China Viewed Through Stories for American Children

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What can American children learn about China and Chinese people from books available to them in their libraries? If Children's books about foreign countries are a medium to promote international understanding as many want to believe, what understanding do American children gain from reading about a country that can trace its history back to 3,000 B. C. and a people who constitute more than one-fifth of the world's population? Is the understanding biased, out-of-date, or partial?

Several recent articles discussed the problems and mistakes found in children's books on China. Dorothea Scott recommended more research on the part of illustrators.[1] Her two articles in 1972 and 1974 emphasized books published after 1950 and those that were in print then.[2] She pointed out inaccuracies in illustrations, in language style, and in spelling. One single book, *The Five Chinese Brothers*, by Claire Hutchet Bishop (1938), received special attention in several articles. Both the story and the illustrations were points of controversy.[3] Interestingly enough, the book can be found in several recommended lists,[4] and is among the best selling children's books.[5]

The purpose of this paper, however, is not to enumerate faults, nor to discuss the literary style or merits of individual books. Instead, it is to analyze those story books that were recommended and were available to the largest age group among Americans, between the ages of 21 and 45, when they were youngsters. It is to discover the trend of these books through

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a period of thirty years, and to summarize the picture of China presented to these Americans.

Wilson's *Children's Catalog* provided the titles that were analyzed in this study. The *Catalog* was considered "the most comprehensive bibliography in its field" in Sheehy's *Guide to Reference Books*. Other writers have said that it was "very useful in selecting books for a particular class study," and "regularly used by the librarians and teachers."[6] The fact that it began publication a long time before other popular tools for the selection of children's books, and that it was regularly revised through the years permits an examination of titles on a particular subject through a prolonged period. It was therefore assumed that titles found in *Children's Catalog* were those that American children were most likely to find in their libraries when they wanted to read about China.

Titles were then obtained under the headings of China, Formosa, Hong Kong, Communism, Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Tse-tung, Confucius, Religion, and Taoism in the eight editions of *Children's Catalog* published between 1941 and 1976.[7] Although it is under the sovereignty of Great Britain, Hong Kong has a Chinese majority, and books about Hong Kong were, therefore, included. The year 1937 was chosen as the earliest publication date in the study. Those Americans who are now 45 years old were 4 years old in 1937. It was assumed that they were old enough then to have access to books in the libraries.

Among the 187 titles found in *Children's Catalog*, only 46 books that can be classified as books of fiction and travel were included in this study. Among the books not used, 48 of them were published before 1937, and 70 books are classified as information books and books of folklore. Twelve books about Chinese in the U. S. and Great Britain were not included in this study.[8] Only 11 fiction titles published after 1937 were not available in this study. Table 1 shows the distribution of the 57 story books published after 1937 and the diminishing number of books in later years.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF 57 STORY BOOKS PUBLISHED AFTER 1937

Years of Publication	Included in this study	Not available	Total
1937—1941	9	6	15
1942—1945	11	2	13
1946—1949	10	1	11
1950—1954	3	0	3
1955—1960	5	0	5
1961—1964	3	2	5
1965—1970	5	0	5
Total	46	11	57

Content analysis was the method used in collecting the data. The books were examined with the following questions in mind:

1. When did the story happen?
2. In what part of China did the story happen?
3. What were the social conditions when the story happened? Was it during a war, or during peace? Were there beggars? Were there bandits?
4. In the illustrations, were there men wearing queues? Were there men wearing Chinese skullcaps?

In analyzing the characters, the major part of Berelson and Salter's device was borrowed and modified to analyze the main characters and their families.[9] The final categories appear as follows:

1. The number of people in the character's family.
2. The character's age.
3. The character's sex.
4. The character's general physical description, including costume.
5. The family's (or the character's) occupation.

6. The family's (or the character's) economic status.
7. The character's personality traits and those of others.
8. How the character's parents or other elder family members were depicted.
9. Animals that appeared in the story.
10. The kinds of food that were eaten.
11. Any cross-cultural communication between Chinese and non-Chinese.
12. The relationship between Chinese and non-Chinese.
13. How non-Chinese were depicted in the story.

The stories were analyzed and classified according to the text and illustrations, and according to what the people did and said. A story is the unit of analysis. There were altogether 58 stories analyzed. The choice of major characters was usually very obvious. If two characters were equally important in a story, both were analyzed.

Tabulation of All Available Evidence

1. When did the story happen?

Table 2 shows that stories of ancient China were published frequently between 1942 and 1968. These creative ancient Chinese stories were inclined to give false information and false concepts without providing any redeeming historical facts. Tables 2 and 3 show that many stories did not give a clue as to when the stories happened. They did not necessarily reflect real life in China, and yet were passed as stories about China. Their illustrations could escape criticism although they showed outmoded or strange fashions.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF STORIES OF ANCIENT TIMES

Years of Publication	Stories of Ancient Times
1942	1
1943	1
1949	7
1957	1
1961	1
1966	1
1968	1

Note: The numbers in tables 2 through 8 represent the number of stories.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF MODERN STORIES WITH THE TIMES OF STORIES UNKNOWN

Year of Publication	Number of Such Stories
1937	2
1938	1
1939	2
1940	2
1942	1
1943	1
1944	1
1947	4
1948	2
1951	1
1955	1
1956	1
1959	1
1967	1
1970	2

