CHINA MISSIONARIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Father Eleutherius Winance

This manuscript is authorized as "open"

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
Claremont Graduate School
Claremont, California
1969

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The China Missionaries Oral History Project was made possible through the generous support of The Henry Luce Foundation, Inc. This interview manuscript is one in an extended series developed through oral history interviews with China religious workers selected to reflect the work of many denominations, the various career lines in missionary work, the geographic spread of missions in China, and the time periods served (earliest to most recent recollections and total length of time served). These interview manuscripts will be deposited with major universities engaged in China Studies, as well as with The Henry Luce Foundation and the Claremont Graduate School Oral History Collection.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

This manuscript is the result of a series of tape-recorded interviews conducted by Cyrus H. Peake, Enid H. Douglass, and Georgenia Irwin on April 22, May 6, May 20, May 27, June 6, and June 24, 1969 in the Oral History Program Office of Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California.

Father Eleutherius Winance, 0. S. B., has read the transcript and made only minor emendations. The reader should bear in mind, therefore, that he is reading a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written, word.

The manuscript may be read, quoted from and cited by research scholars accredited by Claremont Graduate School in the Special Collections Room of Honnold Library. The manuscript may be deposited with the Henry Luce Foundation and with universities engaged in China Studies for use by re-rearch scholars. It may not be reproduced, either in whole or in part, by microphoto, typewriter, photostat, or any other device, except by permission of Eleutherius Winance, his heirs, legal representatives or assigns.

(signature)

(date)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Father Eleutherius Winance was born in Mons, Belgium on July 10, 1909. He grew up in this French-speaking part of Belgium and speaks English with a French accent. The reader will note his special usages in the manuscript. Father Winance was educated at Jesuit schools and college and entered the Abbey of St. Andre, near Bruges, in 1927. He was professed a monk in the Benedictine Order in 1929. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Louvain, where he received his doctorate in 1934. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1935.

In September, 1936, Father Winance left Belgium to be a Benedictine missionary in China, where he served for sixteen years (1936-1952). He traveled through Germany, Poland, Moscow, and Siberia (taking the trans-Siberian Railroad) to Manchuria. He reached Peking, traveled to Hankow and then went by boat to Chungking. He was then in Szechuan Province, where he spent most of his time in China.

From 1936 to 1945 Father Winance became a member of a new Benedictine foundation, Ss. Peter and Andrew near Nanchung and taught Latin and philosophy. The Order also started an elementary school. From February to June, 1945 he served as a parish priest near Kwangan and then he moved to Chengtu. In Chengtu Father Winance taught French in the provincial Fine Arts School and philosophy at West China Union University (Protestant). By the end of March, 1950, trouble with the Communist regime commenced. Father Winance was placed on trial, subjected to "brainwashing," and expelled from China in 1952. He has written a book about Communism in China and brainwashing techniques.*

From 1952 to 1956. Father Winance taught philosophy at Sant' Anselmo in Rome. From 1956 to 1961 he taught at St. John's University in Minnesota, and 1961 to 1966 at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. Since 1963 Father Winance has

*Father Eleutherius Winance, The Communist Persuasion (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1959).

been teaching philosophy at Claremont Graduate School. He is now a member of St. Andrew's Priory, Valyermo, California. This Priory is the home of the former Chengtu Priory with most of its personnel including some native Chinese monks.*

Father Winance is a very well-educated, highly intelligent Belgian Benedictine with a liberal outlook as to the Church's policies in an Asian society. He believes that the Church's practices and forms of worship and governance should be thoroughly indigenized and adjusted to Chinese culture, which will survive the current policies and ideology of the Communists. His sensitive awareness of the values in the old culture and the feelings and reactions of the Chinese people to the inroads of modern science and technology, as well as Communist ideology, enables him to provide profound insights into the problems faced by the people and to evaluate the contribution of the Church's beliefs and practices toward their solution.

His appraisal of the future role of Christianity in China is of special interest and significance, as is his account of the treatment of the Chinese and the foreigners, including himself, under the Communists after seizing control in Szechuan. Father Winance discusses future prospects with a degree of optimism rarely found among former Protestant missionaries in China. He, like his Church and the Chinese, takes the long view measured in centuries and not decades as does the average Protestant. At the Priory in Valyermo, he and his fellow priests are continuing to prepare young men for the priesthood and hopefully for a possible return to China when the ideology of Communism erodes and the door is again opened for a Christianized religious life.

*Complete vita held in the Oral History Program Office, Claremont Graduate School.

INTERVIEW I

DOUGLASS: I think first of all could we just ask you where you were born?

WINANCE: I was born in Mons in Belgium, the French-speaking part, on the 10 of July, 1909. I was educated in Mons to 1919. In 1919 I went to Tournai, another city near the French border, where my mother is still alive, still living there. I was educated first by the Jesuits, the Christian brothers, and finally I studied my high school in the Jesuit school in Tournai 'til 1927. In 1927 I became a monk in St. Andre near Bruges. Bruges is a big city near the frontier.

DO UGLASS: I went to Bruges.

WINANCE: You went to Bruges. Beautiful city! I was a novice from 1927 to 1929. I made my first profession in 1929, and in '29 I was sent to study philosophy in Maredsous. It is one of the big Benedictine monasteries in Belgium, founded by monks who came from Germany in the 1870's. I was there nine months and in 1929, in October, I was sent to Louvain where I studied philosophy for my Ph.D. in theology. I stayed in Louvain until 1936.

In 1936 I was sent to England for a few months, two months, to get acquainted with English because my superior wanted to send me to China. In this time, the best books to study Chinese v,'ere written in English, at least for modern Chinese, better books in English than French. Therefore, In 1936 after two months in England I went back to Belgium in July, and in September, the fifth of September, I left Belgium for China through Germany, Poland, Russia, Siberia.

We started the long trip. We were three monks: Father Weiss--he is in Valyermo*with me--Father Vincent Martin, who was in Claremont a few years ago is now in Holy Land. He will come back very soon to our monastery in July. We left for Russia and China; that was just during the Spanish War. We were very interesting because the reactions of the Russians were a little suspicious--to see people coming from the west crossing through Russia. But they were very, very polite--very nice--but very strict.

We could visit Warsaw. I was very struck by the religious spirit of the people. Sunday when I arrived in Warsaw, Sunday morning, we stayed two days there. We visited the countryside where we could find many influences of French baroque, you know, of the eighteenth century. Very interesting. Also, the spirit of revival in Poland, because Poland at this time was just independent, you know, between Russia and Germany. You could see the government trying to unify the Polish people, to make a nation.

DO UGLASS: Did you sense a good deal of ethnic problems in Poland at that time?

WINANCE: No, I think at this time what we sensed was the fear of Russia and Germany. That was clear. But no; no problem inside with Lithuania. At least for me. But what we sensed was no question. There were many Polish friends who studied with me in Belgium and they received me there in Poland but we realized the ambiguity of the situation. They did not go there to find their friends. In this time their friends were in the West, you know, France, England, but they were fearing both Germany and Russia.

When you arrived in Russia, I remember--I wrote on that so you can correct what I say.

*St. Andrews Priory, Valyermo, California.

DOUGLASS: Fine; I'd like to read that.

WINANCE: It was interesting when we arrived in Negoreloie, you could see the feeling of revolution. Negoreloie was what I called the border station. We stopped there a few hours, visited us, asking where we were going, et cetera, looking at the passport, but we were receiving a revolutionary atmosphere. Everywhere there was a big picture, you know, "Worker of the World."

DOUGLASS: This was when you crossed from Poland into Russia.

WINANCE: Yes, into Russia. After that we started our trip to Moscow. We wanted to see Moscow two days but we could not. They say, "You have to take the first train." We arrived in Moscow Tuesday, at the beginning of September, and we stayed practically no more than three or four hours in Moscow, one afternoon. That is how we arrived from Poland and you have to take a train at another station, going to Vladivostok.

We were received by the In-tourist--it means the Russian guide for tourists, exactly as in China. It is true in this time, no freedom at all, absolutely no freedom. We were visiting Moscow with a lady speaking beautiful French and we believe she was in K.B.G., the police, you know, asking us what we think, et cetera. We were very prudent.

We visited the air field, we visited the famous underground Metropolitan--very beautiful. We visited also the icons; the museum had so many icons. The general impression was this: when you were on the street we were lost. We were three men dressed in bourgeois. It means we were in cravat; you know we were not with collar. We were like lay people, but we were the only men well-dressed. All the people were dressed like in Europe in 1935, you know at five o'clock, when you see the people coming from the factories. That was Moscow.

I don't fear to say that because I wrote that. That was my impression. People were absolutely silent. It was striking. The only people that were dressed were the people of the government, our guide woman, and ourselves-three bourgeois. The impression was this: the city seems to be abandoned, except the public buildings were very beautiful. But the private buildings seem to be broken windows. But it was a very bad impression; do you say stolid impression? I don't fear to say that because it was the same in China when I left China. It means when I left China the Chinese were absolutely silent. The Chinese people were very expansive, talking, smiling; in '52 when I left Chengtu in Szechuan, I was again in the street and that reminds me of sixteen years before in Moscow. Nobody was smiling, nobody was talking.

DOUGLASS: And people looked alike?

WINANCE: Yes. I remember when we arrive in Canton it was different. The Communists were not yet established there, and when we were in Hong Kong people were smiling, talking. But the contrast was terrific when we crossed the border between Russia and Manchuria. In Manchuria we found the Chinese people, smiling face, very friendly.

I don't say the Russians were not friendly. They were very friendly--not suspicious, but very prudent. Therefore, we started our trip on the Trans-Siberian. It was a very interesting trip. We took a train not for foreigners. We were obliged to leave Tuesday and the train for foreigners was only Thursday. Therefore, we left Tuesday in a train for Russian people. Long, long, train. You know, two cars were first class, second class for us.and what you call the officials, and long, long what they call hard seat for the people. And that was interesting because we started the long trip from Tuesday 'til Monday on the Trans-Siberian. Very, very

interesting. Good food, nice people. We used to pass two hours in the dining car. People were looking at us, listening to us. We realized that people maybe were--I don't say spying--but trying to know what we were.

DOUGLASS: You were discussing in French?

WINANCE: Oh, yes, in French, but we believed that people understood. No question. And we believe so.

But it was a very interesting trip, going through big forests. We could see many churches and monasteries between Moscow and Perm. After that several times we crossed big rivers. When you are in the west Europe you cannot see that. It is too big. And always forests.

When I left Perm after the Ural I remember my impression. It was like the Yellow Sea, only wheat, wheat. It was still in September, but the crops are not so early than in western Europe. Also, we were struck by many compounds, what I call industrial compounds, in Russia--a big industrial complex.

After a few days we were traveling through Siberia. Finally we arrived at Irkutsk. I remember it was beautiful the day before. We were in a very beautiful country, no longer the low plains. It was truly high mountains with snow peaks. Sunday I remember we were arriving in Irkutsk and we started to run along the Baykal Lake. Very beautiful. For me it was like the Riviera. And the train was along the shore, you know, passing through many, many tunnels. That 'til mid-day; yes, mid-day Sunday.

At mid-day the train started to climb and go along a river, a river which is the accruement of the lake. We went to--not Ulan Bator, but something,like that. I don't know the name. Finally at six o'clock we arrived in a big city in a country like what I call Les Landes--Les Landes in France. It means woody, sandy, high plateau---something like that--but it was not bad country, but rather poor

country. Many people in the station. They were crowded, crowded. We used to stop every three hours to get fresh food for the dining car, and you could see the country-side, people coming with fresh food. It was very good food--caviar and vodka.

When we left Irkutsk we started to climb, and finally Monday morning we arrive in Chita--big city of Chita. The train was stopping there--I mean the train was going to Vladivostok, and we were going to Manchuria. The train was going through the northern part and ourselves, we crossed Manchuria and went to Harbin, Mukden, and Peking. Therefore, we did not go through the northern way; we took the way across Manchuria.

We stopped at Chita at six o'clock in the morning after a long, long trip, you know, starting in Namurin, Belgium. Those ten days on the train we enjoy very much and we were in the second class. We were not in first class--in second class. We had a roomette, if you like--two sleeping in berths. I was with a Russian navy officer, very nice man, but he could not speak, only smiling, bowing and smiling, but he is very nice. He was a man, I suppose, going to Vladivostok. The two fathers were together and we were in two rooms for the night--two/two--and for the day we were the three together. It was a very pleasant trip.

Finally we arrive in Chita and take the train to Manchuria. We stayed in Chita from six o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock at night. Chita--the country-side was strange. It seemed that we were going through sugar loaf cake, going between isolated mountains. That is what I remember after thirty-three years, you know. I have to remember all those things.

We were in Chita. It was a strange impression. We arrived at six o'clock at the station. The chef of the dining car was very nice man. He gave us food for the full day--chicken, everything. One of us could speak

German and he could understand German; therefore we could speak. We had good food. In Chita it was very strange. First we arrive in the railroad station, the waiting room, filled up with countryside men who had passed the whole night there--sleeping there. Oh! It was terrible. It stunk.

DOUGLASS: Were they waiting for---

WINANCE: Waiting for the train. But, what is it you call, in French "paysan"---country farmers. But they were nice, very human. We enjoyed that, but we could not speak. And finally, the whole day staying there, we were three bourgeois. In the big city where you could see only workers and soldiers. It was a big barracks, you know for soldiers, and also many factories there in Chita. We were struck by that.

We started to roam in the city. Nobody looked at us; they could look at us as a spy. But we had no problem at all. After noon we saw outside the city a church. Therefore, we went out along the marsh. It was a little muddy, along the railroad, and we found the little church--Eastern rite, Orthodox--and we made the sign of the cross. They understood we were religious people, and they invited us to visit the church. We visited the church. They were painting the church and we visited the basement of the church. The Blessed Sacrament was there and we sang the Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy) and finally we could speak like that, communicate. We liked that.

It is interesting because I met here in California a man, a Russian who was born in Chita, and knew this church, along the railroad. Therefore, we could speak--I could check--you know. He is in Costa Mesa, a doctor--Russian doctor--who was a white Russian who left Chita when the

Communists came, and went to Shanghai. He has my age--59--but he knows the church near the railroad.

After that, at eight **o'clock we** took a train for soldiers. They told us, "You must leave the fastest you can. You cannot stay." Therefore, we are all fascinated to take the first train, and at eight o'clock we took a train with soldiers. For me, if you want to have an idea of my trip through Trans-Siberia, you must go to the movie and see The Inn of the Sixth Happiness. You know, there is a lady who is a missionary, who went the Trans-Siberian and also was with soldiers, I think.

The soldiers were very nice, but we could not speak. They asked **us,** "Who are you?" At least we tried. We said, "We are doctors in medicine going to China." We did not say we are missionaries. They tried to be friends, to give us box-car, you know. Finally, we passed the night with the soldiers. It was on the hard seat; we had two cushions. And at six o'clock in the morning, that was on Tuesday, a week later, after we left Moscow, we arrived in the station and they divided the train.

The police was looking for us, the MPI--military police--was looking for us; are we on the train? Because they knew we were coming. And you know, when we were on the train we could visit; we could stay on the platform, but we could not get out because the conductor of the train took our passports. From Moscow to Otpor. Only at Otpor we got the passports. Therefore, you can see we were not going to do anything. But it was nice. I have no complaint.

DOUGLASS: Did you feel that as a religious figure you were being watched? Or being restricted a great deal more than any others?

WINANCE: No. Because we were foreigners.

DOUGLASS: Just because you were foreigners?

WINANCE: Yes, I think so. You know, a few months before that a missionary came from China to France and I think they put on his breviary the stamp on each page. But they did not for us. No problem at all. They knew we were missionaries because they knew everything. But there was no more restriction than on any foreigner.

I remember another thing that **was** interesting. We took a train for soldiers, therefore it was during the day. We could see all the preparations, airfields, barracks against the Japanese which could not be seen by foreigners because the foreigner was to pass through during the night. But we passed during the day and finally, a six hour trip on high plateau, it was a bare country, like Wyoming, something like that for me. We arrived in Otpor, the last city--the last station before the Manchurian border.

When we stopped there the Communists were waiting for us. They said, "There is a room, a waiting room, with three beds, do what you want. You are free. Do what you want." Therefore, we stayed there. You can buy food at the station. They said, "You cannot leave before Thursday," because the train coming from Moscow arrived in Otpor Thursday.

Therefore we stayed there two days, and two days we did not get out because the first night we get out we went on the right. We came back so they asked us, "Why did you go to the right?" Understand? We said, "It is better to stay at home, because when you go somewhere you go either to the right or to the left." For us, we say, "We go to the right because we were obliged to go somewhere."

We stayed there, and after a day-and-a-half we came to the Custom and they looked at everything. When we enter Russia and when we left Russia they look at everything, and ask everything. We have flowers--we came with

flowers from Belgium to plant in China, you know in something like plastic--a bag, you know. And they look at that. We have a big box of tongue--beef tongue--and they asked us to open that; it looked like a bomb, you know. We said, "No. It is food." Well, they looked, but they were nice. No problem. Very nice but strict.

Finally came the train for foreigners. It was better material than for the Russians. But it was very strange. After a week of Russia, living with the simple people, to see a foreigner coming from France, from Germany, you know, practical businessmen. At ten o'clock we passed the border; we arrive on the other side in Manchukuo, and the other side was under Japanese control. Nobody has the visa, absolutely nobody. They told us, "You stop here, go to a hotel, an inn and tomorrow at nine o'clock we look and we see whether we give the visa." You can imagine. We could go home, you know, sent back again to France.

Therefore, we went to a hotel run, I think, by white Russians. It was absolutely the old style--I mean like in the 1880's, like that, absolutely old-fashioned. We stayed there the whole night until nine o'clock. Then we went to the station; all the foreigners were there--British, French, many people, crossing Siberia. At this time it was the fastest way from Paris to Shanghai. By boat it was almost a month, but from Paris to Peking, thirteen days by train.

The Japanese were very strict. No difficulty for us, but absolutely awful for the British. Oh! The British were insulted; very difficult. Finally at three o'clock we took the train--clear, we got the visa. You know, when we were in Brussels you could not get the visa because if you go to the Japanese embassy they say, "Manchuria does not belong to us." If you go to the Chinese embassy they say, "We have no power."

Finally we took the train and the first three hours we could not look through the window because we were passing too many military zones. Therefore, they closed thescreens and police were with us--Japanese--and that is the story. I was very shocked by that.

You know, when I went to China many, many foreigners were despising China. Not the Americans, but the whites were despising China. Not ourselves, because I was educated in another way. That was the beginning for many difficulties for us. I remember when I arrived at the first station, Manchouli, from the platform I saw a Frenchman who gave a slap to a Chinese. We fathers were like that! Father clenched his fists./ We could see the superiority complex of the white. I was struck! I was twenty-seven, un jeune home.

DOUGLASS: You were upset?

WINANCE: Very, very upset. Ah, upset! After that this man was near me on the train, saoul! Do you understand what I mean? He was drunk, drunk, drunk! Therefore, my first contact with the Western people when I got out from Russia was a drunk. He was drunk! After two hours he was /Father Winance indicated deep sleep. Laughter.] Suddenly, he wake up and he wanted to lift the screen. "Please don't lift the screen. You cannot." Oh, he was mad! He lift the screen. Immediately came the soldier with the gun to stop him.

That was a bad impression, you know, to see the white. And the Chinese was so smiling, so nice, very, very sympathetic people.

We passed the night there and the first stop was in Harbin. We arrived in Harbin at three o'clock and Harbin was a big colony of white Russians. I think twenty thousand Russians were there. You have to know thiss when you cross the railroad in Manchuria, all the

railroads are in this town far away from the city--far away from the Chinese city, because the railroads were built during the Empire. Between the old Chinese city and the railroad there is the new city--a Western city. I remember when you arrive in Harbin, in Mukden, it is like Brussels or Paris, Gare du Nord. Have you been in Paris?

DOUGLASS, IRWIN: Yes.

WINANCE: It is like that, very Western, nothing Chinese. It is rather what I called the Western style. I went to New York a few weeks ago--the East and the West, you know, 1880-1890. Big house, you know, French windows, stone, et cetera, very heavy. You find that in Harbin. Therefore, we did not find China before Peking. Very strange.

DOUGLASS: Was this because there had been a lot of Europeans there?

WINANCE: Yes, yes. Because the railroad was built by the Russians, you know. You know, maybe I am wrong in what I say. I don't know.

DOUGLASS: This is fine. What we want to get is your story.

WINANCE: Therefore, I have various impressions. In Harbin what is interesting is this: my aunt has been in Harbin. She is still in Macao, the younger sister of my mother--seventy-six. She is still missionary. She has been in Harbin, a very, very big city with a big flume--river--there. My aunt was very busy because there was a big flood there; also, when the Japanese took Manchukuo.

