

CHINA KNOWLEDGE SERIES

Cultural Flow Between China and Outside World Throughout History

Shen Fuwei



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS · BEIJING

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

中外文化因缘:英文/沈福伟著. —北京:

外文出版社, 1995

(中国知识丛书)

ISBN 7-119-00431-X

I. 中… II. 沈… III. 文化交流, 中、外—文化史—英文
IV. K203

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (95) 第 10206 号

责任编辑 吴灿飞

中外文化因缘

沈福伟 著

*

©外文出版社

外文出版社出版

(中国北京百万庄大街 24 号)

邮政编码 100037

北京外文印刷厂印刷

中国国际图书贸易总公司发行

(中国北京车公庄西路 35 号)

北京邮政信箱第 399 号 邮政编码 100044

1996 年(大 32 开)第 1 版

1997 年第 1 版第 2 次印刷

(英)

ISBN 7-119-00431-X/K·121(外)

04500

11-E-2987P

Contents

PART ONE

Cultural Intercourse Between China and The Western Regions	1
--	---

Chapter One

The Earliest Contact Between China and The Western Regions Before the Qin Dynasty	3
I The Western Regions as Described in Ancient Chinese History	3
1. The Origins of Chinese Culture	3
2. The Ancient Chinese Legend About Xiwangmu (Western Queen Mother) and Its Relations with the Western Regions	5
II The Origin of Chinese Civilization	8
1. Various Hypotheses on the Origin of Chinese Civilization	8
2. The Yangshao Culture of Painted Pottery and Its Introduction to the West	10
III Convergence of the Hua Xia Culture and the Eurasian Steppe Culture	13
1. The Northward Advance of the Bronze Culture of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties	13
2. The Westward Migration of Jichuo and Westward Expedition of the Zhou Dynasty's King Mu	18
IV Nomadic Travellers and the Silk Trade	21
1. Silk—the Earliest Link Between China and Greece	21
2. Silk Fabrics Make China Known Throughout the World	23
3. The Route of Glass and Gem Trade	25
4. The Animal Style in the Northern Chinese Art	

Designs	28
---------	----

Chapter Two

Opening of the Sino-Western Communications During the Han Dynasty	31
I An Open Society and Smooth Traffic	31
II Parthia and the Monopoly of Silk Trade	35
III China and the Oriental Trade of the Roman Empire	38
1. The Biggest Customer of Chinese Silk	38
2. The Proposed Diplomatic Relations Between China and Rome	41
3. The Voyage of Chinese Sailing Ships to Port Adulis	43
4. The Acclaimed "Land of Treasures"	45
IV Earliest Cultural Exchanges Between China and India	47
1. The Origin of Buddhism and Its Introduction to the East	47
2. The Bridge Between China and Egypt	50

Chapter Three

The Introduction of Culture and Art from the Western Regions During the Han and Tang Dynasties	53
I The Steppe Empire and East-West Cultural Exchange	53
II The Influx of Art from the Western Regions	56
1. The Buddhist Art in Inland China	56
2. Popularity of the Xiyu Theme in Art Style	59
3. Paintings and Sculptures of the Graeco-Roman Genre	64
4. The Gandhara Buddhist Art of North China	66
5. Fine Arts of Sassanian-Persian Style	71
III Music of the Western Regions	74
1. The Introduction of Persian Musical Instruments and Songs During the Han Dynasty	74
(A) <i>Konghou</i>	75
(B) <i>Pipa</i>	78
(C) <i>Bili</i>	80
(D) Drum and Cymbal Music and Songs	81

2. The Collation and Promotion of Xiyu Music During the Northern Zhou, Sui and Tang Dynasties	82
IV The Xiyu Dances and Acrobatics	86
1. The Xiyu Music and Dance Boom During the Sui and Tang Dynasties	86
2. The Hu Drama of the Tang Dynasty	89
3. Introduction of Xiyu's Acrobatics and Magic Arts	91
V The Introduction of Foreign Folk Arts and Games	94
1. Puppet Shows and India	94
2. Indian Chess	96
3. The Arabian <i>Shuangliu</i> Game	98
4. The Polo Game	99
VI The Translation of Buddhist Scripture and Its Influence on Chinese Literature	100
1. The Inception of Buddhist Scripture in China	100
2. The Endeavours of Masters Fa Xian and Xuan Zhuang	103
3. A 700-Year-Long History of Translation Work	108
4. The Indian Touch in Chinese Literary Styles	111
VII The Introduction of Science and Technology from Egypt, Persia and Arabia	114
1. Persian Armour Widely Adopted Across China	114
2. Glass-Making Based on Egyptian Prescription	116
3. The Introduction of Medicine from Arabia and Persia	120
VIII Science and Technology Introduced from India	122
1. The Nine-Volume Calendar and Gautama	122
2. Indian Medicine and Longevity Drugs	124
3. The New Creative Buddhist Architecture	125
4. The Improvement of Sugar-Refining Skills	127