Table 4 shows that there was not much time lag between publication of stories about World War II and the actual event. Most war stories were published during or immediately after the war. The evidence of a war story was gathered from clues such as escaping from enemy planes, the appearance of American military men, and from explicit indication.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SINO-JAPANESE WARTIME STORIES (1937–1945)

Year of Publication	Number of Such Stories
1942	1
1943	1
1944	2
1945	1
1946	3
1954	1
1956	1

There was only one case among all the books where a specific date was indicated to set a starting point of the story. The book is *The Girl without a Country* (1944). The day was December 7, 1941, the day Pearl Harbor war attacked. There were only five cases where the dates could be estimated from the texts, through illustrations and the publication dates. In other words, children's books about China did not usually indicate dates of the events unless the events were relevant to Americans. The time lag between the publication about war stories and the actual event was short when Americans were involved in the war.

2. In what part of China did the story happen?

There are seventeen stories that did not give a clue to where the stories happened. A breakdown of all other forty-one stories that mentioned the place of the event may be seen in Table 5. Twenty-one of them gave only a vague idea concerning the place. Only a few specific place names appeared. No stories ever happened in Tibet, Sinkiang, Manchuria, or Mongolia. There was only one story about Taiwan.

TABLE 5

TABULATION OF THE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS OF THE STORIES

Location	Number of Stories
North:	
North in general	6
Peking	4
Banks of the Yellow River in general	1
Yangtze River:	
Yangtze in general	3
Han Kow	1
South:	
South in general	5
Canton	1
Min River	1
Southwest:	
Southwest in general	4
Kweichow	1
Chungking	1
Yunnan	1
East:	
East in general	0
Anking	1
Shaohing	1
Shanghai	1
Nanking and Cheng-chiang	1
Miscellany:	
All over China with well-pecified place names	2
An island off China (unspecified)	1
Seacoast of China without specific place names	1
Shihlin, Taiwan	1
Hong Kong	3

3. What were the social conditions when the story happened? Was it during a war, or during peace? Were there beggars? Were there bandits?

China has been at war since 1842. The invasions by Western powers were followed by the revolution in the beginning of the twentieth century, wars between warlords, early Japanese

invasions, Communist rebellions, the Sino-Japanese war, and the civil war that ended with Communist takeover of the mainland. Only thirteen stories out of the whole spectrum of stories under analysis happened when a war was taking place. The rest of the stories were set in a peaceful country. Ten of the thirteen stories with war backgrounds are about the Sino-Japanese war, also known as World War II. *China Quest* (1937) mentioned provincial wars. *China's Animal Frontier* (1940) mentioned the Communist rebellions. *The Good-Luck Horse* (1943) was set in an ancient war background. None of the books mentioned anything about other wars in China. Table 6 shows the tabulation of wartime stories.

TABLE 6

TABULATION OF WARTIME STORIES

Year of Publication	Number of War Stories
1937	1
1940	1
1942	1
1943	2
1944	2
1945	1
1946	3
1954	1
1956	1

There were four stories where bandits were part of the story. There were nine stories where there were beggars. Although to have bandits and beggars did not present a pleasant picture of the country, it did reflect an accurate and honest picture of some parts of China in the past.

4. In the illustrations, were there men wearing queues? Were there men Wearing Chinese skullcaps?

There were six stories with men's queues in the illustrations. None of the six stories gave a clue as to when the stories happened. The publication dates range from 1937 to 1955. It

is generally agreed that by the mid-1920s there were very, very few men in China wearing queues, a custom that officially ended in 1912 with the downfall of the Ch'ing Dynasty. Dorothea Scott stated that "in the 1930s in China one could occasionally still find an old man wearing a pigtail."[10] This is to say that for Chinese men to wear a queue after the 1920s was the exception rather than a general rule. It follows that the illustrations of some children's story books published in the U. S. about China were ten to thirty years behind the general fashions in China at the time of publication. The latest book is *Willow Tree Village* (1955) by Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Table 7 shows all the publication dates of those stories with men's queues in the illustrations.

TABLE 7

TABULATION OF STORIES WITH MEN'S QUEUES IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Year of Publication	Number of Such Stories
1937	1
1939	1
1940	1
1949	1
1951	1
1955	1

Skullcaps were shown more often then queues. There were ten stories with skullcaps in the illustrations. The publication dates range from 1937 to 1970. Among these books, six stories were published after 1945. It is again generally agreed that by the end of world War II, there were no men wearing the Chinese skullcaps, also part of the Ch'ing Dynasty costume. This means that illustrations in some story books were as much as fifteen to twenty-five years behind the actual fashion in China at the time of publication. The latest book is *A Chinese Year* (1970). Table 8 shows all tne publication dates of those stories with skullcaps in the illustrations.

TABLE 8

TABULATION OF STORES WITH SKULLCAPS IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Year of Publication	Number of Such Stories
1937	2
1939	1
1940	1
1947	2
1948	1
1950	1
1959	1
1970	1

The following is the result of the tabulation of the character analysis.[11]

1. The number of people in the character's family.

The counting of family members included any relatives mentioned in the stories no matter whether the relatives live with the character or not. If a story did not mention the character's mother, she was excluded from the counting. Table 9 shows the frequency of all the different numbers of members in the Chinese families described in the stories. There were eleven families whose sizes could not be determined, and therefore were not included in the table. The table shows that a family of four and five appeared most frequently. In *Lee Lan Flies the Dragon Kite* (1962) there were twelve membdrs in the main character's family. In *Fay Gow* (1964) there were seventeen members in the main character's family. Both stories described the lives of the boat people in Hong Kong, realistically, with true-to-life photos. Contrary to the traditional Chinese big family system with many uncles, aunts, and cousins living under one roof or closely related, the creative stories showed the opposite picture. There were, in general, few relatives and few children in those stories.