But in Harbin we wanted to meet the Russians. We were waiting, the three of us there. We went to the Russian colony, visited some Russian churches, Eastern Orthodox and also the Roman Catholic. We visited the Orthodox then we asked where we could find the Roman Catholics. I knew somebody there, Monseigneur Abrandovitch, who has been in Louvain in 1905, something like that. Therefore, we went to the Roman Catholic and we visited Monseigneur Abrandovitch. He received us very, very friendly and he started to describe the difficult situation. He said the Russians were not sympathetic to the Japanese, also they were not loved by the Reds. They say, "We are in a very, very difficult situation; we do not know what we are and we are very, very poor people." It is true, you know. The poor people in tragedy, because these people after they go to Shanghai, the Communists came to Shanghai. Finally, many families were divided. It is terrible! Many tragedies.

We stayed there and we wanted to stay the whole night but the Japanese told us, "No, you have to leave the Russian section at eleven o'clock." Myself, I visited the monastery, the convent of my aunt. She was not there; she was in Peking. Finally, after midnight, we went to the station.

That was for me the repetition of the "alert." You know, I saw the airplane in Belgium when I was young in the First World War. And I saw many alerts in China during the war, but then it was like a repetition. The whole city was black, a black-out. You could hear the plane coming. It was an air-alert.

We took the train to Hsin-ching. /Father began to look on the map.] I don't know the name now. It was called Hsin-ching.

IRWIN: I think on that map the old name is below---

WINANCE: Oh, Changchun. It was the new capital. In Hsin-ching, we arrived there early morning, and again the same structure, I would say--the Western city. We asked to go into the Chinese city because the missionaries were in the Chinese city. It was our first contact with the Roman Catholic missionaries.

We arrive at six o'clock in the city. We went to the chancery, if you like, to see the bishop. We were received by French missionaries. We say Mass there, and after that they show us the city. It was very interesting because the Japanese wanted to make the city the new capital. Hsin-ching means "new capital" and they started to have a big project in it, many streets and many buildings--new buildings. The city was divided in several sections: Chinese buildings, Western buildings, many styles according to the many countries. It was very interesting, but we did not like it too much because we were very pro-Chinese and we said the Japanese are not the true owners of the country.

Then, at three o'clock we took one of the fastest trains in the world at this time. It was the Asia Express. Three of us from Hsin-ching to Mukden. It was very interesting because it was a very wonderful material, you know, a new train, stream-lined, fast. We were in a very luxurious train. It was interesting to see that many Japanese were there. We could see many Japanese. And it was also interesting to see along the track from three hours, both sides very populated, and many factories. I was struck by that--many factories, for three hours! You know, many factories were in Manchuria. Even now Manchuria is a very rich country--coal, soya beans, many things, you know. A very rich country.

Finally we arrive in Mukden at six o'clock. We went again to the Chinese city through the Western city and we stayed there until Sunday.

DOUGLASS: Excuse me, but was it your impression that the factories had been started by the Japanese?

WINANCEs Yes, I think--I cannot say that. Some were started by the Japanese; some started, maybe, by the Russians. You know, I think the railroad is very difficult to say. Part of the railroad was Russian or Chinese---

DOUGLASS: That is what I was going to ask next. Who was running the marvelous new railroad? Was it Chinese or Japanese?

WINANCEs I think it was the Japanese. Yes. Oh, they made a lot of improvements, you know. No question of that. You have to distinguish the material way, and materially speaking, it is true, the Japanese improved the country. No question of that. But, that does not justify, if you like, the Japanese treatment of the---

DOUGLASS: I understand.

WINANCE: I have to be careful of my statements. They make a terrific improvement and when the Communists came, they took over. The Russians took over everything. That in '45 and the Chinese were very mad because the Russians took over the material, you know--mechanics.

DOUGLASS: All of the developments.

WINANCEi The Japanese wanted to develop that. We stayed there and what was interesting was my first contact with Chinese life. Are you interested?

DOUGLASS, IRWIN: Very much. Precisely..

WINANCE: First it was in the Catholic church. I remember the striking impression made by four of these little girls singing the Mass in Chinese, but singing in a Chinese way. It was not at all Gregorian, you know. It was like metallic voices. You know, they sing like [Father sang in a high, reed-like voice). Well, we--foreign ears-singing like that was fantastic! Not at all sweet, not at all. After that when I went back to Europe it seemed the singing was very sweet. Laughter] But, then it was the old Chinese way. It was beautiful, but I don't say it was beautiful voices. But the impression is terrific. I think every missionary, every believer, Protestant or Catholic, has been struck by the singing, the religious singing of these people. That was my first impression. It means the community prayer in China. They were always praying together, aloud, while we did not in Europe at this time--that, the Catholic church.

Also, at night to hear the life on the Chinese street. These fellows selling, you know--bread selling, candy selling, meat--selling everything, and they were using gong and bells, singing, calling. It was absolutely fantastic. My first night near a little street in Mukden. After that it was something--daily life. But, to see the human life on the street.

After that we took the train again and we arrive in Tientsin. And also the impression was very strange. First, before Tientsin we passed the Shanhai-kuan, the border between Manchuria and China--Nationalist China. I remember we could smell the air of the sea. We could smell that, we were struck by that, and also the easy way entering into China. The police came, the Customs came, asked us, "Do you have something?" We say, "No." "Let me see." We showed them a cake made by my mother; they taste, "It is wonderful. Very good." [Laughter] At this time, you know, they let us come. They like to have many foreign things coming in. Chiefly books. We have sixteen trunks of books; many books. No taxes, because they like to have many things coming from foreign.

When we were in Tientsin we were in the foreign part of the city. Therefore, we were not yet in the Chinese world. It was still what I call the Western world. The Chinese who were living there were Westernized, if you like. We visited a famous institute run by the Jesuits where Father Tielhard de Chardin was working, and finally in the afternoon we took the train--three o'clock--for Peking. Only when we arrive in Peking that we got the sensation, the feeling that we were in China.

IRWIN: The Great Wall!

WINANCE: The Great Wall, the Great Gate. When we saw that we kept silent. We said, "Now we are in China." That was something. You stop now? I rest, you know.

DOUGLASS: I would just like to start-off by picking up a few loose ends you said before about your life. You said that you were born in the French-speaking part of Belgium. Were your parents of French descent,or were they Belgian?

WINANCE: Belgian.

DOUGLASS: Always had been Belgian.

WINANCE: My grandfathers were born in Belgium. I learned Flemish, as everybody learned two languages, but my language was always French.

DOUGLASS: You were apparently a very young boy during World War I, but do you recollect any of the problems, say of getting food, and of the strains with the Germans; are there any specifics in your mind, as a child?

WINANCE: As a child I still remember the day the Germans arrived in Mons. I think it was the 21st of August, 1914. We were defended by the British army, I do remember that. I was just five years old, and Sunday morning the British started to retreat and they just get into contact with the Germans--maybe they do before but at any rate at this time--and in the afternoon the British continued to retreat til four o'clock. At four o'clock they told the people to go home because the Germans are coming. At 4:30, near the house, we could see--my father could see-the contact between British infantry and the Germans. The Germans put civilians ahead of them in order to be protected---

DOUGLASS: You mean they forced civilians---
ivilians---

WINANCE: Yes, ahead of them. Several were shot not far from my house. That is in 1914. After that the Germans started to pass for several weeks, going to Paris, I think. They were going to attack on Paris. I still remember that.

DOUGLASS: Do you remember your family having troubi:: getting food, that kind of thing?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. We have no food at all and my mother became sick and she was obliged to go near Brussels because there you could find food, bread. But, we were not far from the battlefield, something like fifty miles. Therefore, it was a very restricted area. You could not get out without a passport for four years, and you could not get good food. We used to eat carrots, even not enough bread, even not potatoes. I remember we used to get potatoes through coal--I mean, buying coal and in the coal, potatoes were mixed up. We were fed, nourished, by Hoover---

DOUGLASS: Did you get some of that food?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. When I was in--I don't know--grade school, eight years old, nine years old, we receive every day at ten o'clock bread from the American relief through the school. Every day.

DOUGLASS: I understand the only way they got the food out was they could use lighters on the canal system of Belgium because they were not allowed to use the railroads.

WINANCE: Yes, oh yes. I remember when I went to Brussels in 1918 to see my mother we took the street car because you could not take the train. We took the street car from Mons to Brussels. It was a real trip.

But the food, it was something. The food was restricted and we used to go to a common market to buy what we need with a cart. Therefore, we were undernourish when we were young. Many, many of my generation were undernourish.

DOUGLASS: Were the children given a higher priority?

WINANCE: I don't remember that. But I still remember that I used to go with my father to the market with a cart to get so many pounds of food.

DOUGLASS: You were just old enough then to remember.

WINANCE: Oh, yes, and I remember each time the bombing, the Allies bombing the city. They bomb a few houses from my house in July, in 1918, when they start to move the Germans back to Germany. We accepted that because it was the only way to be free.

DOUGLASS: Apparently when America entered the war the Americans had to leave the Hoover operation but other foreign-so-called neutral types, continued to run it so that didn't alter it that much. You still got the food.

WINANCE: We got the food, but I think it was, I know it was through the Spanish ambassador. I remember that.

DOUGLASS: Right. He was one who did that. Well, fine. I thought that was just a little extra anecdote I would like to get.

Then I wanted to ask you also, you probably had all of your schooling as a younger child in Mons. Did you go to a Catholic parochial school?

WINANCE: Yes. First I went to the sisters' school when I was six years old. It was called the Sisters of Wisdom,

Les Souers de la Sagesse. After that, one, two years, I don't remember, I went to the Jesuit school because the Jesuits used to have also grade schools in this time, St. Stanislaus in Mons. My grandfather was teacher there for forty years; after that he was teacher for twelve years in a little school. He taught for fifty-two years.

After that the Germans took the old school and we were disperse into houses. Therefore, the class was in a private house except for the Common Prayers and meetings in the chapel. The chapel was still ruled by the Jesuits. That was in 1918, August, something like that. After that the Jesuit closed the school, grade school, and I was sent to the Christian Brothers and I stay three years with the Christian Brothers, one year in Mons, 1918 til 1919 and in 1919 I went to another city called Tournai where is my mother now.

DOUGLASS: Right. Did your family

move? WINANCE: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Would it have been the normal course of events that a youngster living in your area would just automatically go to this school?

WINANCE: In this time it is still the same. You have six years of grade school, what we call elementary school, and six years of high school, still now. It means six and six. Therefore, you start high school at twelve, twelve 'til eighteen. At eighteen you start to go to the college, but myself, I went to the novitiate.

DOUGLASS: But was it a family decision that you went to a Catholic school? Or did most children living there automatically go to the Catholic school?

WINANCE: In Belgium I think more than half of the student are in Catholic school. It is absolutely usual for the Catholic family.

DOUGLASS: In actuality--I don't know enough about the Belgian school system--are the state run schools free schools?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. But for the time being, I think the confessional school--you say confessional school?

DOUGLASS: Parochial school? What we call parochial school?

WINANCE: Yes, parochial school, receives now the money from the government. Now they do, but not in this time. They did not receive before.

DOUGLASS: They didn't then, but now they do?

WINANCE: But it was a long, long fight.

DOUGLASS: Did your family, then, have to pay?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. It was a very heavy burden on the family to send the children to Catholic school. Now all the schools are supported--Catholic, non-Catholic, Protestant school, Jewish school. This is in the last twelve years, I think. You know I don't know too much because I am not there.

DOUGLASS: But I assume both your parents were

Catholic. WINANCE: Oh, yes; oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: As were most of the people, I guess, in that part.

WINANCE: Oh, yes. Now in the south, many, many are baptized, maybe, but the practice is rather low. In the south. Not in the Flemish part. Flemish part has very high practice, but when I was born it was very socialist country. In the coal mines, very socialist. In this time, socialist means anti-clerical. Not now. If you go to Tournai, they were liberal. The liberal were also, I think, rather anti-religious in Belgium. You know, in Belgium, at least in this time, political parties are a little religious flavor--either for or against, but not now. Now it is more broad, modern.

DOUGLASS: Then I guess the next obvious question is, at what point in your life as a young boy did you decide that you would like to enter the church?

WINANCE: Ah-h-h. To enter the church? I was baptized in the church!

DOUGLASS: No, I meant to serve the church.

WINANCE: Oh, to serve the church. That is a very, you know, private question.

DOUGLASS: Well, did you feel a commitment very early?

WINANCE: Yes, when I was six years old, I think, to develop to be a missionary. I never change my mind.

DOUGLASS: And was the missionary itself a goal you had?

WINANCE: Yes. That is because in my family there are many missionaries.

DOUGLASS: Was your aunt, the fact that you had this aunt in China, was that something that made you interested in China, possibly?

WINANCE: But [pause] what do you mean, exactly?

DOUGLASS: Well, you said you had an Aunt in China and I wondered whether that affected---

WINANCE: Maybe, maybe.

DOUGLASS: Or were you just sent to China by chance?

WINANCE: Ah, no. I was sent to China by chance. But I was sent by my order; it had nothing to do with my aunt.

IRWIN: You have brothers and sisters?

WINANCE: I have two brothers. One died. Still two brothers. One is Benedictine, in the Congo, in the cathedral. The other is in Belgium.

DOUGLASS: Your mother you said is still in Belgium.

WINANCE: Yes, I have a picture if you want to see it. [Fr. Winance brought the picture at a later interview.]

DOUGLASS: I would. Then one other question I guess I was inte.sted in. How was the determination made that you would go on for your doctorate? Was this something that you could arrange or were you chosen to go on?

WINANCE: No. /Long pause] What I did I did because I was asked to do.

DOUGLASS: Well, what I mean is, they saw the potential---

WINANCE: Oh, yes. They know that I have the potential, sure. You know, when you become monk, when I became monk, I was ready for anything.

DOUGLASS: Well, I would suppose they had you in mind for teaching.

WINANCE: You know, when you are in the novitiate, or in the training year, they look what are your possibilities and capacities.

DOUGLASS: Yes, but I meant wouldn't the anticipation be that when you completed the doctorate they very well might have you in a teaching capacity?

WINANCE: Yes, but first I was sent to teach. When I went to Louvain it was for teaching. In '33 Father Abbot decided to send me to mission country. I was already, you know, taking my degree. Therefore, it means to use my degrees in mission country, to be teacher there. That was in '33. Not before then. Before '33 I did not know-I knew that I was going to teach in philosophy. I know that, but where--I did not know. That is in '33. When they asked me, they said, "It seems like it would be good for you to send you to China. Do you like it?" I say, "Yes, whatever you want. I have no---" I am still the old way, you know. "Do it." I do it. Not because I am passive, but because I believe it. Therefore, in '33 I knew already that I was directed toward China. Three years before going. Three years before.

DOUGLASS: Then you said, I gathered, you really had no Chinese background until you were sent to England to learn English in order to read and then you still didn't get the language until you got to China. Is that right?

WINANCE: Yes. When I arrive in China my first job was to learn the language.

IRWIN: You said in your first interview you got your first real impression of China when you reached Peking.

WINANCE: Of Peking, at least what I remember now, first of all what is interesting.... You know that a few weeks ago the Pope has appointed Bishop Yu Pin cardinal. Did you see that in the paper? Bishop Yu Pin in Taiwan. The bishop of Nanking who is in Taiwan has been appointed cardinal. But, we arrive in Peking the day after his consecration. We knew him because I think he has been working in France, in Belgium and he used to visit us as a simple priest. Therefore, after two-three days we got in touch with Bishop Yu Pin who was still in Peking. He was in Peking working some commission there, I think, a Catholic commission. We were received by Bishop Yu Pin who is now the cardinal in Taiwan.

When I arrive in United States in '56 Bishop Yu Pin was in New York, in Riverside Heights. I remember visiting there, Riverside Drive, in exile because he was bishop of Nanking. Therefore, first of all, when you arrive in Peking, we were immediately in contact with, I would say we try to be in contact with the true Chinese life. Therefore, we went to Fu-jin University. Fu-jin University means the Catholic university built by a Belgian Benedictine and run by the les Peres du Verbe Divin; it means the Father of the Divine Word. But this university was founded several years before by American Benedictines and they tried to be more Chinese. There are many things to be said on that. Therefore, we stay there in this building, very beautiful Chinese building.

We stay there and we started to visit Peking and to be rather in contact with the Chinese than the foreigner. That, it was our policy. We visited Peking with Dr. Zacharias; he was a very well-known man in this time, Dr. Zacharias. I remember our visit to the Temple of Heaven just painted in red, where the Emperor used to offer sacrifice once a year for the kingdom. After that we went also to the Great Wall. We visited.the Great Wall with a Belgian father.

One day we went to a Trappist monastery near Peking, Yang Kio pin, who has been completely destroyed by the Communist in the '40's. In this time'we met after three days by train, mule, crossing two ranges of mountains, we finally arrive in a very miserable place where sixty Trappist were living. You know the Trappist monastery. Ten foreigners were there and the other were Chinese. We stay there ten days, very edified by the strict monastic life. We found that in a very remote place, made fertile by the Trappists. When the Trappist arrive there seventy-eighty years ago it was very poor, poor place, but thanks to the work of the Trappist monks the soil started to produce trees. I think they were growing almond trees.

After that we went back to Peking and from Peking we started to go down to Hankow to the Blue Yangtze River and from the Blue River to Szechuan. But on the trip four of us from Peking, we stop in Yuan-chou. We wanted to visit a monastery founded by Father Lebbe. In this time Father Lebbe was very well known Belgian religious man. He founded a monastery of Chinese monks, and what is interesting is the customs were more Chinese than Western. That was the problem, I think, the problem of any church, I think, in China. They were too much Western. It was true of the Protestant and the Catholic and Father Lebbe was a pioneer in this field, and tried to have monastic life which was more Chinese, more adapted to the Chinese temper.

I could contrast the life in the Trappist monastery with the life in An Kuo, not far from Paotingfu. In Yan Chapin, the Trappist monastery, the life was exactly as in France. But in An Kuo Father Lebbe started to have the office not in Latin, but in Chinese. I remember, we have Mass in Chinese. That was in 1936. It was very, very new. At least the brothers were singing Mass in Chinese. The brothers were--are you interested in this?

DOUGLASS: Yes, yes.

WINANCE: The brothers were around one hundred. Life was very poor. The Chinese, the brothers there, used to live the lowest life of the country families. They did not eat rice; they used to eat, I think, millet. I do not know in English the name, but it was not rice, because rice was considered as too rich. The monastic habit was more Chinese than Western. The life of the monk was six month in the monastery, living very strict monastic life and six months outside teaching catechism, and going everywhere for social work and religious work. Very interesting, sympathetic formula. We stayed also around ten days and we met there Father De Jaegher--Raymond De Jaegher--a Belgian who was a number one enemy of the Communist in the '4.0's. He know the Communist hate him; he know the Communist hate him very well. After that he came to the United States, he wrote a book on China,* he went back to the Far East, he was a long time in Viet Nam. I think for the time being he is in New York. I was to meet him four weeks ago, but he was not there. I think he was in Montreal.

Therefore, we stay there. It was our first contact with truly Chinese life. Nothing, absolutely nothing, except Father Lebbe--no foreigners. We tried to keep this policy for many years. We did not want to meet foreigners. Not because we are anti-foreigner, but because we try to show that Christianity is not connected, essentially, with foreign countries. We tried to show that it was Chinese.

Therefore, from An Kuo we went down to Hankow by train. We took the train to Hankow and in Hankow we stay a few days there, waiting for the boat, coming from

*Stephen Pan and Raymond de Jaegher. Peking's Red Guard, the Great Proletarian Revolution ' (New York: Twin Circle Publishing Co., 1968).

Shanghai to Chungking. That was a new experience. We took a French boat, but the capitain only was French; the crew was Chinese. It was a little boāt going up the Blue River. We went to Mei-sing. There we have our first Mass with the Chinese parish. It was very interesting. In Mei-sing we met the Franciscan Fathers, Belgian Franciscans, and we went there for the Feast of All Souls, the second of November, according to the Catholic calendar, and we could see for the first time Chinese parish and living with the Chinese parish. We visit also hospital of the Franciscan Missionary of Mary along the Blue River and from there we started our trip to the gorges of the Blue River, a fantastic trip, very difficult to describe in two minutes like this 21augh7, to Chungking, first to Wanhsien, and to Chungking.

It was two days on boat from Ichang to Wanhsien and two days from Wanhsien to Chungking. It was absolutely fantastic because the boat fight against the water, many rapids, you pass through two gorges three thousand feet deep, an awful feeling of fear when you are there and you keep silence because it is so.... I cannot express what you see. Finally we arrive in Chungking and when we arrive in Chungking it was our second stop; our first stop was in Wanhsien. We stay there a few days at the bishop's house and we were immediately in contact with the Catholic church; that means the French missionary were in Chungking.

The French has been in Szechuan almost for three hundred year. They arrive there at the end of the seventeenth century, sixteen something, you know. The great part of the missionaries in Szechuan were French, Missions Etrangeres de Paris. In this time Szechuan was divided. into six diocese, three Chinese and three French: Chungking, Nanchung, Chengtu, Loshan, and Wanhsien, Luhsien.

DOUGLASS: Let's see, you have taken the trip and you are now in Chungking.

