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Chinese Civilization: A Brief Sketch of Its Origin and Development

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CHINESE CIVILIZATION

A BRIEF SKETCH

OF ITS ORIGIN AND

DEVELOPMENT

By

MARINO P. FIORANI

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty
of the Liberal Arts College of
Marquette University, in Par-
tial Fulfillment of the Re-
quirements for the Degree
of Bachelor of Philosophy.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

April, 1934

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

In compiling this thesis, I am greatly indebted to the generous assistance of Mr. J. A. McChrystal, Professor of History at Marquette university, whose careful guidance and constructive criticism has helped to make this thesis a reality.

It has been my earnest endeavor, in writing this thesis to trace in the many phases the influences of Chinese civilization on Europe. I have attempted to discuss the origin and development of Chinese civilization. It is very difficult in making such a study, to be brief and yet clear. For this reason I have made a special effort to compile all the material and expound it in a unique and interesting manner, remaining brief but yet explicit. It has been my aim to compile this brief study on the civilization of the Chinese people in such a way that it may be of value to anyone interested in this period.

In a central location, on the grounds of the great World's Fair which was held in Chicago to commemorate a Century of Progress stood a beautiful example of Chinese architecture. It was an exact reproduction of the Summer Pavilion of Jehol built in 1787 at the summer home of the Manchu Emperors. Selected as one of the finest examples of Chinese lake architecture, it was here erected in the exposition grounds to contrast the age-old Chinese civilization with our modern American civilization.

What a contrast there was! Only one hundred years ago the city of Chicago, now the second largest in this

CHAPTER I

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of China. History of the white man's civilization in this part of America, while the history of the civilization in China reaches back many scores of centuries into the dim mythological past when it had its rise on the banks of the placid Yellow river.

Indeed the very origin of the Chinese people is shrouded in mystery. Whether, as such scholars as Ross, Giles, and Kuhn have maintained, the Chinese and their civilization were indigenous, moving their homes in the northern provinces and the valley of the Yellow river from time immemorial; whether, as Hieger has held

In a central location, on the grounds of the great World's Fair which was held in Chicago to commemorate a Century of Progress stood a beautiful example of Chinese architecture. It was an exact reproduction of the Golden Pavilion of Jehal built in 1767 at the summer home of the Manchu Emperors. Selected as one of the finest examples of Chinese lama architecture, it has been erected in the exposition grounds to contrast the age-old Chinese civilization with our modern American civilization.

What a contrast there was! Only one hundred years ago the city of Chicago, now the second largest in this country and the fourth in the world, began to lift itself by slow and painful degrees from the mud flats at the head of Lake Michigan. The span of only one short century is sufficient to record the entire history of the white man's civilization in this part of America, while the history of the civilization in China reaches back many scores of centuries into the dim mythological past when it had its rise on the banks of the placid Yellow river.

Indeed the very origin of the Chinese people is shrouded in obscurity. Whether, as such scholars as Ross, Giles, and Hirth have maintained, the Chinese and their civilization were indigenous, having their homes in the northwest provinces and the valley of the Yellow river from time immemorial; whether, as Ulieger has held

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they had a southern origin; whether, as Terrien de la Conperir and G. J. Ball have endeavored to demonstrate, their origin was Sumerian; or whether as E. T. Williams and others in late years have contended, the source of the Chinese culture was in central Asia, the fact remains that Chinese cultural civilization is very ancient indeed and had attained a very high level many centuries before the Christian era.

The earliest records and legends of the Chinese seem to indicate that in the earliest days the Chinese civilization was matriarchal and that the forefathers of the Chinese were settled agriculturists, living in family groups, perhaps in cave dwellings hallowed from the Loess Cliffs directly under the fields, as do many of their children to this day.

Like all races, the Chinese have legendary accounts which attempt to trace their history to its beginning. Their mythology abounds with gods and demi-gods, and has many stories of the legendary first man whose name was P'au Hu. P'au Hu, who possessed many supernatural powers, was the first ruler of the world and the first of a series of Emperors culminating in Sui Jau, the fire producer, who learned how to kindle fire by watching a bird produce sparks by pecking at a tree. But the earliest date for which there is any shadow of authority is 2852 B.C. when the first of the semi-legendary five

rulers, Fu Hsi, began his reign. To Fu Hsi is credited the introduction of matrimony and the substitution of the patriarchate for the matriarchate. He is regarded as the inventor of the Pa kua or trigrams (used in divination) and as having taught his people hunting, fishing, and the care of flocks. He too is regarded as the originator of musical instruments as having instituted a calendar.