TABLE 9

TABULATION OF NUMBERS OF MEMBERS
IN CHINESE FAMILIES

Number of Family Members	Number of Stories
1	1
2	6
3	7
4	9
5	9
6	4
7	4
9	3
11	1
12	1
17	1
24	1

American families in the stories had three or four members as the most common size. Does this suggest that American authors depicted Chinese families in the same way as they saw American families? It is safe to say that the stories published in the U.S. about China did not, in general, reflect a real picture of family life in China.

2. The character's age.

The characters in the stories ranged from small children to old men. However, the exact ages specifically indicated in the stories ranged from five to fifteen. Table 10 shows the frequency of the known ages.

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY OF CHARACTERS
AGES

Character's Age	Number of Stories
5	2
6	3
7	1
8	4

9..... 2
10..... 4
11..... 1
12..... 4
14..... 2
15..... 1

3. The character's sex.

Thirty-nine male charcters were included in the stories, while there were only nineteen female characters. In *Bamboo Gate* (1946), there were eight short stories which presented eight major male characters with female characters in the background. While the authors often emphasized women's traditional subservient and inferior position in Chinese society, were they projecting their Western male-chauvinistic attitude? Since 1912, Chinese women have had equal rights to receive higher education, to vote, to compete with men on an equal basis, and to hold high positions in the government. None of these facts were incorporated into the children's books analyzed.

Ten stories showed that boys and girls received different treatment in the family. Three of them specifically indicated that only boys were expected to have education. The three books are *Boat Children of Canton* (1944), *Little Pear and the Rabbits* (1956), and *Lee Lan Flies the Dragon Kite* (1962). A unique case is found in *A Chinese Year* (1970), where a country boy did not know how to write, while Ai-lan, the female protagonist, did. To what extent Chinese women are inferior to men is not easily measured. However, the stories analyzed in this study did reflect an attitude somewhat old fashioned.

4. The character's general physical description, including costume.

All but six of the Chinese female characters were shown with bangs on the forehead, and one or two long braids in the back. Among the six exceptions, two were in ancient costumes. The other four had short hair. The only girl with a modern permanent wave was a Hong Kong girl in photos for *Lee Lan Flies the Dragon Kite.*

There were eight bald-headed boys with hair variations from bangs to two short candle-top queues on the sides of the head. (These themes are still common in greeting cards and folk art, but that is the extent of the custom.) There were eighteen male characters with short hair. Other male characters either had a cap to hide their hair or their appearance was not known.

There were only six stories in which the children in illustrations did not wear the Chinese jacket and trousers or Chinese robe. Three of the stories were about Hong Kong, and one about Taiwan. The lack of variety is apparent.

5. The family's (or the character's) occupation.

There were seventeen farmers, nine merchants, three fishermen, two cargo carriers, and three jade carvers. Other occupations included emperor (if that is considered an occupation), groom, fuel hawker, laborer, government official, soldier, and student. There were a doctor, a scientist, and a pilot who were Americans. The range of occupations among Chinese shows a lack of modern occupations.

6. The family's (or the character's) economic status.

There were seventeen "nearly rich" families. Twenty-seven families led a life that might be described as "not-rich- not-poor." Only eight families were described as "poor." China has been a poor country as a result of foreign invasions, wars among war lords, and backward technology. It is generally agreed that the majority of the Chinese were poor. However, the stories being analyzed tended to describe the rich and the middle class.

7. The character's personality traits and those of others.

The most frequent traits were: loyal to the family, superstitious, obedient to parents, helpful with chores at home, polite, and modest. There was not much difference in personality traits from story to story.

8. How the character's parents or other elder family members

were depicted.

Four cases showed relatives helping each other in difficult times. Seven cases showed that the father was kind, and permissive in disciplining children. Four cases showed that the father was quick-tempered. Four cases showed that the father was dominant and had to be respected at home.

Five cases showed that the mother was kind and permissive. Three cases showed that she was quiet. Two cases showed that the mother was scornful and quick-tempered. The role of mother was more often put in the background than that of the father. The only book in which the intimate relationship among family members was described realistically is *A Chinese Year* (1970).

9. Animals that appeared in the story.

There were thirty-three kinds of animals in the stories, excluding the species caught in *China's Animal Frontier*. The most frequently mentioned were pig, dog, chicken, donkey, water buffalo, bird, goose, cat, horse, and mule, arranged in descending order of freguency.

10. The kinds of food that were eaten.

There were more than eighty-eight kinds of food mentioned in the stories. The most frequently mentioned foods are rice, fish, meat dumplings, cabbage, tea, pork, chicken, duck, bamboo shoots, beans, and water chestnuts, arranged in descending order of frequency. It is interesting to find that the stories showed a greater variety of animals and foods than of people, their characteristics and costumes.

11. Any cross-cultural communication between Chinese and non-Chinese.

There were twelve cases where cross-cultural Communication took place. There was one case where a Chinese girl was selling toys to French men. All other cases described contacts between Americans and Chinese.