WINANCE: Chungking. In Chungking we stay two, three days and we get into contact with the French bishop. We visited the seminary. You know, it was interesting to see that everywhere you could see the presence of the foreigners. Not just the missionary; you could see the presence of the military element. It means you could see a cannoniere, French cannoniere, in Chungking. Now, you must understand also the reason of that. It is true he was somewhat imperialist. I agree, but it is true also that this little boat, cannoniere, protected the ships because maybe bandits on the shore. When I was between Wanhsien and Chungking the capitain told us, "Don't stay on the deck too much because the bandits from the shore can shoot at you." And I remember one day we were near the stack because it was more interesting, but they told us, "Be careful. It is dangerous." Sometime at this time the foreign ship were protected by little gun boat---you say gun boat?--cannoniere. But anyway, when we arrive there I was a little upset because-we were very Chinese and were very upset to see the semi-colonialism of the foreigners. And I was very upset when I saw that in Hankow because in Hankow we could see what you call the extra-territorial settlement. We were very against that, all of us. We were three missionaries, rather pro-Chinese, of one mind.

DOUGLASS: During all of this period of your traveling, were you dressed in clerical---

WINANCE: We were dressed in Chinese, truly Chinese way, because in China we begin to dress in Chinese way, except that we were in black. We have always the old Chinese gown. I was in Chinese gown for many, many years. Even I was teaching in university in Chinese gown. I used to go to the market in Chinese. Shave--not shave, but---

DOUGLASS: Close cut?

WINANCE: Yes.

DOUGLASS: But you were identifiable As a person--

-WINANCE: Yes, immediately. No ambiguity.

DOUGLASS: Did you sense any reaction one way or another with Chinese or other people?

WINANCE: On the contrary, that is an experience. We were accepted everywhere because we were very Chinese. I have many story to tell on that (laugh], and you know, we tried to live the Chinese life. But it was very hard the first year; after that, very easy. When you come young, and when you give up everything as we try to do, it is something very possible, to feel like the Chinese. Therefore, immediately from Chungking, we were still in Chungking in the half-Chinese milieu, because of the presence of many French missionaries.

Therefore, from there we took the Cha-ling-chiang; we left the Yangtze-chiang or the Blue River, and we took a boat on the Cha-ling-chiang going north to Hochwan. In Hochwan it was the last post of a French missionary. We met Father Blanchard. We stay two-three days there, speaking French. After that we start in the true Szechuanese way of traveling. It means we were in a bamboo chair, and walking. That was the way of traveling for sixteen years.

When we left we left Hochwan at 6:30 in the morning going up to Nanchung. That, it was the truly way of traveling. We used to travel, two-three hours before breakfast on a very narrow road. It was a stone road built in the time of the Emperor, going through a little valley. The country was very hilly. The earth was very red, like near Grand Canyon, and divided in many, many rice field. The road was winding among the rice fields. Sometimes

used to pass a river, a very narrow bridge, just one foot broad and arriving in a little market town, absolutely crowded, so crowded you could not find the road in the market.

For breakfast, we have breakfast at nine o'clock, that was the best way. The best way of traveling was to leave early, to make the most you can before breakfast. For breakfast you have vegetables, meat and rice and start again. Finally, five o'clock the same day we arrive in another parish, a strictly Chinese parish.

tChuckleJ We had an unusual experience, because at this time we have many secret societies in China and the bandits were also organized. The day before, the father was robbed by the bandits; they did that before receiving permission to do so. Therefore, after two-three days the bandits were obliged by the chief of the bandits to send back all the blankets and whatsoever they robbed because it was the wrong place. [Laughter] When we arrive there I remember that the story was the parish had been robbed by the bandits but it was not low on food.

We stay there two days in contact with the Chinese priests. A day after that we started to continue. In this day it was call Chuang Kiang-cheng; it means the Village of the Two Rivers. From there we continue the road, walking or riding on the chair. We used to make twenty miles a day, twenty-five miles a day, something like that.

We arrive in a big city called Suilen, very well-known because the city was the center of Buddhist pilgrimage, big monastery called Wan-kiu-san, the Monastery of the Shining Virtue, of the Brilliant Virtue. Therefore, we stayed there two-three days because we could visit the monastery and have an experience of Buddhist pilgrimage, that is, Buddhist worship, and it was very interesting because you could find there a big statue in

jade, representing Kwan-yu. That is a very long story because Kwan-yu, according to the belief of the people there, was a lady--a goddess. You could see her statue and also a big tower fill up with ex voto--it means people who were expressing thanksgiving, exactly like pilgrimage place in Europe. This Buddhist goddess, at least in the minds of the people, this goddess was the goddess of kindness, the goddess youppray for when you want to get some grace, some gift, is the goddess of kindness, Kwan-yu. We stay there a few days and it was interesting to see this Buddhist worship. From there we started the last stage of our long travel.

We were in November and we leave Belgium in September. Therefore, the 18 of November we cross the river call the Fuchiang. The Fuchiang was an affluent of the Chia-ling-chiang. We went to a little city called Pongchi. It was also a twenty-five mile walk. We stay there the night and the day after, the 19, we arrive in the monastery. Around five o'clock in night, we arrive in a little Benedictine monastery built in a little cove surrounded by rice terraces and many, I think, cedar trees. A very pleasant place.

The monastery was strictly Chinese, which means very beautiful but very uncomfortable. It was built in 1929 by a man who died in Japan a few years ago--a monk--and it was strictly Chinese style. The oratory was a little like a Buddhist temple. The symbols were not at all Western. They were Chinese. We have a little courtyard, you know, like the Chinese house. It was a truly very pleasant place, at least when you were used to it. [Chuckle/

We were three miles and a half from the big city called Nanchung. Nanchung was a big city in the valley surrounded by hills rather bare because the Chinese have not afforested the country too much, but you could find in the valley and all the terraces what I call cedar trees, and also, many orange trees. It was very well known for the orange trees.

PEAKE: I enjoyed reading the transcript in which you told of arriving in China. How long was it from the border area?

WINANCE: We left Otpor, Manchuria, at the border at 10 o'clock Thursday, but we stayed'a half-day in Manchuli, and we laft Manchuli at three o'clock, afternoon, and we arrive in Harbin twenty-four hours later.

PEAKS: It took me three days longer in 1928 than it did you. I am curious to know, what was the motive power? Was it coal, or oil?

WINANCE: I think it was coal.

PEAKE: Ours was only wood-burning, and we had to stop every hour to load up a new load of wood. Was the roadbed double-tracked?

WINANCE: I don't remember that, but I know that between Hsin-ching and Mukden we had one of the fastest trains in the world, the Asiatic Express. That was wonderful. Before that it was o.k. While I was there the Japanese---

PEAKE: I meant in Siberia.

WINANCE: Oh, in Siberia. I tell you this: we started to go fast when near Lake Palakal. I think we were going sixty kilometers per hour. Before that I think the rate was fifty kilometers. Something like thirty miles. We were stopping every three hours.

PEAKE: Every three hours--then you must have had coal. [Laughter) That was the normal run for our trains in the middle-West in the old days, to change engines. That's about all those old coal burners could do.

WINANCE: Also to check the axles. And we saw ladies coming with fresh food. I enjoyed that.

DOUGLASS: You knew you were going to eat!

PEAKE: Twenty-five cents for a whole roast chicken, eggs, I don't know what else we got.

WINANCE: But I enjoyed the trip! I would like to do it again, this trip.

PEAKE: I was wondering, when you first came into China, you mentioned going to some services in a Catholic church somewhere along the way. Did anything strike you as different about that service? The buildings?

WINANCE: No. I tell you this. The first building we saw in China, Catholic building, was very Western, and the Cathedral of Mukden, when I went for the Mass, it was strictly a Gothic church, and we were very criticizing that. It is true it was a beautiful Gothic church, built by Father Lamasse, I think; every detail was French. You could see that, every detail was coming from a cathedral in France, but it was not the place to ha-re a cathedral there.

We were three young men--twenty-seven, twenty-six, twenty-four--very criticizing what had been made by the olders, but we were very criticizing of the church. The missionaries were very proud of the Roman Catholic church, but I was struck by what I called the communal prayers, praying together.

When I was in Belgium, I remember, we were less liturgical as we say now; it means praying in private. But in China the prayers were together. I was struck by the singing of the little girls. I would say very strange. The Chinese, when they sing, is like the steel, very hard,

not at all emotive. It was striking, but not at all sweet. After that when I went back to Belgium, when I heard what we call Gregorian chant--beautiful! I found that too sweet, but the old Chinese way of singing, at least among the Catholics, was very hard, very peaceful, not a monotone, but less fancy than in the West, but very religious. After that when I got used to it, we did not like to have the Mass in Gregorian chant; when we lived in Chengtu we liked the Chinese way of singing.

Even myself, during the Mass, I was so moved by the old prayers. In Szechuan there are the old prayer books written by old Chinese priests, maybe one hundred fifty years ago, while I was there; it means one hundred eighty years ago now. In beautiful Chinese, written in what you call Wen-li. Terrifically deep prayers. I was always moved by the way they were sincere.

PEAKE: These prayer books. Were they from the Jesuits--the earlier Catholics in China?

WINANCEs No, they were not these Jesuits, these prayer books. The Jesuits made doctrinal books, but I think in Szechuan the prayer books were made, maybe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the end of the eighteenth century, by the missionaries. I am not ab;-olutely sure of that, but I was told that. I have not checked reference, quotations, but at this time we had three thousand books in the Catholic church. At least, to make--to receive for the first time the Eucharist, the kids must have a class of catechism for three years, and they have to learn by heart three books: the prayer book, the Book of Rites-it means the sacraments, you know--and the third book was the catechism--strictly the doctrine. These books were written in such a way that the little Christian kids could learn literary Chinese instead of the classic---

PEAKE: Oh, the szu-shu and the wu-ching?

WINANCE: **Yes,** they were reading the Christian books written in literary Chinese. They always enjoyed these books. After that, after the war--- "

PEAKE: Your teaching methods were very much like the old Chinese way of learning--by rote, by memory?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. By memory. We have to learn by heart three books by **six**-seven years old. After that they could make first confession and first communion. The doctrine **was** taught by ladies who remained celibate; these ladies did a terrific job. Because of them the Christian faith was kept during the persecution time. You could see young ladies starting, after that old ladies who had been teaching catechism for fifty years and the method was this: like in the old Chinese way, the families invite their own teacher. Therefore, the Christian families were generally together in a little valley, six, seven families together, inviting a lady to teach a catechism. The lady received her food from them, was paid money paid by the bishop, and sometimes remained three years, teaching the kids of the community. The priest used to pass there and to check--to ask questions. I did that many times, visiting families, asking the questions, and those that were able to answer could make their first communion, and try to practice, the true practice of Christian life.

The Christians could not go to church every Sunday, you know. It was impossible. They used to go to the church once a year, twice--for Easter, for Assumption Day, for Christmas--but they used to pray at home. That is something interesting, because the Christian faith was kept because of the prayer at home. They were very faithful, they used to pray half-an-hour every day, sometimes in the morning, but half-an-hour at night was something very common.

PEAKE: Was it your policy to convert, not only a whole family, but a whole community?

WINANCE: Yes, and the leader was the catechist, not the priest.

PEAKE: Would that be a Chinese?

WINANCE: Oh, a Chinese, yes. Now in the Catholic church they speak again of the deacon; you know they can marry, the deacon. I have found that also, chiefly for the catechist, because the catechist knew the doctrine very well, knew the community better than the priest, you know. The first thing you do, I remember, when you arrive in the community, is to meet the catechist, old man, long beard, you know, respected, to ask him what is the situation.

DOUGLASS: Would these books originally have been translated into Chinese by Jesuits, or priests, or would they have been done by Christian Chinese converts?

WINANCE: I think they would have been made by Chinese convert priests under the guidance of the priest.

DOUGLASS: That is why you think they were so

good. WINANCE: Oh, yes. So good.

IRWIN: Were the Masses still said in Latin there?

WINANCE: While I was there the Mass was still in Latin. But that is a very difficult question because when I went back to Rome the decree was existing to say Mass in Chinese, but it was a practical question: no text was availa1le. I tell you that Rome was very progressive--more progressive than the missionaries. I saw that.

When I arrive in Peking--I arrive at twenty-seven years I told you--we were very radical. At least, we try to follow the direction given by Rome; to have a Chinese church, Chinese bishop, we were fighting for that, and a Chinese way of living, to ordain Chinese priests. Rome was for that and the great impetus was given by Pius XI, and for us Benedict XV, for a church disentangled from the Western ways of life. But, it is a difficult problem and I would like to touch that, if you will let me, but you know when you speak like that you are not aware of the nuances and maybe it is difficult to understand because you have not been on the spot.

When I arrive in China my first impression was clear. The church was too much Westernized; even the Protestant, too, I think was too much Westernized. We did not have the sense of relativity, of some formula, of some way of behavior. I do not say--some would say--the missionaries were too much nationalist. I would not say that. After a few years in China I could see that. The French missionary were not working--or the Protestant--for their own country. You hear that, and you read that. In conscience I do not say it is true. What is true is this: the emotional reaction was very nationalist. It means, in other words, they were working for the church, and for Christ, Catholic and Protestant, but sometimes the emotional way of reacting was too much nationalist. It is difficult to quit your country, you know. I can understand that, and it is true that the Frenchmen were very, very French in their emotions, in their feeling. That is true.

Now, I think the problem is more complex because, when you go back to the history--the sixteen century, the seventeenth century--the Westerners were very respectful of Chinese culture, so respectful that you have a great praise of Chinese culture--Ricci, Verbiest--in the letters of the Jesuits. The Jesuits wrote something fantastic on

this kingdom, but in the beginning of the nineteenth century, chiefly after the Opium Wars, there suddenly came the conflict of superiority. The conflict of superiority, which I would say connected with technology. You know, when the Jesuits came to China, the Jesuits came with mathematics, geometry, astronomy and some techniques, but the Chinese in this time were still, maybe, better than the techniques of the Westerners.

I believe that culturally speaking the gap between China and the West is because of the Cartesian science--mathematical science. It means the application of mathematics to physics. It means when we started to mathematize physics, suddenly we started to be very, very, very distant from older country; that was the progress made by the Westerners. But, from the viewpoint of art, from the viewpoint of culture, from the viewpoint of human understanding, the Chinese were as high and maybe higher than we were, except for Christianity; maybe that is something different. It is what Christianity gave us, some feeling, some evaluation. But otherwise, at the very beginning all the missionary were very enthusiastic for Chinese culture, chiefly those who were learned people.

But in the nineteenth century, little by little it seems to me China was decaying; little by little came the division of China to spheres of influence, it became the marketplace, practically, China became what they called "infracolonial country," a half-colony, worse than to be a colony. Therefore, I think, little by little the Westerners began to have a complex of superiority. I was very, very upset by that.

PEAKEt It affected the missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, in the nineteenth century? It went pretty well down into the twentieth century? By the time you came, a new movement---

WINANCE: A new movement, yes. You could feel that; you could see a new movement. **You know,** for me, I don't like too much to criticize the past after being inexperienced myself, because they met so difficult conditions. One day I was with Father Jean Baptiste in 1942. I was young, Father Baptiste was a Chinese father, old Chinese, old type. Myself, I started to criticize the missionary, using French power to defend themselves, etc. He said, "But you would not be here if they were not defended." This Chinese took the defense of the way which is strange because, it is true, forty years in these times seventy years ago, it was very insecure.

Persecution in '27, some Protestant were killed, 1927 in Shantung; many Christian, Catholics were killed in the very beginning of the century. I went into a parish where 600 had been burned, you know burned in a den, only one girl survived, and she was old lady when I went into this community. Or, I visited an old Chinese priest, Father Lee--Father Stephan Lee--in 1936-37, and his parents were killed. Christians were killed in his community and he was saved by his godfather, took him when he was still six years old. You could hear many stories like that. You know the persecution of 1900--something like that.

Well, I do not say that gives the right to what the Westerner did, but you can excuse. But what I don't like is this: people who continue an old policy which is no longer of today. I remember that the old French missionary could not understand the new China of '36-37. They could not understand that.

DOUGLASS: Did you find that coming in as a young man you were having many discussions, and maybe differences of opinion with the older people of the church?

WINANCE: Oh, yes; oh, yes; oh, yes.

PEAKE: Did you spend any time in Peking?

WINANCE: I stayed in Peking two or three weeks, at Fu-jen (Catholic) University. I remember we were only with Chinese. We tried to avoid the foreigner. It was very strange, our psychology. I told you that my first visit was to go to An-kuo, not far from Paotingfu and to stay with a strictly Chinese community, except there was a Belgian, Father Lebbe, called in Chinese Loei Ming-yuen, and there I could say a liturgy in Chinese, I remember. But, when I arrive in Chengtu and Chungking, we started to be, little by little, in contact.

DOUGLASS: I want to ask one question. Do you feel that your training in philosophy and theology enabled you to come into the country with a much better understanding of what you might expect of what the people's habits were, what their religious customs were and perhaps better prepared you---

WINANCE: I was very grateful to Louvain. Very grateful, because we were open-minded; very grateful because in Louvain I was trained in a type of philosophy, but very open to others. That was the training.

DOUGLASS: For instance, you would have learned about Buddhism, Taoist---

WINANCE: Yes, oh, very interested, sure.

DOUGLASS: You knew much more than the typical person.

WINANCE: I tell you this. Sometimes the missionaries were not educated enough. They were good men, but not educated. And, because they were not educated, they reacted, I would say, in China, exactly as they would

have in France or in another country. It means they were not interested in art; they were not interested in what you call culture. Very few. Some were interested, but many not. I don't blame them; I say I don't blame them because they were good people and did a terrific job, but it was a handicap, terrific handicap. Because, when you go to a country you must show them that you love them, and you love them by being interested. But, if you are not interested in art, of course you are not in Chinese art; if you are interested in music, of course you are in Chinese music, Chinese drama, Chinese theatre. Therefore, some were interested, some were very cultured people. But, I speak of the ordinary missionary.

DOUGLASS: You really have to have a certain background for---

WINANCE: I am sure of that, absolutely sure. The deeper the better. Therefore, I remember after the war we asked people who had a deep background and never send somebody- you know, sometimes you send to mission country people who cannot work here. It is a terrific mistake! You must be more clever there than here. I tell you that, and we said that, and we repeated that.

You know, the Protestants were very educated men, many were very, very educated. I remember they had many high school, many college. I will say this: the Catholics were rather among the poor people, low-level people, non-educated people, but good people. No question, but they were less than you; they were free of education.

When I started to teach in '45 it was something new. When I started to teach even the Chinese say, "We did not know the Catholic has some knowledge."

DOUGLASS: Would you have been somewhat unusual in terms of a Catholic missionary?

WINANCE: Unusual. That was the open-mindedness of my superior. My superior was an Italian and we were educated in the menta'ity of Mateo Ricci. I was educated in Louvain. I was just in the revival of what you call missiology. It means a new type of method in mission. We are a class in Louvain given by Jesuit fathers. After that we were also this: we were connected with the movement of Father Lebbe. You must read the book Thunder in the Distance to understand my own background. That was the challenge to the church, to have a Chinese *church*. It means the church in China must have the Chinese way. Therefore, when we arrive in China we were trained for this way. It means to be Chinese with the Chinese. Therefore, when I arrive in the monastery, I did not tell you that, it was strictly a Chinese house, Chinese food.

DOUGLASS: You just started to tell us that.

WINANCE: After two days it was strictly forbidden to speak French. My superior say, "No, we speak either Latin or Chinese." We started to learn Chinese. It means we started to study the books of grade school, starting with I would even say the kindergarten books, with a Chinese teacher. We did that for one year.

That was the mind of the community: to have a Chinese community because we were Benedictine, and the Benedictine, we are not too much centralized. Every house is autonomous. At this time to be autonomous was something, not very highly regarded. But now is the contrary; we are for autonomy now, at least in the Catholic church more. Because of that you could take root, take roots in the ground and to have your own customs, your own liturgy. You are more free than big orders that are more centralized. We were more free. Therefore, we were able to organize our own way of life, very Chinese. Little by little we did not wear the monastic habit; we took the Chinese habit and we accepted the Chinese customs.

PEAKE: In other words, you were going back to the way the Jesuits operated in the seventeenth century, different from the Franciscans and the Dominicans?

WINANCE: We were very criticized at the beginning, but by '47-48, people began to understand that it was the good way, the right way. Even I would say this: to learn Chinese ten years, not to speak English, not to speak French, and in some way for ten years to stop in your own field, that was something very difficult. After ten years to start again to teach philosophy in Chinese, we did that. In Chinese. It was hard because you understand it is easier to teach in your own language. But I think it was more rewarding because after that we get more influence. And you know that the great tragedy has been the coming of the Communists. They will destroy.

I remember I was in a beautiful college like here [indicated campus"--West China University. It was a Protestant university supported by five churches. It was beautiful campus and all the foreigners were expelled in 1950, all the Americans, French, English, Swedish, and finally myself. I gave my last class in 1950 in June.

PEAKE: Do you know what the Communists are doing with the school?

WINANCE: Ah, we know nothing. You know, we have absolutely no news. You know, in two weeks Cardinal Yupin will come here. I shall try to meet him.

DOUGLASS: You don't even get any word through France or Belgium?