Other early legendary rulers were Sheu-Nung (about 2737 B.C.) to whom is ascribed the introduction of agricultural implements in the tilling of the field together with the discovery of the medicinal properties of plants; Huang ti (2697 B.C.), who is held to have extended the boundaries of the Empire, regulated the calendar, and been the first builder of houses and cities as well as the father of history and commerce; and then, after four minor rulers, three famous ones, Yoo, Shun, and Yu. These last three are usually regarded as authentic, though vague figures of the latter part of the third Millennium B.C., though their historicity is open to some doubt and the entire period down to about 2200 B.C. must be regarded as essentially legendary.

To Yu, who is supposed to have dealt successfully with the problem of draining away the waters of a great flood, is ascribed the founding of the first great Chinese dynasty, that of Hsia, which lasted five hundred years. During this dynasty there arose not only the traditions

of imperialism by divine right with succession from father to son, but also that of exercise of authority in the name of the Emperor by an aristocracy of intellect known as the Mandorinate.

Many legends attach themselves to the Emperor Yu, who was regarded by Confucius as the first model Emperor. Like most Chinese dynasties that of the Hsias, began with a model Emperor and declined toward a condition of corruption resulting in revolution. Eighteen monarchs succeeded Yu and many of them offended the people by opposing their democratic instinct and traditions. The prestige of the dynasty gradually declined until it was overthrown by revolution under the Emperor Chieh Hwei and the foundation of the new Shang and Yin dynasty under T'ang, about 1766 B.C.

The history of the Shang-Yin dynasty was not unlike that of the Hsia one in that it began with a model Emperor and gradually declined until the overthrow of its last representative, Chan Hsin, and his mistress, T'a Chi, -two names that are associated in the Chinese minds with the utmost of infamy and cruelty.

Uln Ulang, the over-thrower of Chan Hsin, became the founder of a new dynasty known as the Chan dynasty with which was inaugurated a new era of the conventionalization of culture. The Chan dynasty lasted until 249 B.C., and so was the longest of any that has ever held

the throne of China. The Chan dynasty is largely historical and marks the beginning of the more truly authentic history of Chinese civilization.

To summarize the development of civilization before the accession of the Emperor Uln Ulang is a difficult and not entirely satisfactory task. Unlike Europe and the West, China has a few archeological remains and the oldest buildings do not ante-date the 11th century, A.D. Apart from the well shaped stone implements and fragments of a coarse unglazed pottery, few vestiges of the Chinese stone-age culture have thus far been found.

Only with the acquisition of bronze does a distinctive Chinese civilization first appear. The great advance in civilization which is made possible by the bronze age seems to have occurred under the mainly legendary Sgung dynasty which came to a close in the second Millennium B.C. The oldest works of art extant are bronze vessels from this period, decorated with simple geometrical designs and figures of animals and monsters.

But the ancient historical writings, largely compiled and edited by Confucius, present a rich and colorful if not entirely accurate picture of early Chinese civilization. From this we know at least, how far civilization had advanced by the time of the great philosopher who lived from 522 to 479 B.C. From Thordike's "Short

History of Civilization" important institutions or inventions existing by this time are noted;

"The imperial form of government, chief territorial subdivisions, observation of the stars, regulation of the calendar, the use of fire and dwellings; marriage, social conventions, ancestor-worship; geomancy, knowledge of the medicinal properties of herbs, irrigation, agricultural and musical instruments; writing characters with a brush of frayed bamboo dipped in varnish, in place of the still earlier means of record and communication by knotted cords and notched sticks; the board of historians, the first temple of bricks, the manufacture of mediums of exchange, weights and measures, public schools."¹

1. Thorndike, Short History of Civilization, pp. 247-248.

The distinctive Chinese picture writing of course, existed long before the time of Confucius and its origin is shrouded in obscurity.