12. The relationship between Chinese and non-Chinese.

The relationships between Chinese and Americans were usually described as friendly. *China Quest* (1937) and *China's Animal Frontier* (1940) are the only books that described the relationships in detail and included misunderstanding between the two peoples.

The U. S. was described as the source of new knowledge, modern education, and military assistance. Americans were shown as philanthropists, paying high prices for goods, donating money for a child's education, and hiring Chinese as technical assistants, servants, and maids. The exceptions are *China Quest* (1937) and *The Girl without a Country* (1944) where Chinese and Americans were helping each other.

It is questionable whether the patronizing attitudes taken by Americans in the stories could help American children achieve understanding of China, or any country.

13. How non-Chinese were depicted in the story.

Americans were merchants, a doctor, a scientist who helped China build roads, bridges, factories, and hospitals, or airmen who helped the Chinese fight the Japanese. Their eduaticn was high school level or above, when it was mentioned. Their personality traits were: courageous, self-controlled, friendly, and eager to learn.

When the color of the eyes was mentioned, it was either blue or green. Whenever the color of the hair was mentioned, it was red, corn yellow, or light brown. The color of the skin was white and pink. It is apparent that the American characters were stereotyped without many differences among them.

Interpretation

What kind of picture about China was available to American adults when they were children? Most stories they might

have read happened in times uncertain and irrelevant. The settings were mostly in remote ancient times or unknown modern times. The only books that American young readers could relate to were the books about the Sino-Japanese War (World War II), in which Americans played a role. The books were published between 1942 and 1956. After this short period of relevancy, story books about China turned to ancient times again. They failed to reflect contemporary China. Most stories happened in China proper, and no stories took place in Tibet, Sinkiang, Manchuria, or Mongolia.

Only one story, published in 1967, took place in Taiwan. After 1950 the number of story books on China in *Children's Catalog* dwindled. No story books about China published after 1970 were found in *Children's Catalog*. On the other hand, 13 non-fiction books on China published between 1971 and 1976 were listed.

While it was difficult, if not impossible, for Americans to go to the China Mainland to have personal contact with the people and to gather firsthand information, it has been quite easy for Americans to visit Taiwan, a place becoming more important in international trading. Although Taiwan preserves some old Chinese traditions, which most books in this study tended to cling to, stories about the traditions in Taiwan could not be found.

Story books about Hong Kong presented a more up-to-date picture, although the information was not necessarily accurate. Two out of three story books about Hong Kong described the boat people. The lack of variety about life in Hong Kong is obvious.

The stories did not reflect the political conditions in a politically unstable country, although the authors did not hesitate to mention bandits and beggars in China. The illustrations in the story books were very much outdated at the time of publication. Almost all Chinese children looked alike and were dressed in

old fashioned clothes. Many men in illustrations wore a gueue, or a skullcap.

A closer look at characters in the stories uncovered more inaccurate pictures about China. The stories failed to show the close relationship among family members. Female characters continued to play a less important role in the society. There was a lack of variety of occupations held by the characters or their family members. Parents were described as either permissive or quick-tempered. Surprisingly, there was a wide variety of animals and foods mentioned in the stories. Americans were given a superior role in the stories, endowed with modern Knowledge, courage, and money. American characters in the stories were also simplified, and with very little variety.

Conclusion

The lack of variety and the out-of-date information in stories and in illustrations can be explained partly by the profuse output of some authors and illustrators. For instance, Eleanor Frances Lattimore wrote seven of the story books included in this study, and she illustrated all seven. Kurt Wiese illustrated seven of the books in the study. The contents and their illustrations varied little from year to year.

Authors tended to emphasize the traditions, the ways of life, and the characteristics of Chinese that were different from those of Westerners. However, they shied away from describing the big-family system in China. The consequence is that they presented a biased, unreal, and old-fashioned picture of China. And this picture was what American children received in the past. Since most books tend to stay in print and on the shelves in the libraries, the picture, unfortunately, continues to be passed on to young readers in the seventies.

References

1. Dorothea Scott, "Chinese Stories: A Plea for Authenticity," *Library Journal* 99 (14 April 1974): 1186. Although this article emphasizes books published after 1950, it includes a few "perennial favorites."
2. Idem, "China in Print: Current Travel, History, and Descriptive Books," *Library Journal* 97 (14 November 1972): 3769-74; and "Chinese Stories," Library Journal 99 (14 Apri l 1974):1183-87.
3. Albert V. Schwartz, "*The Five Chinese Brothers*: Time to Retire," *Interracial Books for Childuen* 8 (no. 3, 1977): 3-7; Selma G. Lanes, "*The Five Chinese Brothers*," *School Libi ary Journal* 24 (October 1977): 90-91; and Thomas A. Zaniello, "Heroic Quintuplets," *Children's Literature* 3 (1974): 36-42.
4. One of the books that recommend *Five Chinese Brothers* is Virginia Havilan, ed., *Children's Books of Internationl Interest* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1972).
5. J. S. Kujoth, *Best-Selling Children's Books* (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1973), p. 23. *The Five Chinese Brothers* was not available in this study, but the stories included in this study that were listed as best selling are Buck's *The Dragon Fish* (1944) and *The Water Buffalo Children* (1943), Handforth's *Mei Li* (1938), and Merrill's *The Superlative Horse* (1961).
6. Eugene P. Sheehy, ed., *Guide to Reference Books*, 9th ed. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1976), p. 33; and Charlotte S. Huck and Doris Young Kuhn, *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*, 2d ed. (New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1968), p. 45.
7. *Children's Catalog*, 6th to 13th eds. (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976).
8. For a discussion on Chinese-Americans in children's books, see "How Children's Books Distort the Asian American Image, "*Interracial Books for Children* 7 (nos. 2 & 3, 1976): 3-23.
9. Bernard Berelson and Patricia J. Salter, "Majority and Minority Americans: An Analysis of Magazine Fiction," in *Mass Culture*, ed. Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), pp. 235-51.
10. Scott, "Chinese Stories," p. 1186.
11. In *Little Silk* (1970), the main character—a doll—was not analyzed. Instead, members of the Shu family, who were the first owners of the doll, were analyzed whenever applicable.