WINANCE: No, no. You know, we receive friends from Hong Kong. They don't know more than you or myself. They know only this: they are still alive, still going, but you

don't know one more detail. We have two brothers maybe are dead; we don't know. Two Benedictines; one is a father, one still a brother, but we halve no news. Even when I write to my aunt in Macao she said, "We know that they are still going, and we know no more."

DOUGLASS: You didn't have any Chinese language training until you arrived. How long did it take you to feel that you were getting somewhere, so to speak?

WINANCE: It means after one year, I still remember, after three months, four months, they **ask you to** preach, to hear confession. They tell you, "You preach marvelous, but nobody understood you." [Laughterl I started to feel easy after five years.

One father, Father Wilfred Weiss, progressed very fast. But after five years, finally in '45 after nine years, I was able to read many books in pe huo, it means the national language, Kuo-yu. I could use, read, three thousand characters, and after that, little by little, I started to write. Because, you have the three jobs, you know, to learn to speak, to learn to read, and to learn to write. Those are the three functions. You have to focus your attention on the three functions. At least, for us, those who start at twenty-seven.

DOUGLASS: I think it might be interesting just to pick up your story from the point at which you began to learn the language and tell us what your duties were during these various years. In other words, what did you first do, and then what did you do as time went on?

WINANCE: I arrive in 1936 in November and for two months, December and the middle of January, '37, we stayed in the monastery. It was a Benedictine monastery. Maybe next week I find a picture, I shall come with a picture of the

monastery, built in Chinese style. I told you, very nice, but very uncomfortable. First we started monastic life, but the first job was to get acquainted with the bishop, to get acquainted with the seminarians. We were three miles and a half from the city. The bishop was a Chinese bishop. We wanted to be in a Chinese diocese where there were no foreigners, except, I think, two-three deaconess, very wonderful women who were all doctor. It means, when we were sick we used to go to visit them, they used to visit us, very, very friendly and outstanding women. Very dynamic.

IRWIN: From what country were they?

WINANCE: They were German Lutherans.

After two months Father Prior sent us sixty miles from the monastery to a little town called Suilen. We were three fathers--Father Vincent Martin who will come back soon from the Holy Land, Father Wilfred Way, and myself. We started a two day journey. In this time we were still using a chair, Chinese chair, but we don't use them too much; we were walking. We walked almost sixty miles in two days, and we arrive in a little town called Suilen. Father Lee, the Chinese priest there, gave us for one year a house. It was the house built by a missionary, I would say colonial style. It was in bricks and relatively comfortable for us, and we stayed there from January 'til October. The job was strictly to learn Chinese. It means we tried to learn one thousand characters in almost nine months. All day long, everybody with his own teacher. We had two teachers with us--two young men, who repeat, try to teach the grammar, but they were not too able to teach us the grammar. They did not know grammar, but they knew very well the pronunciation. Therefore, we started to do that every day for months and months. After several months, in May, we were able to

understand people and they asked us to help in the parish. We started to preach, you have to start to preach even if you are not understood. We stayed there, helping the country, listening, hearing confession, visiting sick people, meanwhile studying Chinese. In the middle of July I went home to write an article on philosophy. I went back to the monastery and was in the monastery three weeks. It was very hot. Szechuan was very hot, and very, very humid. That was the first very hard life. After that we got used to it, but the first year you could not sleep, you could not eat, you lose weight, you lost courage, you lost energy because it is too hot; you cannot rest at night. We were surrounded by mosquitoes, nothing to fight the mosquitoes except to close your bed at six o'clock. If you don't do it, all the mosquitoes are inside, you are obliged to sleep outside. It was something!

In doing the office, you know the office in the church, fighting against the mosquitoes (gesture as slapping at one. The mosquitoes passed through, under the net. What is strange is this: the seventh of July, 1937, it means the seven of the seventh month, we went back, Father Prior and myself, we took the bus, a one-day trip for sixty miles. When we arrived in Suilen we heard the news of the declaration of the war at the Marco Polo Bridge. In this time when we heard that, we said, "Oh, the war will be finish in three months. China will never be able to stop the Japanese attack."

That is something strange, also something very bad to say. Many foreigners took part for the Japanese, not for the Chinese. Immediately we took part for the Chinese; immediately we say, "No, we are in China, we are fighting for the Chinese." You understand, my stand here is the same. I am a guest, therefore I take the stand of the government. We immediately took part for the Chinese, but it was very, very questionable. You know, the Chinese were not very strong at this time.

I remember connecting with this question is this: when I was in Peking I was struck by the fact that the Japanese and the Chinese worked together. We would see Japanese soldier and Chinese soldier on the same street car and I was thinking the Japanese were still in some ways the invader, you know, because they were still'in Manchuria. It means the Japanese wanted to have economic control of northern China. That was a problem. Coming from Europe--you know when you come from Europe, you are shocked. It means you cannot accept contradictory situation. But when you are in the Far East, the contra-dictory is together. I think we still know that; in Viet Nam, I suppose it is the same.

PEAKE: They don't think in dichotomies, as we do?

WINANCE: It is true, it is true. Therefore, I saw that, and I remember when we had arrive in China several months before, they were waiting the war, some were not only waiting, but wishing because they say, "The situation cannot stay like that. The Chinese are more and more under Japanese control. China is a great country and we cannot be like that. We have to take a stand." I don't know enough to say something on that; I know only what I heard from outside. But, I remember when I met Father Lebbe. Father Lebbe was taking a stand. He said, "We cannot continue to live like that in this very ambiguous situation. Otherwise, China will be controlled little by little by the Japanese."

Therefore, the war started in that year. In this time I was in Szechuan; in '37, it was a terrific drought in the county where I lived. People were eating the bark off the trees, eating earth, dying every day on the road. You could see people drop dead, you know, starving before you and you could not do anything.

It was a lack of transportation. You could have plenty of food one hundred miles from there, but absolutely

no transportation. You cannot nourish people like that, I tell you, because there are millions and millions and you need trains and trains and trains, or trucks and trucks and trucks. It was a tragedy. It was a terrific drought and because of that, famine. You know, in that part of China they depend upon the monsoon and in this time the rain came too late and we suddenly had a terrific flood, if you remember, in the middle of July, but it was too late to plant the rice. Absolutely too late to plant the rice, therefore, it did not solve the famine. On the contrary, we had a new problem. Many people were flooded, drowned. Three thousand people died not far from the place we were living. Near a dam they discovered three thousand corpses. That was in August and it was very hot, continuing our job. At this time I was only alone in the monastery in a little house because the two priests started a long trip. Father Wilfred started to make a little trip around in the diocese to see several parishes and Father Vincent Martin went to Chengtu with my prior. You know, the two meet. The founder of the monastery, I told you, was a French navy officer. I think I said that in the beginning, non?

DOUGLASS, IRWIN: No. I think not.

WINANCE: You know the founder of the monastery was Father Joliet. Father Joliet was a French navy officer who went to Shanghai in 1897-98. He was a Catholic officer; he was struck by the Buddhist life and he said, "We must have also the monastic life." In China in this time we have many hospital, many schools. Therefore, he went back to France, became monk in Solevh until 1927 he asked his abbot to be sent to China. It was only 1927 my abbot decided to have a foundation in China, that he asked his abbot--French abbot--to change the monastery, to join us. He was sent to China in 1927 with Father Pierre du Coqueou and they went to Peking.

They stayed in Peking one year and it was a very great year, '27-28. In this time in the Catholic church you have two tendencies. Rome was pushing for a less Westernized church and the French missionaries were very reluctant to change their ways. Before that the Americans started, around 1.925, Fu-jen University, rather in Chinese style. In fact, my superior was in contact with the American monks who were very pro-Chinese way. You have several men from Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and from Lisle, Illinois. They started in this time, in the twenties.

After one year of learning Chinese and trying to find what to do, they decided to go to Szechuan because it was the most remote province, the least Westernized, and in Szechuan to start a monastery in a Chinese diocese, that would be truly Chinese. And this was Father Joliet started this way when he was fifty-six, fifty-seven. After that he was sick, and after a few years of monastic life in Szechuan he was obliged to resign and he went to the high mountains place where he got a little hermitage given by the bishop of Chengtu. He started to give his time reading patrology, Greek, the fathers of the church. He was a very scholarly man and in 1937 the third prior of the monastery wanted to visit him with Father Vincent Martin. That was a trip in 1937, in August.

In September, I went to a little place called Cochintu, twenty Chinese miles from the city, a little typically religious oratory, you know, very romantic. built on the shore of a big river, surrounded by seventy people, all fishermen pulling the boats, all poor people. I stayed there three weeks, trying to practice my Chinese, preaching, blessing marriages there. After three weeks I went back to the big city, and finally at the end of October we left Suilen and we went back to the monastery.

We went back to the monastery the last week of October in order to start strict monastic life for the first vespers of the All Saints' Feast; the first of

November in the Catholic church is All Saints' and we started monastic life for the first vespers on All Saints'. We started monastic life with the idea to have also active work, and the first active work accepted by the monastery was the major seminary, and we started to have monastic life, teaching Latin and philosophy. In 1937 I started to teach Latin. I also give a class or so in introduction to philosophy to the seminarians.

It was a very small school; you have only six-seven seminarians, two-three brothers and a few European fathers, and we started our life.

IRWIN: You were telling us of your seminary. You were teaching Latin and philosophy= you had the six or seven seminarians. This was when you had returned to the monastery and had your first Mass there on All Saints' Day.

WINANCE: We started monastic life in '37 in the monastery. It was very peaceful life, the full monastic life, the life in Europe. We used to get up at 4:20 to start the office at 4:40, matins, mass, office during the day at 9 o'clock, at 12 o'clock, vespers around 6 o'clock and you finish the day with compline around 8 o'clock, something like that.

But the work: first of all, we have the two schools. The first school was a major seminary teaching first Latin, after that philosophy and theology. And we started also an elementary school for the children of the people living in the neighborhood of the monastery. It was a school of, maybe, eighty students. We could accommodate for eighty little kids, boys and girls who receive elementary training, not Christian at all, strictly for the people around the monastery. It had nothing to do with catechism like in the big school, but private.

We invited several Chinese teachers to teach the school and we were only giving the money, and the prior was responsible for the school, but the school was run by Chinese superintendent, Mr. Huen.

DOUGLASS: Did the Chinese families pay you any small sum to send their children?

WINANCE: No, it was gratis. They could not afford the money.

DOUGLASS: Were there any alternatives for these children in terms of schooling?

WINANCE: No, they could not go to another school--maybe to go farther, very far. You know, in this time, '36-37, at least to my knowledge, the government started to spread elementary school. It means to teach the Western way, to teach arithmetic, physics, to elementary kids, but before that you could see in the remote place family school, learning the classics, and learning writing, but nothing on mathematics and physics and chemistry. It means the old type of education. You could find that.

But, in 1936-37 the National Government from Nanking, the central government, started to spread the school, create many high schools. For us, we had an elementary school, and they used to study **six** years. After that started high school.

The life was very pleasant at this time; the war was just starting, but the news started to be very bad and in '38, you know, the Japanese started to take over Hankow, if I remember, in '38, October. We started to realize that we were in the war. In '38, in October, the situation was very pessimistic and we did not know what to do. At least, the Chinese were a little hopeless. I remember in the monastery, from our point, Father Yang, a Chinese father, asked Father Prior to help the government. It means to help the government because it was a patriotic feeling.

Therefore, one day at 8 o'clock in the morning, Father Prior called us to the chapter and he told us that he has decided, with Father Yang, to send Father Yang to Chungking to work for the government. After the chapter, two Belgian fathers, Father Vincent Martin, who will come back next semester, and Father Wilfred Weiss went to the prior, at least first Father Vincent, asked Father Prior and told Father Prior, "I would like also to do something

for China." He was a Belgian. Father Prior said, "O.K." and he was sent to Chungking. Father Wilfred asked to do the same, but Father said, "I cannot send you; otherwise we will be without any men to run the monastery."

Therefore, at the beginning of November, I remember Father Vincent Martin and Father Yang went to the city with all the monks and we were in monastic habit. We went to the big place where many, many soldier were leaving for the battlefield, you know, new soldier leaving for the war. Father Vincent and Father Yang gave a little talk explaining what they were doing, you know, helping China to fight against the Japanese, and they left for Chungking.

When they arrive in Chungking, Father Yang started to work for the government, to be liaison between the government and America, United States, Europe. It means for foreign country because he knew German, he knew French, he knew English. Father Vincent Martin went to the battlefield with Father Lebbe as colonel in the Red Cross, working on the battlefield in the Red Cross.

Therefore, we started to feel the war, and it was in '38. In '38 also the Japanese started to bomb the country, to bomb Szechuan. The big bombing of Szechuan started in '39; in '39 in May they started to bomb Chungking, killing 10,000 people in ten minutes. They started to bomb Chungking in May and it lasted until '43-44, you know when the Americans came and counterattack with what they call the Black Widows fighter planes. Before that, no defense from the Chinese; it is only the Americans who started to have their own fighters and to fight Japanese bombers.

In the monastery we continued monastic life 'til '42, and it was very peaceful life. It means we were obliged many times to stop class because of the air alert and leave the monastery for three-four-five hours, six hours, waiting in a ditch, you know, or in a den, in a

cave. At least for myself, I fear the bombing, and many time we see the Japanese flag coming and passing.

In 1940, the third of September, a Tuesday, they bombed the city and kill maybe 600 people, 1200 people were injured, wounded and killed. That was the situation in Szechuan for several years. For weeks and weeks we were bombed by the Japanese bombers.

DOUGLASS' Were you asked to help in hiding people, or in organizing some kind of civil defense? To get a place for people to hide?

WINANCEs It was very difficult to hide. You know, they started to build many air shelter in Chungking, because Chungking was built in the rocks. A fantastic air shelter. After that, they bomb, bomb, and bomb. No problem at all.

But, in many cities, we have only wooden house, straw house. Or out on the plain--impossible to hide! In Nanchung it was absolutely impossible. After the first bombing many people came to the monastery for a week, two weeks, but they could not live there. The only way to escape was to leave the city.

Therefore, we have air alert. You know, it was very interesting because it was very well organized. The Japanese--you know we knew sometimes that they were coming before they left, because of the spy net. And we have air alert sometimes two hours, three hours before they came. The plane used to come from Hankow or Metang. Therefore, it was very well organized. You could leave the city. We have time.

Many people were killed sometime because they were imprudent. Like after the flood you start again to build on the same place. Exactly that; the lack of thinking.

DOUGLASS: Did you feel that the monastery was not bombed? Did you feel any security in the fact that is was obviously a monastery?

WINANCE: You know, it was this. The Japanese used to bomb, I think, the city. But sometimes coming back, they throw the bombs--they have too many bombs left, maybe--they used to drop bombs in the country. You could get one. Sometimes they could see a big, big target, and the monastery was relatively a big target because it was higher, several buildings, many roofs, the schools. They could see it, but they never bombed the monastery, never.

I remember sometimes you could see the plane coming, passing, and after two minutes you could hear the bombs drop somewhere in the country. I think they did that because they wanted to get rid of them when they were coming back, coming back east, going east from Chengtu.

PEAKE: Did they bomb any Red Cross signs or hospitals?

WINANCE: /Hesitantly/ No. They bomb the cities. Several bishop house were destroyed. In Chengtu they bomb the city as such, you know.

PEAKE: In other words, demoralizing the---

WINANCE: Demoralizing, yes! Rather than---PEAKE:

Rather than attacking military targets.

WINANCE: Yes, it was demoralizing. As to the story of the bombing, it is this. They started to bomb several cities in '40; '40 was very bad. I think it is like this: in July, in August and September they started to bomb more intensely because it was the attack of Europe by Hitler. Suddenly it was intensive bombing and I could see that one day they would bomb our city, and our city was nothing. It was very insignificant, many soldiers, but no factories, nothing. And, in 1940., the third of September, they bombed the city, but I think it was not a military target. It was demoralizing.

PEAKS: Were foreign legations, embassies there?

WINANCE: No, that was in Nanchung. ky old little city, nothing was there. No foreign legation. The foreign legation, I think, were in Chungking.

PEAKE: Weren't they bombing Chungking?

WINANCE: Oh! They bombed Chungking many, many times. Because the government was there, Chiang Kai-shek was there.

PEAKE: That would have an effect on the foreign representatives.

WINANCE: Yes! I think they were affect a lot, but I don't know what effect. Anyway, they bomb Chungking many, many times. When they were bombing Chungking they used to pass near the monastery. We knew that; we knew when they were bombing Chungking. Coming from the north they were passing near the city; coming from Shansi, I think.

DOUGLASS: Did you feel that as the intensification of the Japanese attack went on that your relationship to the Chinese people changed in one way or another?

WIN^:NCE: No, no, no.

DOUGLASS: They neither looked toward you more for help nor tended to regard you as a foreigner?

WINANCE: The answer is this. When the war started we started to be suspicious for the Chinese. The war started in 1937 and the situation was more and more difficult for us. We felt that we were under suspicion, and we were under suspicion until the attack on Pearl Harbor.

When they attack Pearl Harbor we were very happy, because we say, "Now the American will understand the Japanese." We say that! Because, we used to say this also: we used to say the bomb were coming from the United States, made by the United States, the Japanese bomb. Maybe I am wrong; I don't know. We used to say that. Therefore, when Pearl Harbor started finally we say, they will understand. It is a good thing, in some ways.

PEAKE: That was what the Chinese said?

WIPIANCE: No, we say that. The Chinese were very happy, say, "We foresaw that!" The Chinese Chiang Kai-shek said, "We foresaw that for many years--that one day the Japanese were against the United States."

DOUGLASS: But were you and your monastery identified with--say, the Nationalist cause enough for the people to feel you were friends?

WINANCE: What is very strange is this: from the viewpoint of the government, central government, we were identified with the Nationalist cause, I mean wits the Chinese cause, it was not the Nationalist cause--it was the Chinese cause, for us. Because, we sent two people and after that, in '40, after the departure of Father Vincent, you know, to the battlefield and Father Yang, they asked us to send another father to teach French to Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Father Wilfred Weiss was, I think, two years and a half, teaching French to Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Therefore, from this viewpoint, we had no problem at all. No problem at all. We were identified with the Chinese, cause.

But the local government, they did not know that. We were under suspicion. I remember the .suspicion stop the day of Pearl Harbor. Two-three days or a week after

Pearl Harbor we were called to the city. We were called to the city hall, all the fathers. We arrive there as a monk. We were offered tea, candies, they play the Marseillaise--they believe we are French--because suddenly they realize that---

DOUGLASS: But since you weren't Americans, why was that so striking? You were French or Belgians or associated with Europe. Was it just suddenly that they saw the pieces falling together?

WINANCE: I don't know.

DOUGLASS: It's an interesting reaction.

IRWIN: You were Western representatives.

DOUGLASS: Western, I guess.

WINANCE: Yes, that is really very strange, but it was a fact. We were under suspicion. It is only after '41, after Pearl Harbor, that we were, that it was easy for us to walk. No problem. We are no longer look as a spy.

You know, when you are in these countries, far away from everything, you know many prejudices. I know that when I was in Burma also, and then this. Sometime it is childish, but it is a fact. Therefore, the situation became much easier for us after Pearl Harbor; it was no problem at all.

Therefore, we continue our work. I repeat, there was two, three students and also to help the Chinese priest to spread the Christian message. Some of us like to help the Chinese priest. Myself, I did that almost twice a year, you know. It means to visit the families, because the parish were very extended, very far away. Therefore, we used to leave the city early morning for

preaching, for the service, with a boy, two boys sometimes, rather old men carrying what you need and starting to go from family to family.

That was the most exciting experience I ever had in my life, to stay a few days in a family, to preach, to explain the doctrine, you know, the Gospel, to bless marrilge, to baptize, after that to go again, twenty-five miles farther. I think the trip sometimes was one hundred kilometers. You made one hundred kilometers in two weeks, two weeks and a half, trying to touch the whole Christian community. I saw the Protestant doing the same, you know, on the road, living with the little luggage, and books, Bible, and preaching. That--it was exciting.

Always well received! In this Christian family, like at home. You could not be better received than this visit. We called that the visit of the Christians. We did that until the Communists came. After that it was impossible to do. It was a job made by several of us every year, twice--sometimes three times. That was 'til '42.

In '42 we had a very difficult financial situation because we have no contact with Europe, no contact with the United States, and we could not have support from outside. Therefore, we started truly starving. In '42 we decided to divide the group and to send some to the big city to work for the bishop. Several stay in the monastery to continue the job there and several others to work outside and try to make a little money because we were truly starving.

Therefore, in '42 we started a new foundation. We continued what we call the Monastery of the Western Mountain, and Father Prior went to Chengtu, the capitalof Szechuan, and tried to find work for us. When we were in Chengtu, myself I went there in '45, we started a new type of work. We tried to work among the college. Many colleges were there, colleges founded in Chengtu, or

colleges coming from the east, from the coat, from Peking, from Shanghai, Tsinan. Therefore, we could have a field of work there.

We were invited to teach in colleges, either. to teach languages or to teach history of culture, Western culture, and finally myself, I was invited in '45 to teach philosophy in West China University, and to teach French in the Fine Arts School. Also, sometime to give a class in Szechuan University, also in Tsen Hua Ta Shio in Shanghai.

