The Cruel Imagination: Oriental Tortures from a Future Past in Albert Robida’s Illustrations for *La Guerre infernale* (1908)*


It is the Third World War, and a Chinese army has just taken Moscow. European and Russian captives, lined up in the street, are being subjected to horrible mutilations and tortures: three men locked into wooden cangues have their ears and noses cut off with sharp swords, a woman tied to a pole has an eye gouged out of its socket with a metal spoon, another has the soles of her feet burned again and again. Aerial warfare (including saucer-shaped flying machines and chemical weapons) are being used intensively in a German assault on London, and in battles between the United States and Japan.

We take a step back, and find ourselves standing safely in Trieste, in Diego de Henriquez’s Civic Museum of War for Peace, admiring a series of Albert Robida’s original illustrations for Pierre Giffard’s *La Guerre infernale* (1908).† Fortunately, the twentieth century went by without all the ominous predictions of the *Infernal War* coming to pass.

* I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Guido Abbattista for sharing with me ideas and sources without which this research would have been impossible. Any merit there may be in these pages is partly his, while the responsibility for any inaccuracy or mistake is mine alone. Piero Gondolo della Riva put a wealth of rare and valuable material at disposal of this research and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to him. Thanks to Antonella Cosenzi, the archives of the Civico Museo di guerra per la pace “Diego de Henriquez” of the City of Trieste were made available to me for this research and I am most grateful to her for her invaluable help. Thanks also to Judy Moss for editing the English of this text.

(although the World Wars did see the use of weapons of mass destruction and some battles not unlike the ones Giffard imagined).

Today, this early work of science fiction is still a graphic example of the collective imagery of coeval times related to future wars and technologies, Chinese punishments and atrocities, and the Yellow Peril. In fact, it was for a planned future section of his war museum entitled “Storia dell’avvenirismo – Precursori della Futurologia” (“The History of Futurism – The Forerunners of Futurology) that in 1957, Diego de Henriquez, ex-soldier and passionate collector,² bought fifteen of Robida’s original sketches from a bookstand in Rome – fourteen black-and-white ink and charcoal drawings and one watercolour – of which eight are reproduced here.³

By 1908, the theme of Chinese torture, and the topos of Oriental cruelty was not unprecedented in Robida’s work, nor was it an isolated case in popular French and Western publications. Be that as it may (and perhaps precisely because it taps into broader cultural currents), the clash between ethnic stereotypes in La Guerre infernale, which informed the representation of Oriental brutality and sadism, and those visions of a future driven by technological progress, offer a unique vantage point from which to observe and critically assess Sino-Western cultural relationships at the dawn of the Twentieth century (or at the end of a “long” Nineteenth century).

I. LA GUERRE INFERNALE

Artist, novelist, war reporter, theatre critic, and correspondent from the International Exhibitions, illustrator and caricaturist, watercolourist and engraver, Albert Robida (1848-1926), also known as the inventor of the “Vieux Paris” at the Paris Universal Exposition in 1900, is recognized today not just as a key figure on the cultural scene of the Third Republic, but also as one of the founding fathers of the international science fiction genre, thanks to increasing scholarly attention.⁴ During his prolific career, Robida

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³ Archivio del Civico Museo di guerra per la pace “Diego de Henriquez” del Comune di Trieste, cassettiera 2, cassetto 4; Archivio del Civico Museo di guerra per la pace “Diego de Henriquez” del Comune di Trieste, diari nn. 163, 265, 266, 269, 271, 272, 274, 290, 291, 295, 296, 298, 301, 308, 311, 312, 313. The circumstances of the purchase are briefly described in the captions that Henriquez himself prepared for the drawings exposition; there is no mention of it in the seventeen manuscript notebooks that constitute his 1957 journal. He may have come across them on one of the book-stands in Piazza Borghese, noted in an entry from September 14th, diary n. 301.