The books analyzed in this study are listed as follows:

Anderson, Joy, *The Pai-pai pig.* Illus. by Jay Yang. New York: Harccurt, 1967.

This is a story about the rivalry between two boys over whose pig will win the prize for the fattest pig at the Pai-pai festival. Chen Su-Ling played a trick that made his friend win the prize while he saved his own pet pig from being killed at the festival.

Ayer, Jacqueline. *Little Silk.* Illus. by the author. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970.

Little Silk, a one-hundred-year-old doll dressed in the Ching Dynasty costume, was kept in the dark closet of Shu family in Hong Kong. One day Miss Shu carried Little Silk when the whole family went to the market. In the busy street, Little Silk was lost. An old man found her, and gave Little Silk to his daughter. Through illustrations, the author skillfully showed the changes that took place in a Chinese society in 100 years, and many aspects of modern city and country scenes in Hong Kong. The illustrations reflected Hong Kong before 1970.

Bro, Margueritte Harmon. *Su-mei's Golden Year.* Illus. by Kurt Wiese. Garden City, N. Y.; Doubleday, 1950.

Su-mei observed the changes in the village of Wang after the Sino-Japanese War. Her father introduced advanced agricultural ideas, education and new ways of thinking. At the same time, he helped preserve Chinese cultural tradition that is worth preserving. The people and village life are described vividly.

Buck, Pearl Sydenstricker. *Chinese Children Next Door.* Illus. by Willism Arthur Smith. Eau Claire, Wis.: E. M. Hale & Co., 1942.

An American mother was telling her four children about the Chinese neighbors she used to have in China. The Chinese mother, who wanted a son, had six girls before having a son. The arrival of the son was a surprise and joy to the father.

Buck, Pearl Sydenstricker. *Dragon Fish.* Illus. by Esther Brock Bird. New York: Day, 1944.

Two little girls, one Chinese and one American, ran away with a green stone dragon fish they found by a river, because they were all tired of their brothers at home. They worked in a pawn shop for a while before their parents found them. They realized that they would miss their brothers if they ever tried to live without them. At the same time, the two girls were happy that they found a girl friend to play with.

Buck, Pearl Sydenstricker. *Water-buffalo Children.* Illus. by William Arthur Smith. New York: Day, 1943.

An American told her children about her two childhood friends in China who rode on their father's water-buffalo. One day, Da Lobo, the lazy water-buffalo, suddenly plunged into a pond when the three children

were riding on her back. They wondered if it was the effect of a piece of white magic stone, or a bee. There is not much story in this story, but the crosscultural communication between the Chinese children and the American girl is interesting and vivid.

Carpenter, Frances. *Tales of a Chinese Grandmother.* Illus. by Malthé Hasselries. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1937.

There are thirty Chinese folk stories in the book told by a grandmother to her grandchildren Ah Shung and Yu Lang. At the same time, their daily life and family relationships are described.

Chan, Chih-yi, and Chan, Plato. *Good-Luck Horse.* Illus. by Plato Chan. New York: McGraw, 1943.

The story was "adopted from an old Chinese legend (Subtitle)." A paper horse was turned into a magic horse by a magician. The horse caused a lot of commotion in Wah-Toong's father's house. Feeling unwanted, the horse escaped to the other side of the Great Wall of China and married a horse there. When there was a war between people on both sides of the Great Wall, the magic horse managed to bring peace to people by visiting his horse relatives from outside the Great Wall, ridden by the invading enemies. After all, the magic horse is a good-luck horse.

Chrisman, A. B. "Ah Mee's Invention." *Time to Laugh.* Edited by Phyllis R. Fenner. Illus. by Henry C. Pitz. New York: Knopf, 1942. p. 116-25.

Ah Mee, a spoiled son of a carver of wood, jade and ivory, accidentally invented block printing by throwing stained things around the house.

Creekmore, Raymond. *Little Fu.* Lithographs by the author. New York: Macmillan, 1974.

It is a description of what Fu saw on his trip by boat to Foochow with his father. He saw families living on boats, a story teller, danger on the rapids in the river, a tiger caught by people, men pulling boats upstream, lantern festival, cormorants, bandits, outdoor circus, coastal junks and steamships. When they went home, they had a new motor boat with steel sides to protect them from the bandits.

De Jong, Meindert. *House of Sixty Fathers.* Illus. by Maurice Sendak. New York: Harper, 1956.