PEAKE: In other words, you were teaching in this Protestant missionary---

WINANCE: Yes. I was teaching in a Protestant missionary school. Szechuan University was a public school, state school. West China University was a Protestant university. I was very welcome. They were very nice.

PEAKE: You were quite ecumenical in those days.

WINANCE: Yes, it was very strange! Absolutely. You know, I did that in '45. One day we were asked, "Do you have somebody able to teach philosophy?" And I taught philosophy there. I met some friend who I met there, I met them here in the States. Mr. Montcrief--Mme. Montcrief now is in San Bernardino, and I was teaching with Mr. Dryden Phelps, who is a man in Big Sur. Do you know him?

PEAKE: I have heard of him.

WINANCE: He.was teaching when I was still there. I remember him very well. Mme. Phelps was teaching French in the same school as myself.

DOUGLASS: You were a highly educated person. I can see how you would fit into this kind of a position. What kind of work did the other monks find who had to find a way to eat?

WINANCE: Yes, you know Father Prior was an Italian, a theologian, very educated man. When he arrived in Chengtu in '42, alone, he was hired, he was called by the Protestants to teach Western culture. After that came Father Werner. Father Werner was an artist, and Father Werner in '45-46 was called to teach the history of art in the Fine Arts School. Father Werner was from Belgium.

After that, Father Wilfred Weiss, who has been in London a long time, therefore he spoke good English, he was called to teach English. First he taught high school in Nanchung, '43-44. After that when he went to Chengtu in '47, something like that, he was asked to teach English in college.

We have other fathers. Father Hildebrand was rather pastoral man, working in the parish. Father Emile who died in Japan two years ago was a great Chinese scholar, but for himself. He never taught but was the type of the French monk, very learned but not at all interested in external work, but very learned in Chinese. He started to study Chinese in 1916 and he was so enthusiastic.

But Father Emile Butree was also an artist and built the monastery. He built the monastery in a Chinese style, at least he gave many ideas. My first prior was also a very dedicated man, but not in Chinese. The first prior was, rather, well educated in Greek, patrology, history of the church. Those were the first monks. They sent pioneers, but in this time it was a new, policy.

You know, sometimes they say, send to a mission country people who have no education. We realize very, very quickly that you must be very broad-minded, you must have some education. I don't say we have better education but we tried to send people able to face, to appreciate a new country.

PEAKEs In that sense you were different from the Jesuits who sent highly trained men for the purpose of dealing with the highest officials and working from the top down, but you people seemed to be willing to go right to the interior, even though you are highly trained.

WINANCEs It is true, but we did not want to meet high people. Always, myself, I was working someti as with the highest people, sometimes with the lowest. We met all the social layers.

When you were in the country, working with, I remember, the poorest people, the Christians were very poor and I enjoyed very much being with them.

PEAKEs Was it true what was so often said that your converts at these lower levels were often the outcasts in a sense?

WINANCE: Yes, it is true. Oh, you met any type of people! I think it is very like the Gospel. When I was in the parish I remember I used to visit people in a cave. I still remember a little lady who was leperous, I don't know what; she could not open her mouth. It was very difficult to give the Eucharist to her. She was living in a cave. I tell you, we were living with very, very poor people.

After that, when we went to the city, it was a change for me. I was always reading in intellectual work, but, thank God, I was also part of my time with reality, I would say, cruel reality, true reality, less sophisticated work.

When we went to Chengtu it was a change, a change in new type of people, educated people, well-educated people. It is true you find the poorest people when you go preaching the Gospel. For teaching you were with well-educated people.

It is true also that the Protestant were more for high level education than the Catholics were, now. I don't say it was so at the beginning,"but now. In the beginning of this century, the first half of this century, the Catholic were more with the low level people, and the Protestant tried to reach the educated people. That is true.

It was only little by little that we understood that we need also to reach the educated class. Otherwise it was difficult to implant Christianity. And I remember after the war it was interesting to see many conversions among the educated people, at least in the milieu we knew--students and teachers suddenly were attracted by the Christian ideology.

PEAKE: How do you explain such a phenomenon? And now you've got Communism appealing, too, to the educated. To the intellectuals on one side---

WINANCE: That is a problem. I shall touch that, not today, maybe, but we shall touch that. That is a problem.

DOUGLASS: May I ask to what extent were you working with other denominations through the period you were in China? Was it none, or was it more at one time during the war, or---

WINANCE: You know, it is this. I don't speak too much of the other missionaries; I speak rather of my own experience. My own experience is this: because of our training we were very friendly with the Buddhists, Buddhist monks, visiting Buddhist monasteries. We were also very friendly with the Protestant denomination in the city and we were helped by them many, many times, chiefly when we were sick, you know, the Lutheran. I told you already that. But we started to work truly, I

would say on the educational level in Chengtu after the war. After the war we started to work, I would not say more friendly, but it was more open, to have collaboration.

DOUGLASS: It was accepted.

WINANCE: Ecumenicity--helping on less formal basis, yes, it was accepted, but it was still in pioneer style, I would say. You understand pioneer: less than now. Now is more systematic, more doctrinal. But I remember, we did that, and we saw that many times, either with West China Christian University, or the Anglicans. I remember the Anglicans; the Anglican pastor was very friendly with the bishop, very friendly with my Father Prior, friendly with the sisters, helping the sisters or asking the sisters to make vestments for their worship. That was between '45 and '50, you know.

I remember that in China we were--the feeling was this: we are Christian; you understand? At least, contrasting with the non-Christian. Therefore, we were more united. I like to say that. The feeling was rather that we are Christian, contrasting against the non-Christian. I agree that in this time there was not great collaboration, but it was friendly, very friendly. With the sisters and the bishop in Chenatu, we have many friends in West China Christian University. Finally, they invited us to work.

Even a long time before me, they invited a French father to teach French in West China Christian University, an old father, Father Monteil, a long time ago, that, long time ago. It was a big campus, like here /indicating campus/. Oh, I have been there so many times! Even, I was there twelve hours a week; it means I was there almost every day. You know, going by bicycle from the Fine Arts School to the University through beautiful nature, really beautiful countryside. Very lovely. Many flowers.

DOUGLASS: You were teaching in Chinese? By then you were a master of the language?

WINANCE: Oh, absolutely; in Chinese. That, it was a great effort. We were invited to do it. First of all, for the first nine years, no contact with the foreigners. And, we tried to show that you can be Christian and to be Chinese. Therefore, we were vested--dressed--like the Chinese, we eat the Chinese way, we were living in a Chinese house and very interested in culture.

When arriving at the University, I could write bad English, very bad English. I1y notes were in English for the first year, I remember that, but I spoke strictly Chinese. I could not speak English, I could not speak French, and one of my first students, Sshe Kie-hun, is teaching now in Louvain, Belgium.

We sent him, just before the Communists came in October in 1949, he went to Louvain, he take his Ph.D. in philosophy. He has been at the University four years with the American teachers and myself. We could send him to Louvain and now he stay in Louvain teaching, I think, Chinese philosophy.

He recently has been appointed by the Pope--he is a Catholic--to go to Formosa and have a look on the religious situation there, by Pope Paul VI. Mr. Sshe was from the east coast near Shanghai, Ningpo. He wrote a book not long time ago, a novel, on the Chines(, and Communists. I think it was a big novel on the Communist taking over China.

PEAKEs Ningpo. Was that the area where Chiang Kai-shek came from?

WINANCE: Yes.

IRWIN: The period from '38-41, how active was this rejection of you, or this suspicion of you?

WINANCE: We could see that, you know, among the young, the student, not the old people. Never! But we could see that, frankly, that the students visiting the monastery, a little despising. You know, the kids of fourteen, even little by little among the seminarians. Also, among the Chinese priests. Suddenly we were in quarantine, like a quarantine. We could feel that, a very sad feeling.

But you know, I remember we like to go outside, in the countryside, and to meet the countryside people because we were absolutely at home there, even in this situation. But as soon as you were on the campus, it was different. Exactly like that.

PEAKE: You were part of their anti-foreign movement, unequal treaties and all this sort of thing?

WINANCE: Oh, yes, it was that. And that disappeared only in '42 and after the war. But when we arrive there, we were rejected as a people who were using China for making money. Very true.

PEAKE: The American government and British finally gave up their extraterritoriality about 1943 so all suspicions of Westerners became a dead issue? The big issue was Japanese imperialism, not European?

WINANCE: Not European, that is true. When I arrive in China, we were still living this situation. Even the fathers told us before we came sometimes it was very difficult to receive student in the monastery. You know, they were very impolite, writing characters on the door, anti-foreigners. Only little by little finally they were very friendly, because after that I have no problem with the student. Absolutely no problem. They were very friendly, and finally when the Communists came, that is another story; they could find nothing against me from the students, because they were very, very friendly with us.

But that, it was true. In '36-37-38 sometime it was very hard, to feel the suspicion, and more and more when the war started you know, mixing Japanese and foreigners.

DOUGLASS: Would the Chinese priests have been under some pressure or suspicion, too? Were they in a difficult situation?

WINANCE: The Chinese monks? You know, little by little we realized that it was difficult for our brothers to live with us, because they were called "dogs of the foreigners," "yuan ku," "dogs of the foreigners." I remember we suddenly realize--we used to go, you know, our day off once a month with the brothers, to go twenty miles, ten miles, to walk--we could feel that the Chinese did not like to be with us. I understand that, you know you have to be very strong to accept that. Therefore, because of that, we started to drop the monastic habit and we took the Chinese habit. Little by little whatsoever was foreigner disappeared. But finally, you could not change your nose. Ta pi tze /large nose/.

You know, the situation became truly good in '45-46, because of the help of the United States for China. But, at the beginning it was hard to be a foreigner. You felt that also, maybe /lo Dr. Peake] when you were in Peking?

PEAKE: I was there earlier in '33-34.

What was the student, the intellectual reaction to the doctrines of the church itself, and to Christianity as a religion? Did you find any change in attitude in that respect?

WINANCE: It is difficult to say. You know, I met the students in college. You know, I think, you have to see the student in college and the student at.home. They are not the same. They are not the same at all.' In college

they were rather Western, you know, a little skeptic, agnostic, anti-religious, anti-superstition. You know that the same student going home went back to superstition, many of them.

But when I was in Fine Arts School and in a college, I tell you very frankly, it was very tolerant. I could pray in the class. I could say my breviary during the class, during the exam. No smile, nothing. Very tolerant. After three years, several started to be interested in Christianity. I saw that! I know my experience is very clears the Chinese were very tolerant. Very, very tolerant.

Maybe you have something anti-superstition in high school. Myself, I was not in high school; Father Wilfred was in high school, but also he was accepted there for several years, no difficulty at all. I could not say from my own experience that I found among the student anti-religious feeling. As soon as I met them, for six years it was very easy going, absolutely very easy going.

Even the teacher. The teacher was so courteous, even those who were not believer, but absolutely courteous. Never felt that he was antagonizing against me except when the Communist came; that was another story. But, when I was there, not at all.

Several students started to be interested in religion. The school was very easy. I remember even the school say, "We shall tell you whether they go to Mass; we shall send to Mass," you know, to the service. I remember the prefect of the school told me that. He said, "Oh, yes, I shall try; I shall do my best in order they can go to the Mass Sunday." That even with the Communists! I remember this story. But, there for five years, myself, in the milieu where I was living, was not anti-Christian. They were tolerant, very tolerant. You have anti-Christian before, I think because they link Christianity with foreigners. You know they link that. Because the Chinese are very

tolerant for any religion. I saw that. You can be Buddhist, Taoist, Christian; it is your business. But, before that I think, in the mind of many, Christianity was linked with the unequal treaties, you know, with the foreign invasion.

PEAKE: It is a question whether the support of foreign governments which maybe made it possible to be there---

WINANCE: You know, they used to link the Catholicism with France and Indo-China because I think France was appointed the right to defend the missionaries.

DOUGLASS: Delegated that authority.

WINANCE: Yes, not by Rome, but by the fact they have to protect their own, you know, it is difficult to say. I understand I prefer to bo free and not to be dealing with any government. It is true. But sometimes when you live a very difficult situation it is difficult to judge the past. But it is clear when we arrive in China, we have to cut any link. I am convinced of that, to cut any link with any government. Even, we refuse money from French government, we refuse money in order to show that we were not, we have no link with the political powers. That was very important for us because we wanted to start Chinese monasticism, strictly Chinese, and then to show that it was not a way to have what they call cultural imperialism. That they were very against, cultural imperialism.

DOUGLASS: We were up to the point of the confrontation with the Communist movement.

WINANCE: What I say is not what I read, again I repeat that, because I can be wrong in my personal evaluation of the facts.

When I arrived in China in '36, the Communists have been already very influential and we know that the Communist started to establish the regime in the '20's. We know also that Chiang Kai-shek stopped the Communist influence around 1927 and the Communist were obliged to start the long march from the south in Kiangsi, Kueilan and Szechuan, finally arriving at Yenan in the north.

I remember this: when I arrive in China, we were living under the fear of a new Communist movement, truly fearing. In 1934, I think, '35, the Communists tried to invade Szechuan and they were arrested by the central government. Chiang Kai-shek sent troops. That was just before I came.

You know, in this time China was divided into many little governments, what they call feudalism, the war-lords. Chiefly in Szechuan each general had his own government. We were with the General Yang Sen, and General Liu was very powerful in the full Szechuan. But, around 1935 they were obliged to accept the help of the central government of Nanking and to stop the Communist effort to conquer Szechuan.

The Communist arrive two days walk from the monastery, and in '35, I think, '35, around Easter, the monks were ready to leave the monastery because of the Communist trek. But, when I arrive myself in '36, the fear was less great, because they have been stopped. But, we could realize they were very influential among the intelligentsia.

It was a very strange experience for us because we went to China through Russia and when we were meeting elementary school teachers, high schoōl teachers, it was great to have been, to have passed through Russia. Russia was for them like Heaven, like a paradise. It was very difficult to speak, to say exactly what you think, because you could be very antagonized by people who were truly under Communist propaganda, chiefly ideological. We could see that, coming to the tea house for several years in the little villages and to be very careful in what we have to say, because the people would not believe what we say.

Therefore, we could see a sympathy, an ideological sympathy for Communism among the teachers, chiefly the teachers, because the only intelligentsia at this time was the teachers. The people were not for the Communists; indeed, I speak of Szechuan. In Szechuan the people knew them as bandits, people killing, burning, destroying. Therefore, what you call the countryside people were not at all attracted by the Communist ideals. But that was the village people, businessmen or farmers. It was not the case for the students. The students were rather, at least pink, and very, very praising what happened in Russia, freedom, etc. The students and the teachers.

PEAKE: How much of it was Communist ideology and how much was nationalism in the sense the Russians had given up their unequal treaties that made for this popularity?

WINANCE: You know, in this time it was never said, that. Exactly like the Communists in France were for Hitler in the first year of the war because Stalin had a treaty with Hitler. After that, as soon as Hitler attacked Russia, the French Communists were for Russia against Hitler. Exactly the same now. In France the Communist are asked not to vote for Poher; it means to help Pompideau, because

Pompideau is the man of Moscow. You know, Poher is the man for Europe, and a friend of the United States. It means the policy change, you know, and the policy of the Communist is very flexible.

I could see that myself when I was there, the way they asked the people to help for the Korean War. I saw that in 1950 in June, July, and after that in 1951, in January, it was not at all the same type of argument, because the situation was changed. It was yes-and-no. It was very interesting to see the flexibility of their own policy.

Therefore, in this time the Russians were called the "Big Brothers." When I left China in '52, I passed through India and we were in contact with one of the secretary to Mr. Ghandi. They asked us our advice, we were three missionaries coming from China, on the Communist in China and we say what we think.

When I was in india in '52 and after that in '54, we are meeting with the trade unions, and we tried to tell the trade unions that you have forced labor in China. They don't believe it! They make ideas; they say, "You have forced labor in Belgian Congo." For them, China was a paradise. You know, the intelligentsia, part of the intelligentsia in India look at China as a paradise, even by the Communists.

That was exactly the situation of the intelligentsia, a great part of the intelligentsia in China, and the Nationalists started to, I think, to stop the Communist propaganda only during the war, I think; I think. To my knowledge it seems it was around '42. But before that you could find many books, you know, on Communism in the hands of the students. After '42 it was forbidden. That is because in this earlier time China was, to my knowledge, helped by Russian advisers.

When I was in Suilen, I think--if I remember well I th:Lnk it was '38--I was in Suilen in a little city and

when I went to the air field for **a** meeting--not a meeting, an air show--I remember I went there with Chinese friends and the Chinese say nothing, but suddenly came a Russian adviser, and the Russian adviser said, "Don't let this foreigner look at the air show." That I remember; I was alone with Chinese. That is purely personal, that.

Therefore, in this time--and that was with the Nationalists, the Nationalists!--Russia has still advisers in Szechuan. And also, at this time, I think Russia has also German advisers. I think the general who went to Belgium during the Second World War to govern Belgium--Falkenhausei$ I think was the name--had been adviser to Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking. They were called back from China by Hitler just before the war. I did not read that, but it was said.

Therefore, after the war--you know the story that we believe that it was a great misunderstanding of Communist in China by the Western powers; they did not realize the danger. They believe it was what they call "agrarian communism," you know, and therefore they try to force Chiang Kai-shek to accept collaboration with Mao Tse-tung and Cou En-lai.

Marshall came, I think, around Christmas to Chungking in '45, and I saw people who saw him. Many of us, all of us, were against the type of policy because we look at the Chinese Communist at this time as a bandit, like the others, organized bandit, we used to say. Not only us, but the people; it was the people. We were reflecting the mentality of the people in Szechuan, because they knew them through the Long March.

Therefore, you could see that from '45 to '49. You could see the gradual deterioration of the situation. I don't say that because you can find that in books how the Communist took Manchuria, Peking, little by little. From my viewpoint, it is this: my students in the school, even

*Alexander von Falkenhausen.

the Christians, they were all very enthusiastic for the Communist regime.* They did not know, in spite of the fact that the propaganda was forbidders, it was like a new Messianism, like a Messianic Communism. We have many talks, many discussion, but it was very difficult to counteract what I call the intellectual fascination for the system.

The Nationalist tried to stop that and along '47-'48-'49 riots started in the schools, strikes in the schools. Myself, I saw that; I was living through that. The government tried to stop the riots and strikes but no answer from the part of the teacher. The teacher were for the students. This I must tell. The teacher were for the students. Often the teacher does not see the consequences; they lack a sense of responsibility. It is good to be both in the parish and a teacher--then you know the reality of life.

One day, I still remember, in May, I think, maybe must be something like '48, I am not sure, I could check that, but we were called to the government office in Chengtu, what I call the provincial government. All the teachers and the governor, who has been taken prisoner by the Communist later, Mr. Wang--I think it is Wang Lin-chi-make a talk, very clear, to say it is a terrific danger and the waves will come one after one, and the waves will come; I still remember that. "Po-lang" means wave in China. He said, he asked us, not to be deceived, you know, to take our own responsibility. It was very clear.

But, the answer was very skeptical. The teachers were not at all interested in the government. They were against the Nationalists. That was interesting because, myself, I was for the Nationalist because I was a foreigner; therefore, I_was for the legal government; no question. I do not question that. I was a guest, but I could see that the authority of the government was shaky by what we call the intelligentsia. The students follow, at least

See Appendix II ,page 128

the majority of the students. I would not say they were Communist, but they ignore absolutely what they were waiting for.

DOUGLASS: During this period were your contacts principally with students?

WINANCE: Only students. It was interesting because I, myself, could foresee the danger coming and I was living with people who were living with another type of man, with merchants, the landlords, the ordinary people, and I remember I used to say, "Be careful. People are very inclined toward Communism." I was talking of the students. People say, "No. You are pessimistic. The people don't want that."

But, that has nothing to do. People cannot want it; they will come anyway. Therefore, I was truly living only with students for five years. Living with them, eating with them, in the school twelve hours a week, even sometimes more than twelve hours, twenty hours a week with the students.

DOUGLASS: What about older people whom you would define as in the intelligentsia?

WINANCE: Ah, the old people. The old people, it means the old Chinese, literary; they were not understanding. They did not understan. that.

DOUGLASS: They were not interested?

WINANCE: Not interested. You know, you have to say this: in China you have what we call "les retours de France et les retours d'Amerique." It means those /Chinese] who came back from the United States were rather with the Nationalists; those who came back from Europe were with

the Socialists and finally with the Communists. Therefore, people who came back from Germany, from Belgium, from France, were people who helped the Communist to come, generally speaking, to my knowledge. I could see that.

I had a good friend, typically that--Mr. Wang; I don't like to say the other name, but I remember he had been in France. He was typically a French-type thinker, but very Socialist, sociologist and very leftist. People who came from France were very leftist. I don't say they were Communist, but anyway, ready to prepare the way to Communism.

DOUGLASS: Chinese who had been educated in Europe and who would have been older than the students. Then do you sense that the thrust for Communism came out of that group and the students?

WINANCE: Yes, I would say this. At least from my viewpoint, I think in Szechuan. Not from the peasants, not from the farmers, not from the workers. That came from the intelligentsia. It seems to me. At least I would say that.