⁴ Significant landmarks of critical attention are: Philippe Brun, Albert Robida, 1848-1926. Sa vie, son œuvre. Suivi d’une bibliographie complète de ses écrits et dessins (Paris: Editions Promodis, 1984); Daniel
contributed to more than one hundred periodical publications, illustrated ninety-four books and was himself the sole author and illustrator of almost fifty. His critical attention to contemporary society is maybe best epitomized by his role as editor in chief of *La Caricature* from 1880 to 1892, but he is probably more famous today for his visionary portrayals of a future society shaped by an extensive use of electric power and telecommunication technologies. 5 “La place de Robida dans la littérature française reste encore à déterminer […] Le réduire à la littérature d’anticipation serait bien sûr une erreur, mais il occupe dans ce domaine une place exceptionnelle”. 6

In 1908, Robida illustrated an anticipation novel written by his friend Pierre Giffard (1853-1922), a reporter and journalist specialized in sport, who had covered the Russo-Japanese war in 1904. In 1887-1888 Robida had already illustrated other works by Giffard (the humorous *La Vie en chemin de fer* and *La Vie au théâtre*) printed by the Librairie illustrée, a Parisian publishing house with which Robida was working. The collaboration with Giffard extended to *La Fin du cheval* in 1899, an essay published by Armand Colin.


on the technical and socio-economic advancements of the means of transports that were soon to replace horse-drawn carriages: bicycles, automobiles, and trains.\textsuperscript{7}

\textit{La Guerre infernale} brought together many of the themes which Giffard and Robida had explored thus far in their journalism and fictional works: set in 1937-1938, this proto-science-fictional adventurous novel depicts a future World War between France and its allies England and Japan, and Germany, which is allied with the United States. China is able to move in to take advantage of the discord between the Western empires.

The novel is rich in its depiction of future warfare and new technologies, of tragedies of titanic proportions, and episodes of mass destruction that today look like ominous anticipations of the two world wars which in 1908 were yet to come.

Just as Giffard had reported from more than one war abroad in his work as a journalist, and had been interested in technological developments in transport and communications, the theme of future war was not at all new in Robida’s previous work and many of the lavish figurative inventions in \textit{La Guerre infernale} echo precedents in \textit{La Guerre au vingtième siècle}. Aerial warfare and dogfights, the use of tanks, women’s battalions and brigades, advanced bathyscopes, submarines and diving suits, and “corps médical offensif” (biological warfare) – can be found (with variations) in both works, and may indicate a co-authorship of \textit{La Guerre infernale} (also suggested by Pierre Versins).\textsuperscript{8}

The novel was first published in 30 weekly installments by Méricant every Thursday between the 18\textsuperscript{th} of January and the 16\textsuperscript{th} of August, 1908, in a total of over 950 pages. Robida provided 526 illustrations, 31 in colour (the cover of each issue plus the back cover of the 8\textsuperscript{th}) and 495 in black and white published within the text. Méricant was a Parisian publisher which specialized in popular genres,\textsuperscript{9} and which subsequently issued a 6-volume edition of \textit{La Guerre infernale} (1908, each volume containing 5 of the

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\textsuperscript{7} Giffard was also the creator of French cycle and car races; for \textit{Le Figaro} he covered the Paris International Exposition and the first demonstrations of the telephone and the telegraph, and he was their correspondent for Europe and Africa; he became editor in chief of \textit{Le Petit Journal} in 1887, until he moved to \textit{Le Velo} in 1896 after a few years of collaboration under a pseudonym, and then to \textit{L’Auto} in 1904. Jacques Seray, Pierre Giffard, précurseur du journalisme moderne. Du Paris-Brest à l’affaire Dreyfus (Toulouse: Le Pas d’oiseau, 2008); C.G.P.C.S.M.-Fontaine d’histoire, \textit{La Famille Giffard} (Fontaine le Dun: Fontaine d’histoire, 2007). On Giffard and Robida see also Doré, \textit{Albert Robida}, I, 195, 257, and II, 458-459, 462, 478.

\textsuperscript{8} Robida, \textit{La Guerre au vingtième siècle}, a Bibliothèque nationale de France digitalized copy is available on \textit{Gallica}, accessed July 4, 2017, ark:/12148/bpt6k3120885; Pierre Versins, “Robida”, \textit{Encyclopédie de l’utopie e de la science fiction} (Lausanne: L’Age d’Homme, 1972), \textit{ad vocem}.

original instalments bound together without the covers), a 2-volume version (1908, also without the original covers, but with “dos de toile rouge, plats de papier crème illustrés en rouge et or”), and, in 1909, another version consisting of 8 paperbacks (in-12°), under the alternate title of Les Drames de l’air (and with only a part of Robida’s illustrations).10

The protagonist and narrator of the novel is a journalist (who, it is relatively safe to assume, is modeled on Giffard himself), editor in chief for a newspaper Robidianly titled L’An 2000. At the beginning of the story, his Chinese house servant Wang (based perhaps on the historical figure Tin-Tun-Ling, a probable reference also for the character of Tchoun-li-Tching in La Grande mascarade parisienne, 1880),11 announces that during the night war has broken out between England and Germany over a dispute about the distribution of sorbets, and, due to the various alliances and loyalties, has escalated and spread all over the world.