Tien Bao, when escaping the Japanese attack on his village, lost contact with his parents and younger sister. Then began his adventure. He saved an American airman, and was later adopted by sixty American airmen. Through their help, Tien Bao eventually was reunited with his parents.

Evernden, Margery. *Runaway Apprentice.* Illus. by Jeanyee Wong. New York: Random House, 1949.

The son of a rich merchant ran away from home to avoid his stepmother's mistreatment. He became an apprentice of a shadow show master, and traveled around the country. Later he performed for the emperor, and was able to save his family from the emperor's disfavor. After a family

union, he rejoined his master for more traveling and performance.

Hahn, Emily. *Picture Story of China.* Illus. by Kurt Wiese. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946.

Chinese history, customs, religions are introduced through a rich and traditional Chinese family's daily life.

Handforth, Thomas. *Mei Ki.* Illus. by the author. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1958.

On New Year's Eve, Mei Li went to the city with her brother, a thrush, and a dog. They had a lot of fun in the city, in a circus and a toy shop. They were home in time to greet the Kitchen God with their mother.

Hekking, Johanna M. *Pigtails.* Illus. by Molly Castle. New York: Stokes, 1937.

This book presents all the important Chinese festivals in the year, and how the Chungs celebrated them. It also includes people's customs, life style and folktales. There is not much plot but the daily life of Mr. Chung, a rich rice merchant, and his family.

Herrmanns, Ralph. *Lee Lan Flies the Dragon Kite.* Translated by Annabelle Macmillan. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962.

It is a story about two of the children of the Tang family, who lived on a boat in Hong Kong. Lee Lan, the daughter, wanted to go to school like her brother. In order to collect enough money for her to go to school, the brother and the sister set out to look for jobs. They finally made enough money by flying a dragon kite on top of a mountain for the fishermen in Hong Kong. The kite was an annual gift from the fishermen to the Dragon Emperor in the Heaven. The book is full of obvious false information.

Hoge, Dorothy. *The Black Heart of Indri.* Illus. by Janina Domanska. New York: Scribner, 1966.

Indri had the ugly form of his father. His beautiful mother told him that his ugliness would vanish if he would live for nine days and nights in the presence of virtue. He earned his living by selling water of life to people. One day Indri, in anger, asked for a dishonest headman's head as the price of the water. The headman's daughter, Yua Nana, appeared and was willing to stay with Indri for nine days and nights to save her father's life. Her love and virtue transformed Indri physically and spiritually into a handsome young man.

Hsiao, Ellen. *A Chinese Year.* Illus. by the author. New York: M. Evans, 1970.

Ai-lan and her family traveled from Nanking to Chean-chiang to attend her grandmother's funeral. Eventually Ai-lan, her brother, and another cousin stayed with the grandfather, and another relative for several months. Funeral and burial observances, important Chinese holidays, games Chinese school children played, and the life-style were described in detail. Chinese children in the book were real children who played, feared, worried,

and in general, enjoyed life. Family members, like most Chinese, had a close relationship with one another. The author did not indicate when the story happened. The story, however, must have taken place between 1945 and 1949 according to the events in the book. This authentic story about China is a bit old-fashioned in the 1970's.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Bells for a Chinese Donkey.* Illus. by the author. New York: Morrow, 1951.

When Kwei-li's father bought a donkey, she hoped the donkey would have the bells that she had seen on a little rich girl's donkey. One day she found a silver bracelet in a pirate's cave by the beach and returned it to the little rich girl, Jewel, who was looking for the bracelet. At the end of the summer, Jewel gave Kwei-li a present, the woven reins hung with jingling bells that Kwei-li had wanted.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Little Pear and the Rabbits.* Illus. by the author. New York: Morrow, 1956.

Little Pear sold rabbits to the neighborhood children and collected enough coins to buy a donkey, so that he and his friend could ride from the farm to school.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Peachblossom.* Illus. by the auther. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1943.

Peachblossom, an orphan girl, escaped enemy attacks with Aunt Lee, an old friend of her mother's. Among the treasures she held with her on the way was an old cloth doll that a real aunt of Peachblossom's had given her. Later Peachblossom went to a boarding school for orphan girls, sponsored by a Dr. Wang. The fact that Peachblossom looked like Mrs. Wang and had the old doll made Mrs. Wang recognize her niece. Peachblossom found a new home in the Wangs. The story ends with Peachblossom watching both Chinese and American airplanes flying by the farm where she, Mrs. Wang and many orphans lived.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Questions of Lifu.* Illus. by the author. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1942.

Lifu, who liked to ask questions, lived with his mother and grandfather in a peaceful village, when his father, a soldier, was away for the war. One day Lifu decided to run away to look for his father, and to join him as a soldier. On his way, he adopted a lost girl as his sister, and took her home with him, since girls could not be soldiers. That night Lifu's father came home to stay for a few days. After that runaway trip, Lifu learned that the world is bigger than he had thought.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Story of Lee Ling.* Illus. by the author. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940.

Lee Ling stayed home to do chores with her mother and take care of her baby sister. She did not go to school, partly because she was too shy, and partly because the family was too poor to send her to school. During

the dry weather, her mother went to work for an American family, the Moores, in the neighborhood. When the Moores' little girl Anne was in danger on her donkey, Lee Ling overcame her shyness, and gave wise advice in time. Lee Ling made Anne a pair of shoes later. In return, Mrs. Moore gave money to send Lee Ling to school for at least a year.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Three Little Chinese Girls.* Illus. by the author. New York: Morrow, 1948.