PEAKE: What was the connection of these people, the intelligentsia, with the peasants?

WINANCE: You know, I think it is rather psychological than economical. They are against authority and they were for a new order and they were socialist. They were socialist and they were inclined, therefore, to that. At least, you know the Communists did not rely upon them, positively. It is rather negative help. It means, they make people sleepy and they make the government unable to counteract. It is as easy as that.

The job is made by the Communist; it is not made by you. That is my viewpoint. We saw that. It means that

Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists were aware of the danger but they were absolutely helpless. Myself, I live in Chengtu the last month when Chiang Kai-shek asked the governor of Szechuan to help him, and Chiang Kai-shek had with him wonderful army, but people were completely apathetic, apathetic for many reasons.

One of the reasons was the Chinese intelligentsia always undermining the authority. Number two: people were tired of seven years of war. They don't care, absolutely they don't mind, and also the propaganda of the Communists was very clever. They say, "We are brothers fighting brothers. We are Chinese." Therefore, you create what you call ambiguous situation, and people were sleepy. Because of that after several weeks it was absolutely impossible for Chiang Kai-shek to resist.

It was interesting to see; myself, I have too little facts. We were with outstanding men, officers, ready to fight, ready to stand, ready to die, and each time they were ready to stop, came an order "Retreat and retreat." Always retreating, never fighting. I remember when I was teaching in December, '49, I was giving my class in the Fine Arts School; the last weeks before they came you could hear the guns, you could hear the machine guns, you were near the battle; you were not very far from the battlefield.

I am not so sure it was a great battle. We knew from the radio, from Paris or from London, that the Communists were twenty-five miles from Chengtu. Myself, I was in my classroom. I could hear the bombs, the window rattling, you know, but it was not a great battle, I think, because it was very difficult.

The second fact was this. I was one day coming back from my class of French in West China Christian University. I was outside the Gate of the West. I was in a teahouse with many soldiers. They were under provincial authority, not the central government. They did not know that I could

understand Chinese, and they were talking, "We shall never fight. If the Communist come, we shall give up." You know, the soldier have no knowledge at all. They were absolutely low level soldier; they were not educated like the soldier of the central government. There were, I think, eight million soldiers like that in Szechuan under the rule of Liu Wen-hui. He had been the governor of Szechuan.

Liu Wen-hui was a general and he has many guns under him, but he did not collaborate with Chiang Kai-shek because, I think, these people, the generals, wanted to remain independent, not to belong to the central government. And they believed that they could remain independent! They did not know what the new regime could have been for them, because all the generals after that were reduced to almost nothing. They lost their own money, they lost their wives, they lost the army, they lost their power, but they did not realize that.

The story is this: Chiang Kai-shek was ready, I think, to go to Formosa by plane, leaving, and he saw Liu Wen-hui coming back from Chungking, I think, by plane on the airfield, and he asked, "Do you come with me? Do you resist?" He say, "No." That is the story, I don't know. I cannot check the story, but I hear that because I was in Szechuan, in Chengtu the last month when I could see thousands of good army passing, retreating from the north. It was very interesting to see that--retreating from the north and trying to resist and to start again the life in west China, the western part of Szechuan. But it was absolutely impossible for them to start unless they were helped from outside, because they arrive near high mountains. It was impossible to leave without external help. Finally after several months of guerrillas they were made clear on it, those who could escape.

DOUGLASS: Do you think that if Chiang had had the time, or if he had had the talent to unify China out of its sort of feudalistic state---

WINANCE [Softly% They tried.

DOUGLASS: Then they wouldn't have had this hope to retain the advantages of chaos in which independent units--the soldiers or the heads of provinces, the generals--would have had power? They still had that hope that they'could continue that way, I gather.

WINANCE: You know, I think by the end of the war by himself he could not fight. He was too late. I don't like to make judgment on that, but I think from what we saw, the progressive deterioration of the situation just after the war. I think the only solution would have been this: to stop the Communists at the end of the war, in '45. But after that, it was too late.

The Communists were very, very clever to take general after general. You know, in Peking, before that in Manchuria. I don't remember the name of the general. The greatest parts were suddenly fascinated by the Communist way. We say, I think the situation could not be healed. It was too late. The Communist started in the '20's, you know, and after seven years of war, 1.937-1945, the country is absolutely weak, people are fed up with fighting, therefore, they give up.

DOUGLASS: Had you heard any specific stories about corruption within the Nationalist Government?

WINANCE: Oh, many, many! But I am not scandalized by that, you know. I don't like too much to speak of that because, you know, you'll find that in any country. But, oh, sure. You know I was parish priest and for six-seven months I was absolutely disgusted of the little members of the government. But that I always--you know, I think that is Chinese temper. It means the problem was this: the officials were not paid enough and because of

that they were obliged to squeeze, "cha wai," it means "to eat the thunder." "To eat the thunder," "cha wai," means to "put in your pocket." That was absolutely disgusting. I know that, and the Americans were disgusted by that, because they used to give money for people working on the air field. I know many stories like that. And that was a great corruption, I agree. But, they do not, I think nobody accuse the high level officials, at least Chiang Kai-shek, to put the money in his pocket.

DO UGLASS: I wondered if the students ever mentioned this to you.

WINANCE: Oh, the student never mentioned that! The people in the country mention it, they do that, the lay people, but not the students. They did not care of that.

DOUGLASS: That did not concern them? It was accepted?

WINANCE: For "che kui," it means the squeeze, to squeeze the money, that was old China, you know. And in Szechuan it was terrible, in every level. That was a great, great corruption, but they don't look at that as we look at that. You understand? For them it would be business. You know, they have not exactly the same moral approach. Therefore, you have also to take that into consideration. I don't say it is good. I was very upset myself; I was very, very mad sometimes because I could see my parishioners for the draft! It was terrible for the draft! They used to draft people--sometimes you could not be drafted because of the money, et cetera. It was very unjust, an unjust situation.

PEAKE: Did inflation aggravate the situation?

WINANCE: Oh, terribly. I saw twice the inflation. For inflation, my understanding is this: one day, it was in

1948 in the summer, U used to travel with $6,000,000--no $30,000,000--in my pocket to buy only what I need to eat, you know. It means a measure of rice; what they call a tan; I don't know how many pounds that.

In the school, I remember we were paid with paper. What do you call that?

DOUGLASS: Currency?

WINANCEs Currency paper. After that the first thing you want to do is to buy rice. If you do not buy rice the day you receive the salary, tomorrow you are poor. Therefore, when I receive my salary from the American, immediately we used to buy rice. For the rice seller it is a fine living. Suddenly people began to find rice, and that created a bad situation, because people are hoarding rice and rice and rice.

After that, for the second time, I remember we were paid not with paper currency, but paid with silver. We were paid with silver Mexican dollars. I remember coming back from the school with a pile of Mexican dollars, very heavy, and you have the feeling that it was something, because that could not lose its value. Therefore, I live that and it was unbelievable, exactly like the First World War in Germany. Paper was valueless, absolutely valueless. You start to pay with things, you know. It means buying with rice instead of paper. That was in '48-49. I remember twice we have trouble.

Imagine that life was very interesting in China before the Communist came. You could believe that the people were poor, I don't know, something like that, but I think, when I saw life after the Communist came, it was terrible! It was Hell! When I arrive in Hong Kong, the first letter I wrote to my parents, I remember that when I went back to Belgium, I say, "I have come back from Hell!"

People don't realize that. You know, I don't make any propaganda here; I tell you what I lived; it was absolutely i:.tolerable. I cannot describe that another way; it was completely intolerable, for every class. The farmers were divided into three degrees; people were very rich, people less rich, people working for others, but finally, every class was crushed by the Communist regime. I think you can find more about that, maybe, in what I have written, if you read that, get some idea.*

PEAKEt In later turbulent periods, was there any anti-religious, anti-Christian movement?

WINANCE: You know, between '45 and '49 it was fantastic. Every religion--I think the Protestants and Catholics could see an increase. After the war it was a wonderful period from the religious viewpoint. We have many conversions, expecially in the schools. Not only the poor people, for us, but even the educated people began to be interested. Because, after the war, I think they could believe that religion was not something anti-Chinese, because during the war they were helped by the foreigners and I told you that in my monastery some of us went to the battlefield to help them.

Therefore, the years before the coming of the Communists was a growing era for the Christian religion. We were very optimistic at this time. This continue a few months. After a few months they were very eager to be baptized, but I hear this story. In March, '50, when the Communists were already in Szechuan and were raiding the city, we were under the military government, a soldier of sixteen years old asked for baptism. He was a soldier belonging to the Communist army. One day he asked a parish priest, friend of mine, Father Audrin, to be baptized.

*Winance, Eleutherius, D.S.B. The Communist Persuasion (New Yorks P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1959).

We told him that it was a great responsibility. He say, "No, I don't fear.". After he was baptized, after six weeks of training, teaching, learning, he went to Tibet for the liberation of Tibet. After the Communist came, we continued to baptize people, but at a very low rate. It was no longer as before, but people continued to ask for baptism.

DOUGLASS: How were you treated at first when the total collapse occurred when the Communists were in control? What happened to you personally?

WINANCE: What happened is this: for the first three months, nothing happened, nothing happened to us. After three months, it means at the end of March, 1950, we started to be called to the police, to tell them what we did, what we had seen. 411 of us. I remember the Protestant friend of mine, the French, Americans, we went all of us to the police station, called by name and we started to make our confession. That was the beginning of the trouble.

Some Americans were put under orders. One American, I remember, was put in secrecy for four months. Little by little they started two things. First to humiliate us, to swallow many things; it was fantastic, unbelievable what they asked us to do. The second thing; they asked us for our money, asking for money, what I call /hesitantly] increasing tax. Increasing tax. It means you are never, never giving enough. It means they try to exhaust your richness in a legal way. You give them 100,000, they ask you next week 200,000. And, you will find it! If you don't find it, you will go to jail.

Therefore, the church has many territories for help: hospitals, seminaries, for many, many works, like the Protestant; many things. Buildings--the Communist took the buildings, they took the school of the Protestants in Chengtu. They took also the Catholic buildings, and they

asked the bishop to pay taxes, and inventing any motive to pay taxes. Because, if you receive thirty years ago a chicken from a person on the first day of the year, it means a gift of a chicken, from a poor man, you are obliged to pay for all the eggs the chicken could produce in thirty years. Incredible, but it was something like that. That is what I see; it is textual; it is literal.

Therefore, the bishop used to go to the police station every day for two years--every day! Always he have to pay, and after that when he say he has no longer money, "Go to the Pope!" He wrote to the Pope. He wrote to the Pope formally, but he wrote invitus, that means in Latin, "unwillingly." Therefore, he never get the money. But the Communist ask us, also us, to pay, you know, taxes and asking us to write to Hong Kong. For that, I would say, you could write, asking for money; you could and you must. The superior was asking this; one day we say, "No." You know, the more you write, the more they ask. Therefore, one day you stop, and when you stop you are put in jail. But anyway, they did not get money.

You know, they use blackmail. It is terrific the way they use it. Therefore, I speak of the foreigners. For the Chinese, you know, it was terrific torture for them. You know, we were living in the world of torture, suspending pe pie like that /gesture of hangingj, I could hear people crying from my room. I remember it was like for two years, and after torture--death. It means you were shot, shot outside the city., after big trial. Therefore, we live that for two years-and-a-half and it was a terrific experience you cannot realize unless you have been there. You ar.e witnesses.

When we went back to Europe, we did not know that.. I was in Paris with a friend of mine. One day we went to a little restaurant and he said, "I shall tell you what I saw near the border of Tibet. Only you will listen to me; nobody will believe me." Suspending people at the

roof and putting in the garment, in the trousers, cats, and you know therefore the balls were eaten by the cats. You know, cutting the skin of a friend of mine, a priest, cutting the skin in a little piece, and after that letting you die, and shooting you. I have several friends who were shot by the Communist and many were tortured. To be tortured, tortured, that was an ordinary story.

When you say that, it seems it is imagination. It is not imagination; this is fact. I hope one day this part will be known because I think we have to know the truth. That is the truth.

When the Communist came, the first nine month, they tried to control the guerrillas around the city, and I saw that. Also, to train the students to take the school. That was interesting, because I was accused again to be pessimistic, because I was coming back from the school where I could live, what you call indoctrination. Brainwashing. I was brain-washed three times a week. There were four of us. Every Tuesday, every Thursday, every Saturday. I belonged to a little group., twelve people, teachers, friends of mine, ladies, gentlemen. Finally the Communists put among us students in order to check on us.

My experience was this when I was with my colleagues people who think like myself, and those who after that /brainwashing/ happen started to reflect upon themselves. Therefore, suddenly we started to live of life "as if." People did "as if." It means they don't believe what was said, but they behave "as if" they believe. That was, I would say, very Chinese. They are more able than us to do that. For us, we say "No," we say "no," we fight. The Chinese say nothing. I give several example of that. At least, I remember one.

I could hear the story of a teacher, outstanding man, mathemetician. But this man during the meeting, "shio shi huei" was very progressive. When I met him at his room,

in his office, he was absolutely the contrary. He say, "Father, I want to commit suicide. I am completely hopeless." That is a story you could hear. A typical story. You would not believe what people said in a meeting. They had to cooperate then because you do not know what they think. I think I describe in my book.* What I saw is typical meeting, making you absolutely neurotic. Disgusting!

DOUGLASS: We don't want to duplicate. I read your book. Did you feel things were getting as bad as they were until they happened? Did you have this sense of impending doom? Did you realize things were that bad? When everything collapsed finally did you feel this was coming?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. I felt it was coming.

DOUGLASS: You thought it was inevitable.

WINANCE: It was inevitable. Absolutely inevitable. I was accused to be pessimistic but I was not at all pessimistic. It was inevitable.

DOUGLASS: When did you begin to feel that way about it? Do you recall?

WINANCEs I begin to feel that about '48. Around '48. I remember in '47 we started to fear. I remember, you know the Americans left China in '45. Around Christmas every-body was gone. But the advisers were still there, and I remember the advisers, about twelve advisers, were stay-ing in Chengtu, in October, '48, and I visited one of them because .I wanted to get money for students. After that he told me, "But I am leaving." When they left, that was in '48, October, after they left the Chinese say, "It is hopele^s. Absolutely hopeless. We are waiting now. It was inevitable.

*Ibid.

The Communists came fourteen months later in Chengtu. That was inevitable. That is my view, you know. I don't know whether it is objective, I think it was something like that.

DOUGLASS: It was your decision in your own mind, though, to stay and wait and see and be there?

WINANCE: Yes, you know that is a very interesting story. To my knowledge it is this: you know there is a general policy in the church, and the policy of the foreigners, a little inspired by Americans, was this: remain, no danger. You can co-exist. Therefore, the motto was, "We remain." We remain, those who were in charge. But many missionaries, myself, we remain anyway. We did not expect that; we remain, we don't want to leave, we decided to remain. But, it was this policy, and again this policy--the Chinese bishops, the Chinese clergy were against this policy. They say, "Please send out all the students. Send out all the novices. Don't stay. You cannot live with them. We don't think so."

Therefore, you have the two policies: the policy, I would say inspired by the foreign view of the fact, you know, and the policy as the Chinese understood it. And it was a clash, a little clash. I suppose we remain and other from Belgium say, "You remain," and we say we decided, "We remain."

Some Chinese decided anyway to send their own young men to the United States because, they say, they will be lost. Those who have been already under the regime, they allow that you cannot coexist, at least the regime as it was in the beginning.

DOUGLASS: As Chinese Christians they would have been in greater danger than you, possibly, in the long run?

WINANCE: Oh, yes! In greater danger--all the priests were. You know, the Communist did not want to kill us. They wanted to humiliate us and to find legal reasons for expelling us.

DOUGLASS: They hardly knew what to do with you, prōbably?

WINANCE: Oh, sure. But, when I was called to the police, I say that in my book, I think, they ask me, "Do you work for the people?" I say, "Yes. I do all my life." I remember that it was in '50, in October, I was called to the police to tell me, "You may stay and work for the people." And, in the same times they talked to all the brothers, the Benedictine brothers, "You must go." They started to pack everything but they never get the permission to go. Suddenly, we left together, but myself and another priest, I think, because I was teaching in a school, you know, therefore, they say, "You may stay but you must work for the people," wei jen min fu mu," it means to serve the people and I say, "I did that all my life."

You know, I told you for nine months it was easy. After nine months started the control Of the population and that was terrible. You could say this: every other week, every two weeks it was restriction and more and more restriction.

DOUGLASS: Were you told what you could or could not teach?

WINANCE: Yes. You know I was expelled from the Philosophy Department with all the Americans, and they accused me to teach idealism. After one year, the students and the teacher have twelve meetings asking me to come back. I met the chairman of Philosophy Department, and he told me, "Father, you will come back. All the students ask you to

come back." That was in '51. At the last meeting, the thirteenth meeting, the Communist said to the teacher, "You call back an imperialist. You cannot." Therefore, that night, eight o'clock, the chairman came to the monastery, say "I am sorry. You cannot come back." Therefore, they control the teaching. No question.

But, I remain teaching with the Communist 'til '51. because I was teaching French. In '51 they were starting to pull all the foreigners because they told me, "You cannot teach French because now we learn Russian."

PEAKE: When was it you actually left China?

WINANCE: I left China the fifty of February, 1952. At least, I left Szechuan, and I arrive around the twentieth in Hong Kong. It was a long trip of two weeks and a half.

DOUGLASS: To what do you attribute the final move to allow you to leave, to formally expel you?

WINANCE: Ah, the reason is this: they wanted to get rid of all foreigners, and they did that in Szechuan, the west, before the coast. When we left China, I think at the end of March, 1952,. only one or two foreigners were in jail. One sister, I knew her, I met her in Paris, and she remain in jail at least for three years. She was a doctor, accused to have killed, you know, thirty children. For her trial, many bones were put in the audience. Suddenly the sister who was a doctor said, "Pig bones," and everybody laugh and the Communist could not judge her. She was put in jail again. They could not make the trial because, you know, it was too stupid.

You know, as to this trial, the Communist do not believe the trial. The Communist tell you, "Be humble. Don't fear. Acknowledge and be humble." You know, they try to excite the people against you in such a way that

they could stop that. People who were accusing you did not believe what they say! Before accusing, they ask you, say, "Forget us. Pardon. I am obliged to speak against you. What can I say?" I say, "Don't say too much. Be humble." We say that. You know people say that; the bishop say that!

You know, it was a comedy; it was a tragic comedy. I told my judge after my trial I was loyal to the government--I don't say I am not Communist, but I am loyal to the government. You know that. And if I am trial, it is because of religious motivation. He say nothing, because he has been a friend of us before. He say nothing. When they were acting, they were very stern. After that he was---

DOUGLASS: Going through a farcical kind of play?

WINANCE: Yes! Play, but tragic play because many people suffer.

DOUGLASS: Did everyone like you go through a trial kind of scene? A hearing or a trial? You and all of the other priests?

WINANCE: No. From the monastery we were two; two have trial, Father Prior and myself. But during my trial we were six priests and other were trial, many priest were trial in Chengtu, by the military court, but they wanted to trial us before the people. They did not dare that because a few months before a priest, I think it was Spanish priest, was trial before the people but he did not acknowledge. This was a loss of face for the Communist, and people were very happy to see somebody standing and resisting. Therefore, they feel that.

For the trial it was only for photographers. We have been photographed for the papers. Our picture was

in many newspaper, I think. Oh, we have photographer in Hong Kong, like the greatest spy. We were spies; I was sent by Truman, you know! I told him, "I cannot be sent by Truman. I am a Catholic, Truman is not a Catholic. fLauhterJ He does not speak French. I speak French." It was ridiculous. They were obliged after this to'shut up. It was a tragic-comedy.

They told us even, the Americans, we said, "Be patient. Try to control yourself." That was the greatest defense, to control yourself, because the Communist tried to make you mad and to accuse you to lose respect, you know, to the government or the people. Therefore, if you could control yourself you could pass, because they would not kill you. But I think in the north, in other place, they were truly tortured. We were never tortured; we were only humiliated. It was something, I tell you.

DOUGLASS: Did you have changes in relationships after that with people you considered to be good Chinese friends?

WINANCE: I never change relationship. Even people who accuse me, they remain my best friend, because they were in such a situation that, you know, they could not do anything else.

DOUGLASS: In other words, they would talk to you privately in one way, and in the other situation---

WINANCE: Yes. You know, you are obliged to save your life, and I understand what you do when--chiefly when you have a family--because the Communist never ask you to do something that is bad; it is always at the border, ambiguous. The same if they ask you to leave your religion. They say, "We do not ask you not to be a Catholic, or to be a Protestant. But what you are," --freedom of religion! But they ask you to cut any relation with Pacelli, it

means th- Pope. We cannot follow the Pope! They say that! You cannot follow the American policy of the Pope; so suddenly you become divided. You Understand? The American policy of the Pope. I do not follow that.

They would tell you this: we don't interfere on religious level. We are condemning you because you are a good priest; you are a good missionary; you are a spy. They told me that. You are like in the Gospels--they know the Gospel--you came under the garment of a spy. I think they told me that. I remember they say that in talking. You are a false missionary.