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CHAPTER II

THE AGE OF DYNASTIES

Contemporary with the first Chan Emperor, Yin
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Emperors is the glory of the three great sages of which
the Emperor Yu was the first, Yen the second, and Confucius
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ful and rich. It is marked by the lavish use not only of
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Contemporary with the first Chan Emperor, Ulu Ulang, was the second of the three great sages, Tan, the king's brother. Greater even than the fame of the Chinese Emperors is the glory of the three great sages of which the Emperor Yu was the first, Tan the second, and Confucius the third. Mencius says of the sage Tan, "He may be regarded as almost the most potent force in making permanent in China the administrative system of his time."

The civilization of the Chan dynasty was colorful and rich. It is marked by the lavish use not only of bronze but also of gold, ivory, jade, feather-work, and ornamental textiles. From this age dates the great bronze ceremonial vessels used in connection with the ancestor worship of the nobility, originated or greatly stimulated by the sage Tan. For grandeur of form, dignity

in ornamentation and mastery of technique, these have never been surpassed and they command the admiration of students and art lovers the world over.

During the Chan dynasty the inventive genius of the people was perhaps as marked as in America, commemorated by Chicago's Century of Progress exposition. Iron was introduced, writing, astronomy, the calendar, the magnetic needle, mathematics, the metric system of weights and measures, musical science, agricultural implements, cooking utensils, herbal medicine, silk production, drawing, painting, engraving, pottery, bookkeeping and accounting, engineering and physics, religious ceremonies, the writings of essays; fiction and poetry - all were inaugurated or greatly developed and stimulated during this period. In the words of H. G. Wells in his "Outline of History",

"China produced a profusion of beautiful art, some delightful poetry, astonishing cookery, and thousands of millions of glowingly pleasant lives, generation after generation without any such general boredom, servitude, indignity and misery as underlay the rule of the rich in the Roman Empire." 1

1. Wells, H.G., Outline of History.

In the early part of the Chan era were attempts at state socialism, control of prices and markets, city planning, irrigation, and other problems that are the object of major attention by the President and Congress of the United States today.

Says Dr. Gowen:

"From the Duke of Chan (Tan) down to Sun Yat-sen the ideals of Chinese life and its motives have remained constant. Its supreme virtues have been industry, orderliness, reasonableness, group fidelity, respect for the dignity of one's fellow men, and the avoidance of strife. Its vices, often the defects of its qualities, have been acquiescence in bad conditions, lack of general social conscience, callousness to distress outside the group, opportunism, and guile (the substitute for violence in dealing with ones' fellow.)" 2

2. Gowen, Dr., Outline History of China, pp. 62-63.

The second period of the Chan dynasty from approximately 770 B.C. to 255 B.C. is often known as the era of the great sages. During this time the Chinese, who had already spread southwest into the plains of Shensi and east into the north China plain, increased rapidly in numbers during this period and families of pioneers pushed the borders ever further outward. Thus semi-independent rulers grew up on the frontier and the frequent wars between the border lords greatly undermined the power and prestige of the Emperor.

During this troubled era there arose the first of the great religious teachers of China, Lao Tze. The essential key to his teaching is quietism and a return to nature as the solution for all ills. He was born about 604 B.C. and little is known of his life - indeed, some have regarded his entire story as mythical or even

a distorted version of the Budha legend.

Quite antithetical to the teaching of Lao Tze (which came to be known as Tooisue) was that of Confucius, who was born in 551 B.C. and who was beyond question one of the most remarkable characters of history. In the words of Vonder Gabelentz:

"If we are to measure the greatness of an historic personage, I can only see one standard applicable for the purpose: the effectiveness of that person's influence according to its dimensions, duration, and intensity. If this standard is applied Confucius was one of the greatest of men. For, even at the present day, after the lapse of more than two thousand years, the moral, social, and political life of about one-third of mankind continues to be under the influence of his mind." 3

3. Gowenrand Hall, An Outline History of China, p. 73.

Unlike Lao Tze, Confucius refused to withdraw from the world but rather endeavored to establish what he termed "right principles" throughout the empire. In his historical works and complications he glorified the virtues of the model emperors of old and held that since the people were naturally docile and well-behaved, the greed of the upper classes was the chief cause of suffering and distress and that their conduct would straightway improve if they had a model ruler. Thorndike says:

"Society would become orderly, wholesome and prosperous, once things were called by their right names and people observed in deeds the full meaning of what they accepted as words, once filial piety was duly observed and the respect for one's superiors that goes with it, once the past and its lessons were held reverently in mind, once right principles were distinctly enunciated and understood, and the people were trained for a little in manners and ceremonial."⁴

4. Thorndike, Short History of Civilization, pp. 253-254.

Confucius compiled and edited the five classics, which were ancient specimens of Chinese literature, the date of which cannot be determined with any certainty, and his sayings and ethical teachings have been preserved in other works by Mencius and others of his disciples. To quote Thorndike again,

"These have become the component stones in China's true great wall against barbarism, --- literature, history, philosophy, and moral character."⁵

5. Ibid.

After Confucius his disciple Mencius (372 to 289) continued the propagation of his doctrines and departed somewhat from strict Confucianism in maintaining that the people, not the rulers, were the most important element in the state. Mencius says,

"There was no such a thing as a righteous war, and he demanded universal education and free trade. He attacked trusts and profiteers; and advocated taxation of non-producers or a single tax on land."

6. Ibid., p. 257.

The last centuries of the Chan dynasty were marked not only by the teachings of Taoist and Confucion philosophers but by the presence and prominence of other schools of philosophy. In the fourth century Yang Tzu founded a school of extreme ethical egoism not unlike that of Epicurus in the west. On the other hand, Mo Tzu taught a doctrine of mutual love.

But politically the Chan dynasty was becoming corrupt and the Empire was disintegrating. The last monarch of the dynasty was Nan Ulang (314 to 256) who reigned over sixty years but who died just in time to avoid witnessing the inevitable disaster with which his dynasty was ended in a victory of the league of border states.

For a time after the death of Nan Ulang there was a period of anarchy, followed by the rise of the first great martial figure in Chinese history, Shih-Huand-ti, the founder of the short Chinese dynasty, shortly replaced by the important Han dynasty, the first great national imperialism. Infuriated by the opposition of the scholarly

aristocracy, Shih-Huang-Ti endeavored to exterminate them and their teachings by destroying their books and indeed during this period much of the learning of the past was wiped out.

The opposition of the scholarly class, however, brought about the downfall of his short dynasty and in 206 B.C. Kao Tsu ascended the imperial throne as the first of the Tau rulers. Under them the emperors contrived to maintain a great unified empire and at the same time to placate the scholars. Confucius was defied, the mandorinate re-established, and the scholar class converted into the chief prop of the throne. The supplanting of bamboo tablets and styles by paper and ink brush gave great impetus to literature and learning. The same general southward movement of barbarians which was to inundate Rome struck China but the resistance of the Orient was more prolonged than that of the Occident. The Han dynasty continued until about 200 A.D.

Drs. Gowen and Hall summarize the trend of history under the Han dynasty in a comprehensive quotation from the writings of Szu-ma-Ch'ien, the historian known as the "Herodotus of China", as follows:

"When the house of Han arose the evils of their predecessors had not passed away. Husbands still went off to the wars. The old and the young were employed in transporting food. Production

was almost at a standstill and money became scarce. So much so that even the sun of heaven had not carriage horses of the same color; the highest civil and military authorities rode in bullock carts and the people knew not where to lay their heads.

At this period the Huns were harassing our northern frontier, and soldiers were massed there in large bodies; in consequence of which the food became so scarce that the authorities offered certain rank and titles of honor to those who could supply a given quantity of grain. Later on draught ensued in the west, and in order to meet necessities of the moment, official rank was again made a marketable commodity, while those who broke the laws were allowed to commute their penalties by money payments. And now horses began to reappear in official stables and in palace and hall. Signs of an ampler luxury were visible once more.