The story tells of everyday life in a silk merchant's family in Peking. It includes loss of pets, going to market, visits from the boy next door and visits to the wealthy grandmother, a visit to the old family farm, and learning to write characters.

Lattimore, Eleanor Frances. *Willow Tree Village.* Illus. by the author. New York: Morrow, 1955.

Mimosa, a rich merchant's only daughter, was lonely in her fine house. One day, she changed clothes with her nurse's daughter, and ran away. After a series of adventures, she went to live in the nurse's home in Willow Tree Village. Mimosa's father was happy to find her there, and allowed the nurse's son to live with them in the city, too.

Lewis, Elizabeth Foreman. *China Quest.* Illus. by Kurt Wiese. Philadelphia: Winston, 1937.

John Stuart, a young American high school graduate filled with desire to learn about China, especially the western part, accompanied his parents to China. Wang Li-San, a Chinese boy from a poverty-stricken home, was obsessed with curiosity about the technology of Western civilization. The two boys met and aided each other in reaching their goals. This is a book for better understanding and tolerance between Chinese and American people.

Liu, Beatrice. *Little Wu and the Watermelons.* Illus. Graham Peck. Chicago: Follett, 1954.

Little Wu worked hard by pasturing cattle and by planting his watermelons to help his parents buy a small patch of rice field. As it turned out, he still had some money left over to buy a silver hairpin for his mother. There are scenes of harvest, bargaining in the market, and the superstitious practices of villagers.

Martin, Patricia Miles. *Pointed Brush.* Illus. by Roger Duvoisin. New York: Lothrop, 1959.

When the Elder Uncle was arrested falsely, the father sent his five older sons to break into the jail to save him, but in vain. The sons returned beaten up by the jailors. The sixth and youngest son, who had learned to write, posted a notice to ask the villagers to save the uncle. When the uncle was released through the help of the villagers, the father was convinced that words are more powerful than strength, and decided to send all his sons to the teacher.

Merrill, Jean. *The Superlative Horse.* Illus. by Ronni Solbert. New York: Scott, 1961.

Po Lo, the Chief Groom of Duke Mu, was retiring, and recommended a fuel hawker's son, Han Kan, to take his job. In order to convince everyone that he was qualified, Han Kan journeyed far to choose a good horse for Duke Mu. The people, including Duke Mu, were not satisfied with Han Kan's choice. A race was held to show that Han Kan's choice was a superlative horse. Po Lo believed that the internal qualities of a horse, or a man, were more important than the external qualities.

Mosel, Arlene. *Tikki Tikki Tembo.* Illus. by Blair Lent. New : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.

This story took place when the eldest son in the famly was customarily given a very long name for superstitious reasons. When the second son, who had a short name Chang, fell into the well, he was saved quickly. One day the elder son fell into the well, his brother Chang had to repeat such a long name when calling for help that Tikki almost drowned. That is why later Chinese parents only gave short names to their children. It is an amusing but inaccurate account of Chinese names.

Oakes, Vanya. [Virginia Armstrong Oakes.] *Bamboo Gate; Stories of Children of Modern China.* Illus. by Dong Dingman. New York: Macmillan, 1946.

Eight stories that happened during World War II and immediately afterwards show people's loyalty to Chiang, and the goverment, and their gradual acceptance of modern concepts and technology. There were people who were enthusiastic to build Burma Road. A boy went to a new type of school to learn modern knowledge, instead of receiving education from traditional family tutors. A young soldier learned from a speech Chiang gave that sholdiers should not steal. A village boy learned the values paper money in place of silver dollars. One story showed that people in Peking supported the New Life Movement, which advocated honesty and loyalty. An incident of misunderstanding between an American lady and a Chinese silk merchant's son initiated the correspondence between some Chinese and American school children to promote mutual understanding and to eliminate wars in the world. A Chinese boy saved his father and others from bandits by sending for Nationalist government soldiers in time. A boat child was fascinated by airplanes after the family had saved some American fliers during the war. His father, however, asked him not to forget the values of their junks.

Pope, Clifford Hillhouse. *China's Animal Frontier.* New York: Viking, 1940.

The author told the reader about his experience in traveling various parts of China, working with and meeting people of all ranks. He also described the species he caught for the American Museum of Natural History and how to process them. The book is illustrated by photos taken by the author.

Poston, Martha Lee. *The Girl without a Country.* Illus. by Margaret Ayer. New

York: Nelson, 1944.

Margaret, a China-born American high school girl, was urged by her doctor father to leave Shanghai to go back to the U.S.A. by way of Chungking, when the war was declared between Japan and the U.S. She traveled on foot, by bus, train and boat with a Chinese girl. On the way she experienced cruelty and hardships of war, and saw how Chinese managed to endure and survive with confidence. She also felt resentment and hostility toward Japanese soldiers. The story ends with Margaret ready to go back to America with Madame Chiang's assistance. After all she was a girl with two countries!

Ritchie, Alice. *Treasure of Li-Po.* Illus. by Trekkie Ritchie. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949.