We were in the school, people knew us, the students knew us. They could not invent, I would say, scandal story, to say I have a bad life; they could not do that. Therefore, what they say was very, very general, you know. "You are an imperialist." People knew that I was not an imperialist, but very, very friendly with the Chinese. Sometimes the facts were true but misinterpreted.

Before my trial I went to the school a day before and I was so welcome and I was already under house arrest for two months. And when they saw me in the school, very welcome, welcome by everybody. When we were with the guns, machine guns around us, nobody cursed us. They don't believe it. I remember in twenty days we had only two bad days. We had too many friends.

PEAKE: Do you hear from any of your people since you left?

WINANCE: Nothing. I receive letters 'til '57, something" like that. After that, nothing. Absolutely nothing.

PEAKS: Do you have any idea what the situation is?

WINANCE: No idea; no idea. If we know they are still alive, it would be great. Even now we do not know. You

can ask people from Hong Kong; they know nothing. No relation. I have my aunt in Macao and she told me at least they know the sister are still there--the Chinese sister.

IRWIN: The Chinese priests who are with you up at Valyermō, were they out before this period? They had come out when? How early?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. Two came out in '45 or '46. Another one has t.b. He was sent to Europe in '49, in October, because he was very, very sick. In this time, you know, many people didn't believe that the Communist would take the province. Myself, I believe so, I never hesitated. But people were optimistic.

PEAKE: Were your people well able to run the church themselves? Adequately trained so that they could keep things going?

WINANCE: Oh, yes; oh, yes; oh, yes. No problem. Very, very able. The problem was the relation with Rome, you know. At least for the Catholic view. That is the problem of the bishops. But that is a problem--I touched that also in my book. It is a very, very deep problem. It is clear that the Chinese Catholics never want to leave Rome--never, never. Because the man, the bishop who started to consecrate before the Rome authorization, was my bishop, and I know him enough to know he was very strong man, very faithful, but in such a situation I believe that they do that for the best, you know, for the best.

It is not a theological principle, making them cut relations with Rome. But I believe Rome could be more flexible, more supple, and to let people.solve your

*St. Andrews Priory, Valyermo, California.

problem by yourself. Now it would be like that, but in the '50's it was difficult to think like that. You understand what I mean? I think that-maybe they do that now, but in this time we could be more flexible, to say, "Solve your problem." Because the problems are absolutely new, and those who were outside could not realize the problems we have to face.

DOUGLASS: During this period of turmoil, did you discuss the problems and the coming possible crisis with the Protestant workers in your area? Did you get together with them?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. Not together, but private talk; oh, yes. Many friends, and we have the same experience, exactly the same experience, people who remain until the last day. What is interesting is this: I received a visit of people to say good-bye in Christmas. They go home, the Communist call the husband to go to the police station and to tell him, "You do not leave, your wife may leave." The wife said, "I don't leave unless my husband come with me." When I went to the police station-I tell in my book--you know, called by the police, I saw several Americans who got the passport. We say, "Good-bye, good luck, you are lucky to go home." Myself, I did not realize I would be put in jail and these people arrive in Hong Kong after me! They arrive in Hong Kong when I was in Calcutta. It means they receive permission to leave China several months before me but the Communist have stopped them, and myself, I was expelled, and I arrive faster than those who left.

You know, it is unbelievable life. I could not discuss that now; it is too long. But sometimes I say I would never live that again in my life. It is finish.

DOUGLASS: You had to live each day by itself, I suppose.

WINANCE: Day by day, and you never knew what would happen tonight. You could be in jail tonight. And when they call you to the police, you never know why. You say "Good-bye. I shall come back;" you come back. When you were called to the police, I do not say "Good-bye;" I do not come back.

I could not fix my bed. I remember that. I did not fix my bed. I go to the police very early and I did not come back. The only thing I do, I change my trousers because I think they took my trousers because my trousers were American. Therefore, they ask us to give back what-soever we receive from United States. Oh, it is a story, that.

PEAKE: What is your feeling about the survival of Christianity?

WINANCE: I think they will survive. I think so. The problem for us is this: I would say the institution, the structure and the life. As to the life, I think they will survive--it means the inner life, it means Christian life, it means people still believe and baptize. This is absolutely essential for every Christian, you know.

But, the structure can be shaky. The Communist can shake the structure. But even that--you know, I have been told that if you go to Peking now the churches are packed! People are really taking it hard, I tell you that. The practices are very high, but the problem are the young. Do the young receive instruction? With the people of my age, the adults, no question. They are faithful, no question, because the Chinese are very faithful, like the Japanese. You know, the Christian were very faithful people; no problem for them. The problem is the young. Did the young receive Christian training; at least Christian doctrine?

We believe that the parents give that but the young can be also fascinated by the new word. We do not know.

DOUGLASS: Do you have any information as to what degree people are allowed to practice Christianity?

WINANCE: For people who have been in the big cities, I think it is free.

DOUGLASS: From what you hear they can---

WINANCE: Oh, yes! The problem would be, maybe, in the countryside. The problem is, maybe, the infiltration of Communist ideas to Christian ideas. We saw that. The Communist try to use any church as an instrument, you know. They know what I call the morality of the church; therefore, they will not destroy that, they will use it. I say that in my book, also. Officially, you are free, and I heard, "I will ask Christian brothers to collaborate with you." I heard that in big meeting. I was there, and the director of the school told me, "Be careful, Father; you know officially they are for you, but secretly they are against you." I only heard once a teacher who said once in a meeting, "Religion will disappear by itself. Science will be strong enough. No longer religion; science stronger." But only once I heard that; otherwise it was respectful.

DOUGLASS: Did any of your students try to get you to discuss the ideas in Communism that might be similar to the ideas in Christianity and ask you why they should go the Christian way to this sort of thing rather than the Communist way? Did the students tend to talk to you about this, or ask you? Or get you to argue about it?

WINANCE: No, no, no. They left me free 'tit absolutely the last minute. You know, the greatest argument against the young Christian was this: you go to.Heaven, you are an egoist, selfish--and it was terrible. Many times the

young told me that. They say this: "You go to Mass once a week; you lose time. This time could be dedicated for the people." Therefore, we told them, "Okay. Don't come to Mass and dedicate yourself, but continue to pray."

You know I think the Communist did not want to change the mind of the old Christians, but they were very, very--at least in my field--attacking the new Christian. Those who have been baptized one year before, two years before. They were brain-washed. Some resisted; some did not. But I don't pay attention to that. You know, for me they are no longer responsible.

I could see people coming in my room, crying, a boy crying on my bed. "They force us to say that; they force us." When I speak of Communism myself I don't speak of the torture because that is common thing. But what makes me absolutely frighten, was what I call the intellectual pressure. I say that in Rochester when I give a talk to in some doctors Rochester, Minnesota, on brain-washing. that They believe brain-washing is something psychological. not For me it is psychological; it is intellectual. More than intellectual psychological. It means they try to change your mind by teaching, using scientific method. It means, "We tell you the truth and if you tell us that you are forced to believe that, we don't believe. But you will believe that we are right." And that is terrible. Therefore, practically you change your mind by false information, and when you get right information, you change again your mind.

But, it was not too much the fear, it was--the fear, also--but for me it was intellectual, I would say. More intellectual than emotional. Maybe in jail, I don't know, but in the school it was something intellectual. For me, more terrific. More terrific because you are convinced; I think the young were convinced.

I remember when I came back from Europe I had no theory of brain-washing except my experience, and I was

a little amazed to see, to know the theory given, because I think my book was one of the first on brain-washing. I think so. It was a revelation when' ' explain in a very quiet way--I have the same book in French--and I say that is my experience. I did not read a book on brain-washing before. I did not know. I know the term because the Chinese use the term "shi lao," it means "to clean the brain."

DOUGLASS: You are continuing to study in the hope you will go back?

WINANCE: Yes. It means the monastery, St. Andrew's Priory, Valyermo, California, has been founded in order to inform young people for return to China. That is the idea we have.

PEAKE: When was it founded? How many are there?

WINANCE: Here in California in '56. Now we are around twenty-eight.

PEAKE: From various nations?

WINANCE: The majority are Americans. The founders were from Belgium,my old prior from Italy, three Chinese fathers and one Sengalese from Ceylon, but all the new fathers are from the United States, studying Chinese.

PEAKE: When you say "studying Chinese," the language for some of them---

WINANCE: I continue myself. For the time being we teach them philosophy, theology, because all are young, you know.

PEAKE: Oh, these are younger people? Some of them haven't been to China, then?

WINANCE: No, no, no. Only the founders have been in China.

DOUGLASS: How many of your original group from China?

WINANCE: Let me see. Father Prior, Father Bernard, Father Felix, Father Vincent, myself, Father Gaston Onberique, Father Wilfred and three Chinese.

PEAKE: The rest are younger American students?

WINANCE: Americans, yes. Except Father Placid who came from Ceylong. Otherwise all the brothers are Americans.

DOUGLASS: Are they studying the language?

WINANCE: Not yet. That means they study philosophy and some are going---

PEAKE: When you say philosophy, is that Western philosophy?

WINANCE: Yes, Western philosophy. Oh, yes. We have a student who was in graduate school.

PEAKE: Are you aware of this effort that Reverend Jones* here in the city is engaged in--a project with a number of Chinese to translate classical works of Christianity into Chinese?

WINANCE: No, no, I do not know of that.

PEAKE: There is quite an extensive project underway-fifty to a hundred books, all the major Western religious works, the whole classical literature. Apparently a good many of the classics of the West have not been translated ever into Chinese, even yet. So this is a long range project, looking into the future. You might be interested to know what they have actually translated into Chinese.

WINANCE: The Chinese have started this work long time ago.

*See Francis Jones interview manuscript.

PEAKE: Yes, they started it and he works with them. He is very good in the language. Will you be teaching these young people at all about the Chinese civilization?

WINANCE: Yes. Next year we start to teach philosophy in Valyermo and Father Yao will teach them Chinese philosophy. Myself I teach Western and they will have a Chinese on Eastern philosophy.

PEAKE: You mentioned a minute ago about Chinese art, a workshop in Chinese art. What do you mean by that?

WINANCE: Yes, just this week. They started this morning-I don't know yet! /soft laughter/ There are two, a Chinese teacher from Hong Kong and Father Yao who is an artist himself.

PEAKE: Do you encourage your Chinese to picture the Holy Family with Chinese features?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. I am for that. The Chinese approach. A long time ago I saw many reproduction of Chinese art, made, I think, in Peking. Beautiful. The whole Biblical theme in a Chinese way. The Chinese way of expressing. I am for that also.

PEAKE: How do the modern Chinese students look upon that art with the old Chinese dress. They are now so Western-ized in their dress. Do they think this is strange? How do they react to it?

WINANCE: I don't know how they react to it intellectually. I have been educated to Western art, the missionary use Western pictures, and therefore it was difficult for them to educate the Chinese to appreciate their own art. We were more appreciative than they were. Did.not react as we did.

DOUGLASS: The old story.

WINANCE: Yes, the old story. I don't say the intellectuals, but ordinary, average people did not appreciate this art. At least, when we started in the '30's. I don't know now. They were rather eager to have picture from Paris, you know, or from Rome. That is an education. I cannot understand that, because they know that Christ is not Chinese, therefore, a Chinese Christ is less realistic. I think the way at the present time is no more realistic, either. It is artistic.

PEAKE: Offhand I don't know anyplace where the Protestants are training, educating students in theological seminaries or somewhere to be prepared to go back to China. Maybe there are, but this is some evidence of your hope and faith that China will be open again.

WINANCE: Sure, that without doubt. You know, it is not the first time that all missionaries have been expelled. Several times in history of the church China was closed. In this time, the missionary remain near the door. In Hong Kong, Macao. I think it is a period now that it is impossible for us to go back, but people go back anyhow, one day. We have great confidence for that. Maybe not my generation, but one day they will be open again to the West and I imagine also to religious groups.

PEAKE: Do you think they may, the Chinese people, become more receptive to Western religious and theological concepts as a result of the Communist influence?

WINANCE: Yes, we believe so and we believe also maybe it is the end of many superstitions. Therefore, when they have serious religion, I believe they will be more open. We believe so, that the Communist maybe can suppress many

superstitions to prepare the way to a less superstitious religion and to be more open to what is not Chinese by itself.

DOUGLASS: You said once that you didn't really know but you have a feeling that the people you converted and left in China are still practicing.

WINANCE: Oh, yes. We are sure! We are sure they are still practicing. No question for that. The problem is how to found a new generation. We have no doubt, we don't know too much, but what we know is rather positive. They continue to practice. But the problem is how to found the young ones. That is the problem.

PEAKS: Now, in accepting, having been indoctrinated with this Communist ideology in which there is some philosophy which is based upon Marxian materialism, a product of the West, is this going to wipe out of their minds their own philosophical approach to the universe? Is it going to make them feel more at home in the Western style of thinking about things in the universe, their cosmology?

WINANCE: You know, sometimes people believe that after they have been indoctrinated it would have been impossible for them to change their mind. When I left China I was a little inclined to believe so. They say, "These people are lost forever. They could not think as we do." But, after several years of experience we could see that those who have been indoctrinated when they were young, change their mind when they are thirty-five or forty. That is why the Chinese were obliged to have the new Cultural Revolution, because they have no confidence in people who have been indoctrinated in the '50's. Those who are thirty-five have been indoctrinated when I was in the school, and in the school they believe, you know,

strongly in Marxism. You know, what they knew of Marxism, the way it is practice is so unnatural, so un-human, that you cannit, it seems to me, to believe so. It is not believable! It is not a livable theory.

You know, the intellectuals who are attracted by Marxism are strictly on an abstract level. But when you have to live, it is no longer the same, and you can be attracted by Marxism as some are now in the West, even Catholics, you know. But not the people who live it. Therefore, I think these people can keep what I call the freedom of mind, and to think. Now, the fact that they have been trained to technique, i.e. scientifically and technologically, but that is not essential to Marxism. That cannot be changed and that can open the mind.

You know, I believe that. Like in Russia, people are trained little by little to technique, science and therefore they become more free in their judgment, more critical, more critical than before. I don't say that is against religion if they need a religion which has its own proof.

PEAKEX Is there any parallel in Russia itself as to the Russian Orthodox Church still practicing and---

WINANCE: Even I don't believe that will disappear. in China because each generation has the same need for an answer to it. New generations have to start again to work, to destroy what you call the religious need. Each generation has the same need. It is true, more difficult maybe, but as a generality, it seems that each generation start with the same need for the religious answer. Therefore, the Buddhist may always be attractive; he will be salve what I call "the need for the spirit." The regime cannot fulfill this need; it is too much technique, and I am pleased that they claim that. They do not satisfy the need for the spirit. Therefore the people will remain religious. I don't think that the people are indoctrinated.

PEAKE: You don't think that Communist ideology has penetrated very deep?

WINANCE: No, no, no. And also this: I could see, you know, they are Chinese. And I believe that the man is the same for everybody; therefore we react the same way. But finally, you belong to a culture, cultural background; and Communism is not Chinese cultural background. It came from the West, and suddenly after two, three, four, five generations there is a reaction. People will discover their own heritage; ones who have a very deep and long heritage are proud of it. You cannot go back to your heritage with a technique.

We believe that the Chinese way of life will be modified by the Communist. I am not so sure there will be a radical cut with the old way of life. I don't see how, because you cannot indoctrinate 600,000,000 people like that, because they don't change the way of life too much. Outside the cities it is still the same when you hear people coming back from there.

PEAKE: China will probably remain more agrarian than most Western societies, do you think, even under industrialization?

ndustrialization?

WINANCE: Yes, at least still for many years, many decades.

DOUGLASS: You spoke of the Red Guard sort of affair. I was thinking in a sense this was reaction against a generation with which you were acquainted, as students very heavily Marxist indoctrinated. This is very interesting. Possibly some of your own students were some of the people who were being attacked.

WINANCE: It means all my student have been indoctrinated. In 1963-64 even before that, Mao Tse-tung does not rely

upon them. It means those who have been indoctrinated when I have been in the school are no longer reliable. It means therefore, they started the cultural revolution to a new generation of young people, and these young people are between fifteen and twenty-five, because they obeyed, no critique, enthusiastic and finally is this: you give them some freedom to rule the others. We saw that because I tried to imagine the Red Guard as I have seen in my time--the Communists using the young against the Nationalists. And now, the Communist are using the young against themselves, to destroy what you call the bureaucracy of the other party.

DOUGLASS: Now they have to face a reconstruction---

WINANCE: To face a reconstruction!

DOUGLASS: To get these young people back to school.

WINANCE: Yes. It was very difficult. I don't know what happens now. I don't know more than the newspapers say.

There is a book on the Red Guard published by a friend of mine, I think it is a friend of mine, a Chinese, a paperback edition published last year, like a document on the Red Guard.* You have the whole story of the Red Guard from the Chinese sources, the Chinese newspaper. That is very informative, published last year, I think.

PEAKE: Do you get Chinese Communist materials at your school?

WINANCE: We receive only magazine from Formosa or Hong Kong. Nothing from China. Several years ago we have a French magazine called Saturn, in French and I think also in English. It was published by Commission Internationale contre .'_e regime, which opposes slave labor camps. It was

*Op. cit., p. 28.

very, very well informed. It was only the translation of the Chinese newspaper, but now we don't see this magazine. The magazine stop to be published maybe five years ago. That was very informative, written by people who were in Hong Kong or in Paris, but according to the Chinese sources.

According to my knowledge, it is difficult to have the Chinese sources, at least to give the Chinese newspaper. Sixteen, seventeen years ago you could get a newspaper very easily in Hong Kong but after that the Communist did not let a newspaper go to Hong Kong, because you could get many news from the newspaper. That was very interesting, but they stop that.

PEAKE: Did you see any--probably you don't study this-change of the ideology of Marxism under Mao from the orthodox?

WINANCE: I believe that Mao is a Stalinist* and Mao is a true Marxist theoretician.

PEAKE: You believe it is the true one. The Russians---

WINANCE: I believe it is the true one. The Russians no longer the true. From the Communist viewpoint I believe Mao is right. Practically, the Russians defend themselves now, but Mao is for the revolution all over the world.

When I was there it was clear: revolution, revolution all over the world. I tell you, it is not at all peace, peace word. When I was in Shanghai, I never have seen so many soldiers. It is a military power, developing a great military force. 195^{0}-5^{2}.

And then Mao Tse-tung. I think at least for the time being, the Communist regime rely upon the army, told me from a general, for the time-being. It is true the Communist took the country by military force--long, long war from the beginning, January, '49 and they arrive in Chengtu in Christmas, '49. It was strictly military, it was not

*See Appendix II for his discussion of this judgment.

at all the people who became Communist. The Communist arrive in Chengtu with guns, machine guns, in the army and people were on the street looking very stern. The Communist were very upset because nobody was laughing except the students. The student were very enthusiastic, but nobody was enthusiastic in the old city of Chengtu. Six, five hundred thousand people were there. Nobody was laughing and the Communist were very insecure for the first three months, very insecure because the population was not at all enthusiastic.

The population was, the mentality was this: try. After three months if we do not want them, we shall reject them. That is a great mistake. You can never reject the regime. As soon as the regime is there, it is finished. But it was the psychology: "We try. Why not? They are Chinese." And, people were tired of so many years of war--Japanese war, before that the landlord war--therefore they believe that a new regime could start unity and peace and stability, but I think I describe that in my book.

The regime, I could see, the death, the destruction, the systematic destruction of the whole society. That is the most terrifying thing, you know, to see whatsoever you like, whatsoever you accept is rejected. It is the most difficult thing.

PEAKE: Are you aware whether or not they actually destroyed temples or destroyed monuments of the past?

WINANCE: No, they don't destroy the temple. They use many temples as factories or churches as factories. They don't destroy; they don't destroy the monument of past, but a new use, new use.

December of 1954 I was in Hong Kong. I wanted to buy the old classics. In this time I could not find a classic in Hong Kong. They have been eliminated by the

Communist, I have been told, and they wanted to give a new edition with a new explanation, new commentaries.

PEAKE: Have you ever seen any of these commentaries?

WINANCE: Now in this time? No, no, no.

PEAKE: I get the impression from American scholars that they still collect materials from the past but they write introductions that make it strictly Marxian interpretation, and yet you have the original document. They don't change those.

WINANCE: You know, it is interesting, when I was in Hong Kong I could find only the Communist introduction. But you can see the interesting development is this: For example, the leading pre-Communist student of Chinese philosophy, Feng Yu-lan, in a few years changed completely his mind, but I don't know to what extent it is true. It is unbelievable. A scholar can do that? It is unbelievable. I cannot believe it, except he does that to save his life, to save his life. Yes, they are trying to interpret everything, to reject what hē has believe before.

I could see that myself. In the Fine Arts School the people did that, I would say, as a way of living. I think, nobody knows what you think, you are very aware, you know, because you have to save your life. Therefore, a teacher told me--I remember he was a painter, painting the old Chinese way. He told me, "No, I put all my brushes away. I am obliged to paint the Western way, and to paint only what you call pragmatic paintings for advertisement. I could not paint trees, and landscape, the old Chinese mountains---"

PEAKE: Purely propaganda.