Quite a few pages of the book are devoted to a description of the incredible French air fleet, which, at the beginning of the conflict, is hidden in a secret base under Mont Blanc. Along with easily maneuverable “engins volant” resembling flying bicycles, “aérocars”, bigger flying “vaisseaux” and “dirigeables” (see especially issues 1-4), La Guerre infernale offers us an array of garish inventions such as the “scaphandres semi-rigides et autonomes” employed for underwater battles (issue 6), an underground copy of London built to protect the city inhabitants from a German attack (8-10), the use of electric power as means of mass destruction (16), a Japanese invasion of the United States, the creation of a “muraille blanche” in the Urals, through an alliance between Europeans and Russian to stop the Chinese advance (21-22), and the cholera germ used as a weapon in germ warfare (25-26).


II. A Yellow Peril from a Future Past

The representation of Chinese power in La Guerre infernale follows a topos of the Yellow Peril which had been codified in fiction since the 1880s by a varied selection of narratives where early adventure and war-themed science fiction played an important part, both in English and in French. While public opinion in Europe and America increasingly feared Chinese competition in the form of low-price labour, wage dumping, and exports of cheap goods (the Chinese exclusion act in the United States dates back to 1882), the earliest Chinese conquest of the United Stated is to be found in Pierton W. Dooner’s Last Days of the Republic, as soon as 1880, while in William D. Hay’s Three Hundred Years Hence (1881) a racial conflict was resolved in favour of the “whites” thanks to the use of futuristic weapons. “The Battle of the Wabash: A Letter from the Invisible Police” published under the unidentified pseudonym of Lorelle, and “A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the Year A.D. 1899” by Robert Woltor (appearing in 1880 and 1882, respectively) imagined that Chinese immigrants were soon to outnumber the “whites” in America.

A few years later, in 1898, it was The Yellow Danger, by Matthew Phipps Shiel (a British citizen born in the West Indies) which launched the Yellow Danger as a science fiction subgenre, “exploiting fears that Chinese hordes could take over the world by simple strength of numbers” and by benefiting from of the rivalry between Western powers: in fact, in the novel, an intra-European war is orchestrated by Chinese plotting. In France, the Yellow Danger subgenre of war fiction included books like L’Asie en feu. Le roman de l’invasion jaune by Féli-Brugière and Louis Gastine (1904), and the trilogy L’Invasion jaune, by “Capitaine Danrit” (Émile-Cyprien Driant) (1905).

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The description of the Chinese hordes in *La Guerre infernale* are therefore part of what was, at the time, a well-established repertoire, with a clearly evident racist matrix.\(^{14}\)

A Californian Chinatown is described as being teeming with a miserable, sorrowful humanity, living in the sloping streets of a pestilential city,\(^{15}\) and commenting with his friend Pigeon on the tragedy of the European fleet stopped by a Japanese blockade of the Panama Canal, the narrator eloquently describes the rise of the Chinese hordes he foresees, that will spell the end of an unprepared old Europe.\(^{16}\)

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### III. The Cruel Imagination

Two issues of *La Guerre infernale* (28 and 29) graphically portray the Chinese occupation of Moscow, and linger over the descriptions of the torments inflicted on the captives. The reader is warned before that an instant death would be preferable to being captured by the barbarian Chinese, and being used in their ferocious games, subjected to escalating tortures.\(^{17}\)

In “Les Chinese à Moscou” (issue 28), Western and Turkish prisoners of war, lined up in the streets of Moscow, are subjected to cruel and elaborate punishments before being executed. The cutting off of noses, ears and tongues (see Figure 10), and especially the “rat walk” – in which a live rat is inserted in the captive’s swollen wounds, and looks for a way out by nibbling at the flesh – is described in detail and accompanied by the cruel satisfaction of the executioner, and the indignation of the narrator:

> Immondes Chinois! Bêtes féroces indignes de porter le nom d’hommes, décidément! Comment s’appelait donc le fou qui voulait démontrer dans je ne sais quel ouvrage, voilà des années déjà, la parfaite égalité des races humaines? Il n’y a pas de races, disait-il, avec je ne sais quelles déclamations en guise de preuves à l’appui, il n’y a que des hommes!\(^{18}\)

The “rat walk” is not the only reference to Octave Mirbeau’s *Le Jardin des supplices* (1899), to which the title of issue 29 “Dans l’avenue des supplices” pays homage.