There are six stories with the characteristics of folk tales. Old Li-Po's savings helped a virtuous girl marry to a noble young man. An obedient and loyal lanternbearer waited bravely through the cold dark night while the emperor was visiting with a hermit. A fox's daughter encouraged a student to study hard in order to win a high positions in the court through examinations, and married him later. A Chinese sailor's daughter helped her father make enough money to buy a ship of his own by selling her paper toys to Frenchmen. Ku-Ling cured his father's illness by fetching water from the Country of Sleep after a series of adventures. Mr. and Mrs. Hak-Tak found a magic brass pot which would produce an exact replica of whatever that was dropped into the pot. When the couple dropped into the pot by accident, they had to build a new house next door for the new couple.

Schloat, G. Warren, Jr. *Fay Gow: a Boy of Hong Kong.* New York: Knopf, 1964.

The book describes the day-to-day life of a little Chinese boy of boat people in Hong Kong. It includes how and what they ate, a fishing trip and the boy's trip to Tiger Balm Garden.

Sperry, Armstrong. *Bamboo; the Grass Tree.* Illus. by the author. New York: Macmillan, 1942.

Sun Yo went with his family by boat to Hankow to sell the bamboo bird cages that they made. An American lady bought a round cage with a high price. Sun Yo did not know much about foreign countries, and this American lady's nephew was wondering about things in China, too, after he received the cage.

Stilwell, Alison. *Chin Ling; the Chinese Cricket.* Illus. by the author. New York: Macmillan, 1947.

Chin Ling, a small cricket, won the championship of a cricket match for his owner, the poor little boy Liu Kuo Chu and brought good luck to his family.

Treffinger, Carolyn. *Li Lun, Lad* of Courage. Illus. by Kurt Wiese. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1947.

Li Lun, afraid of sailing at sea, refused to go with his father on his man-making trip. His father, in anger and in shame, told Li Lun not to come home again until he has harvested at least forty-nine grains of rice on the top of Lao Shan, a mountain where rice has not been grown for many years. Bringing some food with him, Li Lun climbed to the top of the mountain and planted rice. He lived by himself, and protected the plants from seagulls and rats until he harvested the rice. The story ends when Li Lun was declared a lad of courage by the priest in the temple in front of all the village people.

Urbahns, Estelle. *Little Red Dragon.* Illus. by Weda Yap. New York: Dutton. 1947.

Chang Fen, loyal, honest, and proud of being the adopted son of the rich potter Chang, was accused of an attempted theft of the Chang's family treasure, a silk scroll. He was chased out of the house and wandered for a long time in the country, trying to elude an officer who seemed to be pursuing him. When he was far away, he found that he was carrying a little red jade dragon, which Chang had entrusted to him. Lame and exhausted, he arrived home to return the dragon and found that his guilt had been lifted. He was happy to be the adopted son again. Furthermore, Chang gave him the dragon. The story is as unreal as it can be. Some information is questionable, for instance, "the hour of dog."

Ward, Marion Boss. *Boat Children of Canton.* Illus. by Helen Sewell. Philadelphia: Mckay, 1944.

After a Japanese bombing, two boat children in Canton, Tang Ek Khi and Tang Mui Lang, were separated from their parents. One day they happened to wander to their rich uncle's house. Although the uncle was once angry with their father, he treated the two children well, and helped them look for their parents. On New Year's Day, the parents came to the house. Since the war was getting worse, the uncle decided to travel to inland China with all his twenty family members. They boarded Ek Khi's father's boat, to "work with the Generalissimo for a new China."

Wiese, Kurt. *Fish in the Air.* Illus. by the author. New York: Viking, 1948.

The Chinese boy Fish asked his father to buy the biggest fish-shaped kite of all kites and got it. When all of a sudden the big wind blew, Fish was sent up to the air with his kite. After he was saved by a fisherman, he changed his mind and wanted a smaller kite.

Wiese, Kurt. *You can Write Chinese.* Illus. by the author. New York: Viking, 1945.

The book introduces fifty characters that an American boy learned in a Chinese school in Chungking during World War II. The book also shows how to draw the characters, and gives reasons for each character.

Wood, Esther. *Pepper Moon.* Illus. by Laura Bannon. Eau Claire, Wis.: E. M. Hale & Co., 1940.

It is a story about a little Chinese boy, Pepper Moon, who wanted to have a dog as a pet, which the members of the family did not allow in their orderly household. After he brought home a mouse, snails, a frog, ducks, a pig and a big water buffalo that caused commotion in the house, his grandmother decided that the idea of keeping a dog was not so bad afthr all.

Wood, Esther. *Silk and Satin Lane.* Illus. by Kurt Wiese. n.p. Longmans, 1939.

The story centers around the orphan Ching Ling and her daily adventures and accomplishments. She was fascinated by the city life in Shaohing. She was afraid that the old aunt would return soon to take her back to the rice fields. At the end, she became a member of her uncle's family, and lived with the uncle and his bride.

Yolen, Jane. *The Emperor and the Kite.* Illus. by Ed Young. Cleveland: World, 1957.

Djeow Seow, the neglected little princess, saved her father from his prison by flying a kite with a rope made of her own hair. The emperor learned that people, big or small, should all deserved attention and love. He regained his throne and Djeow Seow ruled after him.

Young, Evelyn. *Wu and Lu and Li.* Illus. by the author. n.p. Walck, 1939.

One summer, the three children's grandmother came to stay with them on the farm. She brought presents and gave money for them to buy toys. On their way to shopping and back, they had a lot of fun visiting the uncle, and swimming.