WINANCE: Purely propaganda. I saw that in the Fine Arts School. That was in the '50's. I think it is still the

same, though, because even literature is strictly propaganda. And the literature, I think, is very poor. A play that was a very great success was the Pe meo nie. I don't know if it translates like this, The Girl with White Hair. That was very, very influencial, the play in Paris. It was truly something very artistic, but very anti-all-society. It was a play, also, of propaganda for the regime.

PEAKE: Do you feel there is going to be reaction from this distortion of the culture or this propagandistic use of it for their immediate political and doctrinaire objectives?

WINANCE: For the time being it is strictly propaganda, but you cannot live too much on that. It may be fifty years after that the natural drive comes back like in Russia, I suppose. For the time being I think it is that they want to establish the regime and to use everything for the regime, but people are still of good common sense and the same tendency as we are. For the time being they tolerate that because you cannot counteract. But, I don't think people have change in the mind--as we are, and I myself. But you accept.

We saw that. You know, we live this psychology: to accept everything. We accept everything except what was against my religion as such. Otherwise, we started to accept even what we hate, understand? To do, but we say, "That's true." We were, I remember, all of us. We did not accept the social system, if you like, like that, and the economical system, so tight, but that is a social theory, you know. You accept it because you cannot do anything else.

But, we refuse to accept what was strictly freedom of conscience. When they speak of freedom of conscience, it was truly that.

PEAKEs The Chinese would take this position, or you, the Westerner? Chinese Christians would---

WINANCE: Yes! The same position, except that their way of answering is more subtle. You know, I am sure, we are sure, for them it is a problem of conscience. Truly a problem of conscience. It was a problem like that for us. When we came back we tried to show that, you know, but not at all to take a position on politics, economics. We have no opinion with that. We accept the regime, but sometimes the regime is anti-human and we cannot accept it. I saw that with indoctrination, people defending me and saying "Father live like a Buddhist," something like that. But the Chinese took the same position, it means it is a question of conscience for the Christian. But they were more subtle answering that. We are more "Yes-or-no" I would say. For them I suppose they will ask you this, "He has no right to ask us, therefore I have no duty to answer him." For us, we take a position; for them--no.

PEAKE: This Chinese habit of mind of sort of seeking a middle way, how does this pattern of thinking strike you from a religious, doctrinaire angle?

WINANCE: /Short pause,/ Finally you let them answer, solve the whole way, because I believe the German way is not the French way, even on a religious way, and the British way is not the same. Therefore, you must accept some flexibility. I believe that in the '50's sometime we did not accept this flexibility. We were too much yes or no, and now we say, "Yes, there is some flexibility, according to your temper," and for that they were more flexible than we were, but never losing the basic truth. For that they were strict, very, very strict. But they were more flexible as we were, maybe. That is the

Chinese way. Oh, sure, the old Chinese way, and the Communist are not like that. At least, they were not like that when they were antagonizing us. They were to the true Western way, not Chinese.

PEAKE: I wonder how long you think the leaders can'get this type of thinking across to the people, or even their leadership. Do you think the ideology of the regime will break down?

WINANCE: I think for the principles they are strict, but I think they are also flexible in the policy. I suppose with Russian. You understand they are very flexible and it is difficult for the Russians to answer back and forth, I think, to the Chinese. I think men like Cou En-lai is truly Chinese in his policy. It means, the way they react is still Chinese. I believe so; the way they act is still Chinese.

DOUGLASS: It means they are enigmatic to

us. WINANCE: Absolutely enigmatic.

DOUGLASS: What do you think would have to happen to enable you to go back into China? What practical steps would have to happen to enable you people to re-enter? Like diplomatic recognition by the United States or this kind of thing? Do you have any notions about that?

WINANCE: Ah-h-h-.

PEAKE: Are they American citizens, these people you have at the monastery?

WINANCE: No, no. I would not go back as I am. No, I did not take American citizenship.

PEAKE: They wouldn't even let these Quakers land in Shanghai.

WINANCE: Yes, for the time being I think it is a little too early to think of that, but I don't think it will be for always like that. Impossible! I don't think you can live a life like that behind a bamboo curtain, you know, for centuries and centuries. I don't know how they will come back, but I hope. It is rather a hope, but hope founded, you know, on the sense of history. History cannot continue like that.

'DOUGLASS: You don't seem to want to channel yourself through Taiwan particularly.

WINANCE: Oh, no, no, no! Impossible.

DOUTLASS: This would close doors, probably.

WINANCE: If we go it would be to Taiwan now. On the mainland, I don't know. You know, I think it is unpredictable what will happen at the death of Mao Tse-tung. And the Chinese can change tomorrow and be more friendly with the West. Why not? It means that the people as such are still as before, ready to make friends with us. It is only a policy of the government but that we cannot predict. We don't know. I think it depends upon the opportunity and it is strictly pragmatic for that. What is the best for that?

PEAKE: You think they want a policy of isolation in order that they can better indoctrinate their people, not to allow any hope of outside contact?

WINANCE: Ah, for the time being, yes. At long last I think they want to be truly Communist, in full sense to keep people in quarantine. But, do you think this can

last long, a long time? That is a problem. As long as they want to be pure Communist, it is the only policy.

PEAKE: The door was closed to Japan for a couple of hundred years and in China for a hundred and fifty or more years in the past.

WINANCE: But do you think they can do that again? They cannot do that.

PEAKE: Things are speeded up a little more in the contemporary world. These young men that you are instructing, in time they will leave the monastery and then they will take positions in this country, or wherever they come from, but still will have the background and training.

WINANCE: You know, we started in 1940 to change the training of our young monks. Instead of teaching them at home, we sent them into public school. That, it was a new policy. We have no Catholic school; therefore, we accepted several young men and they were sent to the high school of the city. They receive in the monastery only the strictly religious training. They used to come back-oh, once a week, for the week-end. Therefore, those when they went back home were like the other students. We have no problem for that.

DOUGLASS: This is in China?

WINANCE: In China, yes. In China they used to have the closed school, to form people for the seminary, the closed school. It is the only way--I don't think it is like that. But, in 1940. when we started to receive young men for us, for the monastery, even 1937, the first who came were immediately sent to public school, non-Catholic

schools, non-Christian schools, to the best school you could find in Nanchung. After that they went to Chengtu, and it is only after having finish the high school that they were received in the monastery for one-two years. After that, we give them the best training we could outside. Then the Communist came.

Therefore, these people did not lose the ground, you know. When they left the monastery they could find a place in the world. It is the same here, you know. All our people need religious training, but not the technical training. They get that in the school.

PEAKE: They go out and take lay positions?

WINANCE: Yes, now they can take lay positions. Those who come out from the monastery; here, also, when they come out.

PEAKE: They are not committed then to monastic life or the church?

WINANCE: Oh, no. We are against that. We are against this, that you are obliged because you'have no other training, to accept monastic life as the only way. The Chinese will say, "mo yu ts'u lu," "no exit." No, we don't like that, why you have no choice. If you have a choice, you must be able to make something else, than monastic life. We were against that when we were in training. They receive in the monastery the religious training, the monastic training, for those who want.

PEAKE: This is rather exceptional from the Protestant point of view. They were always trying to get their Christian young people into their own Protestant schools.

WINANCE: That had been the policy also for many, many years in the Catholic Church. Oh, sure, it was the same,

but during the war we decided to have a new policy-World War II. We change that before the other change. Now it is more open. We did that for many reasons. First, because we believe so, and also because we have no money to start our own school. The people who came to us, we say, "O.K. You go to the public school, but you receive in the monastery religious training every week-end when you come back."

PEAKE: The Chinese authorities, would they approve of this?

WINANCE: They would not feel what you call cultural imperialism, because for them it was this: you could see people who could speak Latin very well but they could not speak Chinese. They have been train in the old Western culture. I suppose maybe to speak English very well, or French very well, but they could not speak Chinese.

PEAKE: Now, in your order, does Rome approve this?

WINANCE: Oh, yes. You know when I went to China, Rome was the most progressive, and antagonism came from the bishops. They were on the spot. But the general direction even by Rome was very open for liturgy, for the Chinese, for education, for culture. We were educated like that, then when I was sent I was sent to fulfill the direction given by Pius XI and Pius XII and the Propaganda de Fide--it means many directions were tried to establish indigenous church, not the Western church. We were trained like that, but that was very difficult for the bishops, you know, to accept that. You could see that. I don't know the Protestants.

PEAKE: Was it a diminution of their power? Were the bishops always Westerners?

WINANCE: In this time they were Westerners. When I went to China it was the first generation of Chinese bishops, consecrated by Pius the XII in 1925. But I would not say that the foreigners were anti-Rome, it is not that. It is the easy way.

It is difficult to assimilate a new culture, very difficult. Therefore, it is true there is an easier way--to remain with the old way. But to face a new culture.... When I went to China I could see the new trend, to face the new culture like Mateo Ricci, you know, in China, some of us, several others, and in India. In India I saw two-three Jesuit fathers who understood the same policy and also Father Monchanin. He was a French priest who taught philosophy and went to India in '39 and he started to live the Indian life and started to be initiated to the Indian classics. We wanted to do the same, but for us the job was stopped by the Communist.

You know, the Communist stop the revival of the church in China. It was a great revival of Christianity. Many people were interested and we have a new literature when I arrive in China. Catholic literature was all books written one hundred years before, two hundred years before in the old language, but after the war', started a new Catholic literature, modern books written in Kuo-yu--it means the national language--and it was a great hope. But this work was stop by the Communist invasion. Some continue the work in Taiwan. I think the Jesuit continue this kind of work in Formosa; I know that.

PEAKE: What sort---

WINANCE: Translation, dictionary, two-three intellectual class, to develop the high level education. You know, the Catholic when I arrive in China were not so much interested in high level education as the Protestants. All the great colleges were Protestant colleges. The Catholics are only a few, very few--the Jesuit, some were. But, in many

provinces, in Szechuan, nothing. Even some time, no high school, because the Catholics were rather among the farmers and low class. And after the-war, we realize that we have also to touch the educated class, to. start our school ourself.

PEAKE: What success is it meeting with in Formosa?

WINANCE: For that, I think the Catholics are two hundred thousand now. In 1945 they were only 20,000. Now it is increasing, and also because they came from the mainland. There was a great increase at Fu_jen University in Taipai.

PEAKE: Fu-jen? It came over from Peking?

WINANCE: It was in Peking; it is now in Formosa. A few weeks ago came Cardinal Yupin. You saw that in the news-paper. I think he is the chancellor of Fu-jen.

PEAKE: In India is this same policy working? Will the Indian government allow---

WINANCE: Ah-h-h-. Difficulties. You cannot go to India unless you come as a social worker. I think you cannot go to India as a missionary. I experience that myself, because twice I could not get long visas for there, only transit visa because I was a missionary. At least, on my passport was written "missionary." Therefore, you can go as a social worker or technician but not as a missionary as such, to my knowledge.

Not in Formosa. In Formosa is absolute freedom, I think. I have many friend who went to Formosa. No problem. The Protestant the same; many go to Formosa. Very interesting work, I am told.

PEAKE: I think this is all very interesting and brings us to the present. Let's jump off a bit into the future.

You don't think that Western civilization is going to overcome the ancient civilizations of India and China in some of their basic patterns of thought?

WINANCE: It is difficultto say. When I arrive in China in '36, I met Father Lebbe and I--maybe I say this to you? Father Lebbe was a Chinese and a great person, and for Chinese culture. But he told me it may be one hundred years. It is sad to say that, but it seem that it is that. I believe that some Chinese ideas cannot survive the technique of modern science and technology.

With what is true, we survive. You know, some way of living can survive with a technique, but some cannot. That I agree. It means I agree the economics is some way linked, like Marxist, you know. It means there is some relation between some pattern of life or values of life, technology, but it is difficult to foresee. I think you can be high in technique and to be German, or to be French all the time; we have something like that. I think so, but what is truly superstitious and false could disappear. I imagine that, I suppose the Chinese medicine, many theories will disappear because it is not scientific. But, many good medicine will remain. What they know by experience will remain, but the theories to explain will disappear. They accept the Western technique, Western theories. But it is true you can have many, many Chinese medicine which have to be check by experience. What the Communist do now, I think, as they did before. It means to check by modern experiments, the old Chinese medicine, the old Chinese drugs.

PEAKE: What about the traditional family system? Modern forces are a little rough on that.

WINANCE: Yes, very rough on that. It depends on where you live. If you live in a city, I think it is very difficult. If you are in the country, you can still keep the old Chinese way.

You know, I enjoy very much the old Chinese way, except sometimes the lack of freedom in the family. That can disappear, but I could accept to live in a Chinese family. You know, it is like in Europe. The Italian family is not exactly the same as the north. I think it would be interesting for each culture to keep its own way, because it is very delightful. I think it works and you keep the human dignity, human freedom, responsibility. But, I think it is a mistake to impose the same way everywhere. I think it is a mistake. Even I would say that when you should speak of democracy. Impose democracy as we live it, even the British democracy to the French, you cannot. It does not work. Therefore, the several concept, it cannot work for the time being in the Far East.

You know, I believe so that when I was in China I could see this: I was in the countryside, and you could see the countryside and its own customs, its own laws, indigenous. And in thistime, thirty years ago, you could see the government was Western-type government. Very artificial. I would say the laws were Western laws imposed by the central government. It was Western! It was good, if you lily , but you could see that it was a little like the framework that does not fit the content.

The people did not react like that. You could see the co-existence of two types, two judicial system: the system--you know, not an active system, indigenous; and at the same time, the Western way of doing. I suppose at the beginning they co-exist. After that, I suppose, there is some osmosis between the old way and the new way.

PEAKS: I presume they introduced a doctrine or a practice of following the old custom in certain situations involving law and in other situations the Western way?

WINANCE: Yes, the Western method was on the paper. But, finally, to solve the problem, it was the old way.

PEAKE: Did you have any concrete experiences to illustrate that?

WINANCE: No concrete example. I have to think of that, but when you are a parish priest living in the country-side, you could see that. The government was far away and finally when you have some problem, don't go to the yamen, don't go to the prefect; you go to the chairman of the secret society. The secret society were very powerful and these people solve your problem, not the government. That I remember during the '30's; in the '40's that was a classic case. In the countryside it was much better to agree with the secret society. When I say "secret society" it means--not secret, but we call that in our Western way.

There was a while when the Communist came in December, I remember somebody told me only this state of affairs--I said this before, I think--could continue to survive in spite of the revolution, because the govern-ment was still something very artificial and imposed. The people don't live on that; they lived their own way. I suppose it is the same in Viet Nam; it can be something like that, also. Therefore, when the Communist came for three months, almost three months, it was no order, I would say, no political order. The people continued to live their own way, because we were not depending on this little artificial Western way. We could see that the last month before the Communist came. Because, the people lived their own, at least in Szechuan and the countryside they live alone--followed their customary *ways.*

PEAKE: Do you recall the name of the secret society in your area?

WINANCE: Oh, it was very powerful. I remember I think there were four societies; I don't remember the names.

PEAKE: White Lotus, Red Spear, some of the others?

WINANCE: Yes, beautiful names like that.

PEAKE: Then these were made up of local people? The gentry class? Where would the village elder fit into that? Would he be a part of it?

WINANCE: Local people, yes; very powerful. The gentry class and also the low class. Even some priest were part of it, Chinese priest, were members belonging to the officials. True.

PEAKE: If two peasants got into a quarrel over some property they would go to this channel, and keep out of the hands of the Mandarins?

WINANCE: Oh, sure! I suppose--I remember this priest was robbed. He was robbed! He lost all his blankets and he belong to the society. Immedi.°.tely he went to the chairman. He say, "They were wrong to rob me." When he got back he have all his blankets. That is a story of long time ago.

When I was there the bandi-;s went and robbed the mother of a priest, Catholic priest, and saw the men. She say, "I recognize you. You are a bad guy," and she was killed. The day after, the chief of the bandit call his man and told him, "What did you do yesterday?" He did not answer; he was shot on the spot. It was very sad, because myself I was parish priest among two of these bandits. Bandits were, you know, keeping the law there in the county for several years, chiefly in the '40's, '41, '42, when the government could not handle the order because of the war. These bandits were robbing only the rich people, never the poor people. But that is a type of secret society. Some were good; some were bad. You could see that people were more relying on that than upon the government.

PEAKE: Do you think the Communists really penetrated right down and broke up these?

WINANCE: Ah, the Communist first job was to break the secret societies, chiefly in Szechuan. In Szechuan they were very powerful; Szechuanese were very independent. The first job was to break them.

APPENDIX I

Archival Materials deposited in the Honnold Library of the Claremont Colleges

1. A copy of Father Winance's book, The Communist Persuasion (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1959)

2. Nine copies of photographs taken between 1936 and 1942 in China:

   a. Monastery of Ss. Peter and Andrew near Nanchung (1942).
   b. Group picture, including Father Winance, at the major seminary at Sishan, near Nanchung.
   c. View of the plain of Nanchung from the monastery.
   d. Part of the monastery with the city of Nanchung in the background.
   e. Group picture in the monastery (1937).
   f. Father Weitz, Father Lebbe, and Father Winance in the Monastery of the Little Brothers of St. John the Baptist, An Kwo.
   g. Father Winance, Si Shan, 1937.
   h. Group picture in Suining, 1937.
   i. Refectory of the monastery (1936).

APPENDIX II

Written Responses to Questions

Father Winance was asked in a letter why he felt Mao Tse-tung was Stalinist. He gave the following response in writing:

> I wrote an article around 1953, "Stalin in Peking," because at this time of a very vivid impression of the doctrine and the fact, I believed (and still believe, with rectification below), that Mao was Stalinist.
>
> I was in Hong Kong in 1954, with an old "Trotskyist" who is no longer communist, when Stalin died. At this time, it was clear that the phenomenon of "destalinisation" was very harmful to Chinese communism. In this time and for a long time, the Chinese communists felt very uncomfortable by this change of direction in Russia.
>
> When I asked yesterday (June 5, 197V two of my friend, monks who have been in China, I got the following reactions respectively:
>
> 1. Fr. Werner[1] first reacted by this statement: "Mao Tse-tung was not a Stalinist buta Trotsl.vist. The reason for this opinion: Stalin did not work for world revolution but for the construction of his country. Mao Tse-tung (except for the atomic energy-reflection of my brain) did nothing for his country, destroyed his party and worked in order to create "a perpetual revolution in China" and "a world wide revolution in many countries."
>
> 2. Fr. Yang[2] immediately answered that Mao was a Stalinist as well as Liu Shao-chi, who remained Stalinist when Mao was not so any more. He believed that Mao was Stalinist, but he questioned the firmness of his conviction. He was a Chinese "politician" (for me, twice opportunist) who, first of all, feared the Russian influence in Asia.

[1]Fr. Werner lived in communist China with me and was chaplain in U. S. Army in 1944, 1945.

[2]Fr. Yang is Chinese, Ph.D. in political sciences, in immediate contact with the political Chinese life during the war, he met Chu Guen-Lui ,Chou En-laig and had breakfast with him during the war in Chungking.

3. Today, just now, I asked Fr. Gaetan and Father Weitz. For both, Mao was a Stalinist, and Fr. Weitz added, that Mao never forgave Kroutchev /kruschev, for having discarded Stalin.

Then apparently, Mao was Stalinist. Maybe he is not Stalinist any more. It is easy for them to change, because by definition they are the rule, determined by the goal, the concrete goal in its historical condition. For the time being, the West wants to be friendly . . . even Catholics find that Mao has many things in common with Christianity. . . .

Father Winance also responded to the following question in writing:

When your students were attracted to Communism in 19421949, how did you try to persuade them that they were wrong?

As a Catholic priest, I never took any political stand, I am for everyone, anywhere, policy I practice now in Claremont. Because of this decision, I could teach in a communist school for 18 months . . . see my biography. . . . I was for the Government of China, even of Ir?ao Tse-tung. I said that to my judges. I was against the philosophy or anthropology of communism. But I did not have the responsibility of the hearts and the minds of my students. Therefore, as a general rule I never touched the subject., It was a rule which I adopted already in 1936, when I was meeting "teachers" in the tea-house.

Once, as I remember, I warned a friend too enthusiastic for a coming regime; this happened in 1948, perhaps, before the communist took over the city. The young man was the son of a very rich family in Chengtu.

As to the Catholic students of whom I had the responsibility, I warned them against the atheism and the materialism of communism, not its economical system. I gave a seminar for Catholics during the communism regime, a seminar which has been called by the communists "worse than the Legion of Mary, the last weapon invented by American capitalism" and in which the communists introduced their spies (at least one

[3]Fr. Gaetan studied Chinese in Paris and knew the Communist Regime. He was the last to leave the monastery in 1952. Father Weitz taught French to Mme. Chiang, traveled and took his meals with the Generalissimo, during the war, went with them in the shelter during air alerts.

girl with very long hair), but even there, I never, and never, touched any political; social, economical problem. Myself, and Fr. Raphael, the Prior, we were only concerned with the basic Christian doctrine.

Before the communists came, I spoke sometimes,. privately with students, showing them the risk of losing freedom if they welcomed the communist regime. But as a matter of fact, I was very cautious.