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\(^{14}\) In the light of other writings by Giffard, however, Langé points out that “le narrateur n’est pas nécessairement le porte-parole de l’auteur”, “Le rire et l’effroi”, 156.

\(^{15}\) Giffard, *La Guerre infernale*, issue 18.


Outside the Kremlin, Chinese soldiers prepare the next day’s feast, when three hundred enemies will be put to death after atrocious suffering. A Western woman is subjected to the torture of the “chemise de fer”, which is reserved to the adulterous during peacetime: an extremely tight “cotte de mailles” is fitted around her chest with many holes, from which small pieces of flesh stick out. The executioner slashes at these bulges, leaving the woman agonizing and bleeding out (see Figure 13).19

In the second to last installment of *La Guerre infernale*, text and illustrations depict: the cangue (see Figures 10-15), the “great cage” (see Figure 12), the gallows, the “serpent d’eau” (prisoners are tied, bare-skinned, with pipes filled with boiling water clasped around them), the “bûcher” “à la Jeanne d’Arc” (see Figure 14), the torture of the “allumettes” (see Figure 16) and the one of the “mille morceaux”, the gouging out of the eyes (see Figure 18), the decapitation (see Figures 12 and 16).

The savagery of the tortures described in *La Guerre infernale* can be traced back to representations which had previously accompanied coverage of the Sino-French War (1884-1885), the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901), and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) in the French press20. Explicit illustrations of massacres in China were to be found in popular periodicals certainly known to the authors (or with which they had collaborated), such as the *Petit Journal* illustrated supplement, *L’Illustration*, and *Le Monde illustré*.21 Photography was used to document these wars and photos of corpses and victims on the battlefields began to appear in 1900-1901.22 With his long-standing interest in the latest technologies for reproducing images, Robida was certainly both aware of and shocked by the graphic documentation of massacres which became available in these years: already in *Le Vingtième siècle* (1882) a future sack of Beijing was being transmitted in French houses through the téléphonoscope.23 In “Dans l’avenue des supplices”, in an illustration of Pigeon being tortured, we can make out two Chinese


22 For example, see *L’Illustration*; Robida and Giffard may have been personally acquainted with J. J. Martignon, author of the article “Un supplice qui disparaît en Chine – le lynchii” which was published in the *Archives d’anthropologie criminelle* in 1905 and accompanied by photos; see Langé, “Le rire et l’effroi”, 161-163.

photographers, one in civilian dress and the other in uniform, both busy documenting the scene with folding cameras.\textsuperscript{24}

**IV. Merciless Tropes and the Precedent of Saturnin**

By the end of the 1880s, Chinese torture had become a fairly common topic in European and French public discourse, thanks not only to the interest in Chinese society and culture created by the latest developments in East-West political and cultural relations (including the opening of a Chinese embassy in London in 1877 and the Chinese section at the 1878 Paris International Exhibition), but also to the codification and proliferation of specific tropes in popular literature.\textsuperscript{25}

The representation of Oriental cruelty in *La Guerre infernale* has an important precedent in Robida’s work: the *Voyages très extraordinaires de Saturnin Farandoul*, an adventurous fantasy novel published in 1880, which, in a wry parody of Jules Verne’s *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours* (1872), had its protagonists make a journey “dans les 5 ou 6 parties du monde et dans tous les pays connus et même inconnus de M. Jules Verne” (as the title goes), including Siam and China.

In Siam, while on a quest for the King’s white elephant which has mysteriously disappeared, Saturnin accidentally enters the apartment of the King’s wives. After a trial lasting twenty-four days, he and his companions, are sentenced to eight hundred decapitations (one for each of the king’s wives!). After having tricked their way out of Siam, and still on the look-out for the white elephant, Saturnin and his friends cause a pagoda to collapse in China. They are arrested once again and this time after a two-week trial, are sentenced to the torture of the “ninety-eight thousand pieces”: a sophisticated machine will cut their bodies up into ninety-eight thousand pieces, by means of a complex mechanism (“remarquablement ingénieux”)\textsuperscript{26} of cogwheels and circular blades. This time, our heroes will escape by giving opium to the guards. After avoiding the “boiling fat” torture and a kind of seppuku (the ritual suicide known also as *harakiri*) in Japan, once back in China, Saturnin will then elude public execution between Nanjing and Beijing.