Thus it was in the early days of the dynasty, until some seventy-years after the accession of the house of Han. The empire was then at peace. For a long time there had been neither flood nor drought, and a season of plenty had ensued. The public granaries were well stocked; the government treasuries were full. In the capital strings of cash were piled in myriads, until the very strings rotted, and their tale could no longer be told. The grain in the imperial storehouses grew year by year. It burst from the crammed granaries and lay about until it became unfit for human food. The streets were thronged with horses belonging to the people, and on the highways whole droves were to be seen, so that it became necessary to prohibit the public use of mares. Village elders ate meat and drank wine. Petty government clerkships and the like lapsed from father to son; the higher offices of the state were treated as family heirlooms. For there had gone abroad a spirit of self respect and a reverence for the law, while a sense

of charity and of duty toward one's neighbor kept man aloof from disgrace and shame.

At length, under lax laws, the wealthy began to use their riches for evil purposes of pride and self-aggrandizement and oppression of the weak. Members of the imperial family received grants of land, while from the highest to the lowest, every one vied with his neighbor in lavishing money on houses, and appointments, and apparel, although beyond the limit of his means. Such is the everlasting law of the sequence of prosperity and decay."

7. Gowen and Hall, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

Under the Hans there was a great revival of learning coincidental with the expansion of the Empire. History, lexicography, poetry, and other branches of scholarship flourished.

The first woman scholar, P'ian Chao, lived during this period and attained a high court position.

about 200 A.D. Buddhism was introduced into China. There are legends that this religion dates back as far as 600 B.C. With the coming of Li Tang, and especially with the introduction of a golden image of the Buddha by a Chinese general who brought it back from西域 about 165 A.D.

However the rate of the introduction of Buddhism was at first very slow. In the course of years, however, it became quite Chinese in its nature. The influence of the Chinese mind had been both profound and far-reaching. The names of Buddha and his disciples were translated as follows:

CHAPTER III

The Introduction of Buddhism into China.

The introduction of Buddhism into China was a process that took place over a long period of time. It was not until the late Han or early Wei period that Buddhism became firmly established in China. The influence of the Chinese mind had been both profound and far-reaching. The names of Buddha and his disciples were translated as follows:

In architecture it has had a great deal to do with the introduction of the Pavilion, or triumphal arch, and with the building of pagodas. In philology it led to considerable simplification in the speaking and writing of the language. The number of tones was increased and some approach was made towards the creation of an alphabet, by using certain sounds, after the analogy of the Sanskrit syllabary, to suggest the spelling out of the characters. In literature generally the stimulus given by Buddhism was one of the factors in the bringing about of the Han renaissance. Manners, too, were unconsciously softened and refined by the spread of the Indian faith. As has been mentioned already, much that

About 67 A.D. Buddhism was introduced into China. There are indeed traditions that this religion dates back as far as 217 B.C. With the coming of Li Tang, and seventeen companions or with the introduction of a golden image of the Buddha by a Chinese general who brought it back from Turkestan about 123 B.C.

Whatever the date of the introduction of Buddhism its progress was for a time very slow. In the course of years, however, it became quite Chinese in its nature. Its influences on the Chinese empire has been both profound and far reaching. Drs. Gowen and Hall summarize as follows:

"In art it has done much to divert the attention of the artist from the etiquette of courts to scenes in the lives of saints and pictures of the Buddhist paradise. In architecture it has had a great deal to do with the introduction of the P'ailon, or triumphed arch, and with the building of pagodas. In philology it led to considerable simplification in the speaking and writing of the language. The number of tones was increased and some approach was made towards the creation of an alphabet, by using certain sounds, after the analogy of the sauscrit syllabary, to suggest the spelling out of the characters. In literature generally the stimulus given by Buddhism was one of the factors in the bringing about of the Han renaissance. Manners, too, were undoubtedly softened and refined by the spread of the Indian faith. As has been already mentioned, much that

had been best in Taoist mysticism now naturally became part of the heritage taken over by Chinese Buddhism." 1

1. Gowen and Hall, An Outline History of China, pp. 104-105.

The Han emperors held out against the barbarians as long as they were able but the last years of their reign were marked by almost unintermitted violence. The emperors became steadily weaker and at the end of the second century after Christ the capital was entered, the emperor dethroned, and the dynasty brought to an end.

