:

Hear a war drum sound
and desolately
on autumn
become a bruise mark.

⁷⁷Seven modern anti-war poems are among the selections anthologized in Nguyen Ngoc Bich's "War Poems from the Vietnamese," *Hudson Review*, xx, No. 3 (autumn, 1967), 361-368; and poems or poem-excerpts about the recent conflict by eight Vietnamese intellectuals and journalists are quoted in "The Anguish of the Vietnamese Artist-Intellectual," *Fellowship*, July, 1969, pp. 15-18, prepared by "Nam Giang," pen-name for a Vietnamese artist at that time in the United States. Raffel's anthology also has a number of Vietnamese poems on the war/peace issue.

⁷⁸Bich, p. 361; translation is by the editor and Burton Raffel.

⁷⁹Bich, "The Poetry of Vietnam," *Asia*, Spring, 1969, p. 5 (the translation is by the editor and W. S. Merwin).

⁸⁰Bich, "War Poems . . .," p. 362 (translation by the editor and W. S.

Merwin).

^{s1}Raffel, p. 37; Nguyen Du's dates are 1765-1820.

^{s2}*Ibid.*, p. 39.

^{s3}*Ibid.*, p. 13; the original poem was composed in Chinese.

^{s4}*Ibid.*, pp.71,72; an epigram more overtly focused on the war/peace mood is the one titled "Festival of Tsing Ming," p. 73:

Tsing Ming, and it

Drizzles on.

"Freedom, where's Freedom?" The jailor points

To the governor's house, far, far away.

^{s5}Crown, Bonnie, "Voices from Asia," *Social Education*, Nov., 1969, p. 802 (translation by Nguyen Ngoc Bich); also in Bich, "The Poetry of Vietnam," p. 23. Crown's article also presents Tu Ke Tuong, "The Love Story of Leaves," p. 802, in which a soldier's pregnant wife plans to write to her husband--"If it is a girl she will name her 'Barbed Wire'..."

^{s6}Taken from a typed copy in English; source at present unknown.

^{s7}*Fellowship*, July, 1970, p. 15; the translation is by David Zlinkoff. Incidentally, poignant war/peace poems by four modern Vietnamese writers are reproduced in *Tenggara*, April, 1969, pp. 37-41.

^{s8}Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Cry of Vietnam*, p. 37. The fifteen poems with associated drawings by Vo Dinh make this a powerful volume. "Our Green Garden," p.17, is used as a prefatory poem in Lowenfels, *Where is Vietnam?* p. 1-2, and is also quoted in Kay Boyle's *Enough of Dying!* (Dell, 1972), p. 290.

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