\textsuperscript{24} Giffard, *La Guerre infernale*, issue 29, 921.


In the *Voyages*, the nature of cruel Oriental punishments is one of carnivalesque exaggeration: extremely elaborated procedures and clever machines are meant to amuse an adult reader, who – as André Langé has rightly pointed out – was familiar with popular scientific volumes and periodicals such as Gaston Tissandier’s *La Nature* (to which Robida’s contributed), *Magazine pittoresque* and *Merveilles de la science*, with travel narratives such as the ones published in *Le Tour du monde*, and with illustrated magazines such as *L’Illustration* and *Le Monde illustré.*

Robida might also have had access to rare works including Antonio Gallonio’s *Traité des instruments de martyr* illustrated by Antonio Tempesta (1591, translated in French in 1659), thanks to friends such as the bibliophile Octave Uzanne (1851-1931); the representation of impalement in two of the illustrations in the *Voyages* is probably indebted to Sade’s *Histoire de Juliette* (1796), and to contemporary popular notions of Siamese punishments.

The iconography of the cangue, recurrent in both the *Voyages* and *La Guerre infernale*, as it has been shown in other parts of this volume, was already widespread in Europe by the 1880s, and Robida may have been familiar with Mason’s *Punishments of China* (1801) which “had imposed the subjects of cruelty and Chinese ‘torments’ or ‘torture’ upon the European imagination by leveraging the effectiveness and immediacy of coloured images” and was followed in subsequent decades by further representations of the Chinese

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29 Together, Robida and Uzanne authored *Contes pour les bibliophiles* (Paris: May et Motteroz, 1895), a copy digitalized by the Bibliothèque nationale de France is available on Gallica, accessed July 4, 2017, ark:/12148/bpt6k123180j. On their correspondence, see Doré, *Albert Robida*, II, 461-463, 468, 471. The fact that some of the *Contes* were published before the collected volume itself, that Robida did some illustrations for Uzanne’s articles published in *La Vie élégante* (1882) and *Le Monde moderne* (1895), the portraits of Robida and references to his works in Uzanne’s various articles published between 1880 and 1901 all bear witness to a long friendship between the two men, see Doré, *Albert Robida*, II, 529, 571-572, 575-577.

30 Langé points out Jacques Offenbach’s *Ba-ta-clan: Chinoiserie musicale en un acte* on Ludovic Halévy text (1855), and the entry “Pal” in the *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle Pierre Larousse* (1866-1876), Langé, “Le rire et l’effroi”, 144-145.

treatment of prisoners, punishments, and instruments of torture, such as the ones to be found in *La Chine ouverte. Aventures d’un fan-kouei dans le pays de Tsin* written in 1845 by Émile Daurand-Forgues (1813-1883, aka Old Nick) and illustrated by the Orientalist Auguste Borget (1808-1877).\(^{32}\) Here, incidentally, George Thomas Staunton’s work is mentioned as the source for subsequent knowledge of the Chinese “penal code” in Europe,\(^{33}\) while in the same chapter, on law and justice, and imprisonments, punishments and tortures, we find illustrations of a prisoner in a cage, two in the cangue, a flagellation, a beating with a stick and various instruments of torture. In a chapter devoted to “Les trois religions. Philosophie, morale, cosmogonie” a depiction of hell is described as

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\text{rempli de supplices horribles […] Ce sont des réprouvés que l’on scie en deux, d’autres qui rôtissent, attachés à des piliers de cuivre brûlant; on coupe la langue aux menteurs; on jette les filous sur le penchant d’une colline hérissee de couteaux, et mille autres inventions que varie à plaisir l’imagination des Chinois, volontiers féroce.}^{34}
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According to Langé, this myth about Chinese inventiveness as regards new forms of cruelty may also have found its way into Robida’s work through Guillaume Pauthier, Sade and Ludovic de Beauvoir (whose *Tribulations d’un Chinois en Chine* saw many reprints after 1879).\(^{35}\)