The era of the Han dynasty had marked many advances in Chinese culture and civilization. The invention of the hair brush revolutionized painting and the art of writing the Chinese characters. Illustrated manuscripts began to be produced in China and paper was in use by the beginning of our Christian era. Thorndike says,

"The Han dynasty was further marked by such progressive measures as abolition of the custom (which continued among the Tartars and Mongols) of burial of slaves with the dead master, and shortening of the period of mourning for parents from twenty-seven months to the same number of days. In modern times the longer period again became the rule."2

2. Thorndike, Short History of Civilization, pp. 261-262.

the pottery of the Han dynasty was exceptionally rich and beautiful and marked by skillful glazing. Its bronze work was also beautiful and showed the influence of Hellenistic art.

With the fall of the Han dynasty, China broke up into three kingdoms and there followed a long period of internal warfare. For 400 years China was in chaos with military adventurers preying upon the land, developing an involved code of chivalry, and supplying the heroes for fiction and drama of later ages. Not until the beginning of the T'ang dynasty in 618 was China reunited and its supremacy re-established throughout Asia. Little progress was made during this chaotic period in the development of civilization but at the same time, owing to the Chinese tenacity and reverence for tradition, the national culture did not suffer to the extent that it did in the West during the Dark Ages.

Under the T'ang China's second great national dynasty, Chinese culture reached its climax, and the epoch matches that of the Han rulers as one of the greatest in Chinese history. Carl W. Bishop in the Encyclopedia Britannica says,

"Under its earlier rulers, China had nothing to fear from comparison with any realm on earth, whether that of Byzantium, of Sassanid Persia, or the newly founded power of Islam. Intercourse with the Occident during much

of this time was constant and close, and ideas of every sort travelled both east and west.

Buddhist sculpture now attained its highest pitch; naturalism replaced conventionality, and heads, instead of reflecting an impersonal and purely spiritual ideal, became individual portraits. Painting also underwent a noteworthy development. To this period belongs Uln Tao-Tzu, greatest of all Chinese painters, whose style has exerted enormous influence upon all later times, not only in China, but also in Japan. Two schools appeared, a northern and southern, and landscape was now seriously developed. Almost all the authentic existing T'ang dynasty paintings are religious in character; but fortunately a very few secular examples survive, while others are known through copies by artists of later periods.

In pottery also the T'ang period reached a higher stage than hitherto. Glazes were increased in range of colour and texture. The forms themselves are predominantly native, although in some cases they reflect western influences, especially that of Sassaind Persia. T'ang grave figures are well known for their artistic merits as well as their great archaeological interest. Bronze, long since displaced by iron for the manufacture of weapons and tools, was in greater favour than ever in the arts, notably for the casting of Buddhist statues and statuettes, often richly gilt. Ivory from southern China and Indo-China and jade from Turkestan were carved into a variety of ornamental shapes. Although probably already known in principle, engraving on wood now makes its first definite appearance. The T'ang period is also noteworthy for the great extension of Chinese culture which then took place into southern China, till then only partially assimilated and also into Korea and Japan." 3

Under the later T'ang emperors poetry and music reached their highest development while luxury and license marked the official life. The mandorinate was developed to its highest point and the first newspaper was published at the Chinese court. The development of block printing gave a great impetus to learning. The three religions, Nestorian Christianity, Mohammadanism, and Buddhism were widely preached but the last named alone became a permanent nation-wide influence.

As the T'ang dynasty grew weak, various Tartar tribes carved out little kingdoms in North China. Succeeding the T'angs were the five little dynasties which were weak and comparatively powerless, and in 960 the first emperor of the Sung dynasty ascended the throne. The Sungs reconsolidated most of the territory of China and maintained the high cultural tradition of the T'angs but fought a gradually losing battle with the Tartars. After 200 years of rule the Sungs were pushed south of the Yellow river where, after another hundred years, they fell before the great Kubla Khan, ruler of the war-like mongol tribes. There followed a period of Mongol rule under the Yuan dynasty during which the mandorinate fell very low and the people were oppressed by the foreign troops. The Mongol dynasty like all regimes established in Ching by force, was short lived and came to an end with their overthrow by the Manchus and the inauguration of the Ming dynasty in 1368.

