

VI - 73 E - 38. Review of Battle Hymn of China by Agnes Smedley -
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The Battle of China A. Smedley

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Travelogue

Three women have contributed to put China "on the map": first and foremost of course, the incomparable "Missima," Madame Chiang Kai-shek herself. The two others are the novelist Pearl Buck, whose powerful novels and the films made from them have touched the hearts of millions, and, last but not least, Agnes Smedley, a journalist gifted with deep understanding of, and sympathy with, fighting, suffering China.

Agnes Smedley has been in the thick of the Chinese war from the word "go"—which she translated into the term "stay." In fact, she arrived in China as far back as 1928, when the Kuomintang was partly Fascist in character. The Blue Shirts, who formed its right wing, crushed the League for Civil Rights she had helped to found.

Since those far-off days, Agnes Smedley has watched the resurgence of China against the Japanese oppressor; witnessed the salient phases of the

epic battle for Chinese independence, and taken an active part in it by improving the care of the wounded and by rallying the support of thinking men and women all over the world to the help of that stricken land.

Her new book, the fifth she has written on China, is perhaps the most comprehensive of all, and certainly the most interesting. For she has put into it, not only the vivid reporting which made her previous works valuable documents of contemporary history, but more of herself. Thus it is her own, engaging personality which holds together its separate episodes. Not that she consciously thrusts herself into the foreground—far from it.

The travelogue she gives us is alive with her keen intelligence, which enables her to sense the danger to China's future, even when present perils are overcome.