Other references that Robida will certainly have had in mind were Honoré Daumier’s (1808-1869) two series on China and Chinese costumes published in *Charivari, Voyage en Chine* (1843-1845) and *En Chine* (1858-1860). Having previously collaborated on *La Caricature* during the 1830s, Daumier exploited exotic subjects to satirize the European presence in the Orient and the Parisian reader at the same time.\(^{36}\) A different ideological attitude was to be found in the album *Les Français en Chine* published in 1861 by the caricaturist Amédée de Noé (1819-1879, aka Cham), a figure that Langé places “tout autant que Daumier, à l’origine de son [Robida’s] intérêt pour le traitement caricatural de la justice chinoise”.\(^{37}\) In Cham’s work a prisoner in a cangue was the

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33 Nick, *La Chine ouverte*, 228.

34 Nick, *La Chine ouverte*, qt. 259, our emphasis, see also illustration 257.


V. The Image of Horror in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproduction

The treatment of the horrible in *La Guerre infernale* is considered by Langé to be ambiguous, in a position “à mi-chemin entre un sadisme de bibliophiles avertis et un sensationnalisme typique de feuilleton de presse populaire, s’adressant à un public large, et probablement adolescent”. Between the *Voyages* and *La Guerre infernale* the tragedy of the Sino-French and Russo-Japanese Wars, and especially of the Boxer Rebellion had reached Europe and French public discourse and imagery, also by means of photographs, and uninhibited illustrations. The fiction of *La Guerre infernale* adopted and elaborated this imagery to further denounce the cruelties of war, all the while exploiting it to shock the reader.

Of course, the representation of the radical difference of the Other in both racial and cultural terms was a necessary part of imperialist discourse, and works of fiction such as *La Guerre infernale* were both influenced by, and contributed to, the milieu in which they appeared.

Although there are subtle moments of irony in *La Guerre infernale*, which might be seen as beginning to subvert the ideological frame of the narration (eg. the cruelty of the Chinese soldiers gives rise to the hypothesis that they might have been trained in France), by drawing on stereotypes recurrent in a broader Sinophobic milieu, the depiction of Oriental cruelty informs a representation of Chinese culture characterized

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by irreducible otherness, incomprehensible to a Western eye. From a different perspective, this is something that the picturesqueness of other Chinese customs and traditions described in its pages only serves to reinforce. In this future war fiction, China was thus reconfirmed as “a peculiar point of reference, a mirror, a starting point from which to reflect upon forms of social, cultural, political and religious diversity due to both the quantitative ‘incomparability’ and the undeniable alterity of the nature, essence and deep-seated characteristics of its way of life”.41

VI. Robida’s Original Sketches for Pierre Giffard’s La Guerre infernale

Figure 10 – Albert Robida, illustration for La Guerre infernale by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 28, “Les Chinese à Moscou”, 871. Three men locked into wooden cangues have their ears and noses cut off; text reference: “L’odieuse barbarie! Les ignobles drôles”

Figure 12 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published on the cover of issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplices”. Prisoners are subjected to various tortures and decapitation; text reference: “J’entrais, vivant encore, dans l’abominable cité de la douleur”
Figure 13 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplïces”, 901. The torture of the “chemin de fer”; text reference in the original: “Elle souffrira beaucoup, dit il, c’est le supplice de la chemin de fer”; text reference in the published version: “L’infect bonhomme coupe, par ‘bouquets’ les morceaux de peau”
Figure 14 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplices”, 915. A French prisoner is tortured with the “bûcher” “à la Jeanne d’Arc”; text reference “C’est le bûcher de Jeanne d’Arc, me dit un de ces Sauvages”
Figure 15 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplices”, 918. The protagonist and his friend, Chinese prisoners, are forced to dig their graves; text reference: “Avec la pelle et la pioche, les misérables nous ordonnèrent de creuser nos tombes”

Figure 17 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplices”, 920. The protagonist is forced to breathe an acre smoke, by the lightning of paper’s sheets inserted into his nostrils; text reference: “Ce supplice-là, c’était celui des allumettes”
Figure 18 – Albert Robida, illustration for *La Guerre infernale* by Pierre Giffard (Paris: Édition Méricant, 1908), published in issue 29, “Dans l’Avenue des Supplices”, 926. A Russian prisoner tied to a pole has an eye gouged out of its socket; text reference: “Deux aides lui empoignent les cheveux pendant que le bourreau lui extirpe l’un après l’autre les globules des yeux.”