The Sung dynasty took an important place in history of Chinese culture. It was a period of peaceful meditation and inward assimilation. Systematic study of the bronzes in the imperial collection was begun and the results published in the form of a large illustrated catalogue which was a magnificent specimen of wood engraving. The great encyclopedia of Ma Tuan-lin embraced the whole field of contemporary knowledge. State academies of painting were opened and great forward strides were made in the art of ceramics. The porcelain of this period is perhaps the most beautiful that has ever been produced. Painting reached heights never attained before, particularly in the field of landscapes where the object was not so much to depict a scene exactly but to reveal its inward spirit and arouse a corresponding emotion.

In the realm of invention further progress was made, notably in the art of printing.

Religion and philosophy under the Sung dynasty attained great importance. The influence of Buddhism declined, being replaced to a large extent, but Confucianism and to a lesser extent, by Taoism. Curiously enough, the development of these two religions which had originally been so diametrically opposed brought them closer together and in the Sung period the Book of Changes linked these two religions very closely together. The resulting neo-Confucianism brought into uniform focus the whole course

of Chinese civilization, uniting all the spiritual and cultural influences of the nation. This school was in words of Richard Wilhelm "the ripe fruit of thousands of years of development".

Under the inspiration of an adventurer named Chu, the Chinese rose in rebellion against the Mongol rule of the Yuan dynasty and the last great native dynasty of the Mings was founded in 1368. The Mings ruled over nearly all of the territory of the earlier rulers and restored China's prestige in Asia. The Ming dynasty lasted until 1644 when the throne fell into the hands of the Manchus, a small Mongol tribe with ambitious rulers who were to retain the government of China until the revolution of 1911. The culture of the Ming period is summarized by Bishop as follows:

"The Ming period (1368-1644) is especially noteworthy for its great achievements in literature, even today hardly appreciated at their real worth. Nearly all the city and frontier walls, paved roads, bridges, palaces, temples and pagodas still existing in China were constructed by the great Ming builders. Next to its architecture, probably the most important work of the Ming period was that accomplished in pottery. Here too inspiration was sought from the earlier epochs, especially that of the T'ang. But original work was done, and Ming celadon, polychromes and blue and white ware are well known. It was during the latter half of the dynasty that porcelaine was first regularly exported to

Confucianism was accompanied by the philosophical teachings

Europe, although isolated examples had reached Mediterranean lands far earlier through Arab traders. The sculpturing of this time is dull and uninspired, as shown by its best known examples, the colossal figures of men and animals lining the famous avenue to the Ming tombs just north of Peking. Painting not infrequently displays much excellence, but necessarily lacks the interest always aroused by original creative art. Emphasis was placed chiefly upon landscapes and nature studies, and to the Ming artists who industriously copied earlier works we owe by far the greater part of our knowledge of the secular paintings of the T'ang and Sung times.

In the realm of textiles, embroideries, brocades and damasks of high character were produced, and for the first time, perhaps as a consequence of the contacts opened up with the near East under the Mongols, Chinese rugs and carpets assume a place of importance. In the minor arts also, development attained a high level. Ming cloisonne is characterized by a boldness of design and colour never excelled. Much work of high technical order was done in the carving of jades and other semi-precious stones and ivory, in dignity and beauty often far superior to later examples. In general, the art of this time, perhaps largely owing to the revival of Confucianism with its worship of antiquity, falls far below that of the earlier and truly great periods. These were spontaneous and creative and had a genuine message; while that of the Mings was consciously initiative and sought its mission in trying to bring back to life a long dead past.⁴

4. Bishop, Carl W., op. cit.

In the realm of philosophy the revival of Confucianism was accompanied by the philosophical teachings

of Wang Yang-Ming. His was the philosophy of a genius but it degenerated after his death, and his disciples were unable to preserve it as a permanent system. Its chief principals were assimilated by the older religions and philosophies and the rest of it sank into obscurity.

Toward the end of the Ming dynasty the Jesuit fathers arrived in China. At the outset they were well received by the imperial court and succeeded in converting to Christianity the last Ming Emperor and his mother. With the Jesuits western science was introduced into China while Chinese philosophy was taken up and widely studied in Europe.

In the realm of literature, the novel and the romantic writings were greatly developed and came to be read and generally admired by every educated Chinese. A vogue for historical novels arose and some splendid works of this nature were produced.

With the new Ming dynasty European influences became the chief problem of China. The mandarin, which had been revived under the Ming, again broke down and China began to be the prey of western nations who were constantly seeking privileges for themselves at the expense of the Chinese, and whose greed and rivalry among themselves gave rise to a strong anti-foreign feeling among the Chinese. The Opium War of 1840-1842 and the Boxer Uprising in 1900 caused a temporary setback to the

CHAPTER IV
China and Her Troubles with
European Influence.

The culture of the Chinese under the Ming saw no great advance in any realm. The genius of the Chinese displayed itself to better advantage in warfare than in the advance of civilization. Architecture continued in the Ming tradition but with little or no advance. Sculpture showed little originality and much less taste. Painting was mostly confined to the copying of earlier works.

In the field of ceramics, however, there was a marked development in the fineness of texture and smoothness of form and decoration. The same tendency was noted in the weaving of textiles and in the execution of articles of personal and household ornament. With these things, however, went a steady deterioration in taste, so that while the art of the Ming dynasty is more delicate

With the new Ch'ing Manchu dynasty European influence became the over whelming problem of China. The mandorinate, which had been revived under the Mings, again broke down and China began to be the prey of western nations who were constantly seeking priveleges for themselves at the expense of the Chinese, and whose greed and rivalry among themselves, gave rise to a strong anti-foreign feeling among the Chinese. The fanatical Boxer Uprising in 1900 caused a temporary set-back to the European nations and the revolution of 1911 brought an end to the Manchu dynasty and, indeed, to the entire ancient imperial system.

The culture of the Chinese under the Ch'ings saw no great advance in any realm. The genius of the Manchus displayed itself to better advantage in warfare than in the advance of civilization. Architecture continued in the Ming tradition but with little or no advance. Sculpture showed little originality and much less taste. Painting was mostly confined to the copying of earlier works.

In the field of ceramics, however, there was a marked development in the fineness of texture and elaboration of form and decoration. The same tendency was noted in the weaving of textiles and rugs and the execution of articles of personal and household adornment. With these things, however, went a steady deterioration in taste, so that while the art of the Ch'ing dynasty is more intricate

and elaborate than that of the Ming period, it is less attractive from the standpoint of beauty and art.

The second of the Manchu emperors, Hang Hsi, was one of the most munificent patrons Chinese literature has ever possessed. He is said to have been personally familiar with the Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan and Latin languages. He was himself an author and under his direction the great dictionary of Hang Hsi, which is still in every day use, was compiled. In addition two great encyclopedias were published embracing the whole realm of Chinese knowledge. Fiction too thrived under this emperor, who made many attempts at reform, including an endeavor to suppress the practice of foot-binding among the women.

Another imperial patron of literature during this period was the emperor Ch'ien Lung (1736-1796). He was both a student and an author and under his direction the literature of the past was gathered by imperial edicts into public libraries under government direction. The emperor wrote poetry and had many translations made from one language to the other.

With the death of Ch'ien Lung the Manchu dynasty began to decline and the western powers were not long in taking advantage of the weakness of China. From that time to the present there is little to be added to the history of civilization in China. A period of intermittent warfare with the west culminated in the revolution of 1911 and

the attempt of Yuan-Shih-H'ai to find a new dynasty. This resulted in failure, and China nominally a republic, was left a prey to military adventurers armed with the weapons of western warfare which they little understood. During the World War Japan, supposedly China's ally, took advantage of the pre-occupation of the western world to undermine China's independence. The nation was saved temporarily by a rising of the students whose organizations virtually came to control the local government and to have a considerable influence on the national government. During recent years the spirit of nationalism has grown rapidly and with it a demand, encouraged by Russian influence, for the cancellation of the special priveleges enjoyed by the western powers in China.

In 1932 Japan judged the opportune time for further expansion in China and that country, torn by internal strife and without a single unified central government, was able to offer little opposition to her advance in Manchuria and Jehol. The combined protest of the western nations caused Japan to mask her operations to some extent but the Japanese penetration of China appears to continue with little effective check from the other nations of the world.

Will the next "Century of Progress" see a merging of Chinese civilization with that of the west, or will a new China, imbued with the spirit of nationalism, rise to throw off Japanese and occidental bonds, as it has in the past thrown off those of the Mongols and the Manchus, and

reassert its ancient culture and heritage? Time alone holds the answer.

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Date April 13. - '34