Chapter Four

Cultural Exchange During the Course of Founding a Unified Empire	130
I The Famous Conqueror Gürkhan	130
II The Westward Advance of Chinese Culture During the Mongolian Rule	134

1. The Three Mongolian Expeditions to the West and the Tide of National Amalgamation	134
2. The Khanate Golden Horde and the Northern Passage of Chinese Culture to the West	137
3. Il-Khanate and the Southern Passage of Chinese Culture to the West	140
III The Mongolians and the Roman Catholic Church	143
1. The Vatican Envoy's Trip to the Orient	143
2. An Mongolian Envoys' Visit to Europe	146
IV The Arabian Culture During the Yuan Dynasty	149
<i>Chapter Five</i>	
Cultural Communication Across the Maritime "Silk Road" During the Period from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century	154
I Developments of Ocean Shipping in the Tang, Song and Yuan Dynasties	154
1. Maritime "Silk Road" to the Indian Ocean	154
2. Delegations Sent Overseas by China During the Song and Yuan Dynasties	157
II The Maritime "Silk Road" and the Communication in Materials and Culture	159
1. Overseas Markets Opening to Chinese Silk	159
2. The Chinese Porcelain Boom Across Three Continents	162
3. The Influx of Spice, Rhinoceros Horns and Ivory into China	167
III The Three Famous Travellers of the Yuan Dynasty	168
1. Marco Polo and His Trip to China	169
2. Ibn Battutah's Tour of the Orient	176
3. Wang Dayuan's Two Voyages Across the Indian Ocean	180
IV Zheng He's Voyages to the West and China's New Ties with the Asian and African Countries	187
1. The Itinerary of Zheng He's Seven Voyages	187
2. The Treasure Boat Fleet and Overseas Cultural Exchange	191

3. The Attraction of Blue-Floral-Patterned Porcelain	195
<i>Chapter Six</i>	
Chinese Science and Culture Introduced Worldwide	199
I The Inventor of Iron Foundry and Tunnelling Techniques	199
II China's Sericulture Spread Overseas and Silk-Weaving Skills	203
III Taoist Alchemy Originated in China	207
IV The Rapid Development of Porcelain Industry	210
V Global Tour of the Paper-Making and Printing Techniques	214
1. Paper-Making Skills Introduced Across the Ocean	214
2. Printing Techniques and the Renaissance of Europe	217
VI Mariner's Compass and the Revolution of Maritime Navigation	219
VII Historic Changes Caused by the Invention of Gunpowder and Firearms	223
 <i>PART TWO</i>	
The Development of Modern Science and the Reform of Chinese Traditional Culture	227
<i>Chapter Seven</i>	
China's Access to Western Culture During the Ming and Qing Dynasties	229
I Matteo Ricci and His Collaborators Xu Guangqi and Li Zhizao	229
II Xu Guangqi's Reform of the Chinese Calendar System	237
III Western Missionaries and Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty	242
1. Emperor Kangxi and Western Science	242
2. The Catholic Crisis	256
IV A Chinese Visitor to the Original Site of the Renaissance	261

Chapter Eight

Missionaries and the Turning Point of European Culture	266
I The Enlightenment Movement of Europe and the Political Ideology in China	266
1. The Mode of an Open-Minded Monarch in the Orient	266
2. The Chinese and Western Views of "Contemporary China"	269
3. Francois Voltaire and His Play <i>L'Orphelin de la Chine</i>	272
4. The Chinese Monarchism and the European Physiocrats	275
II New Creations of the Western Fine Arts	277
1. The Different Genres of Chinese and Western Fine Arts	277
2. Samples of the Rococo Architecture	282
3. The "Anglo-Chinese Gardens"	288
III Sinology and the Chinese Cultural Boom in Europe	292

Chapter Nine

China's First Attempt to Understand the Western World	298
I The New Maps and New Knowledge	298
1. Wei Yuan and Xu Jishe, and Their Works on Knowledge of the World	298
2. Li Shanlan and Xu Shou, and Their Cooperation with the Missionaries	301
3. The Kiangnan Machine Building Works and Its Publications	305
II Schools Teaching Western Sciences	308
1. From Tongwen Institute to Military Academies	308
2. The Missionaries and Mission Schools	312
III The Transplanting of Modern Science and Ideology	314
1. The Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection as Reflected in <i>Outlines of Astronomy</i> and <i>Principle of Geology</i>	314
2. The Widespread Introduction of Darwinian and	

Spencerian Theories	319
3. The Democratic Ideologies of Zheng Guanying and Liang Qichao	321
IV Western Democratic Politics and Its Influence on Chinese Revolutionaries in the Late Qing Dynasty	324
1. Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Ideal and the Western Sciences	324
2. Anarchism and Populism	328
<i>Chapter Ten</i>	
An Open China and the New Culture Movement	330
I China with Wide Open Doors	330
1. The Footpath of the Missionaries	330
2. The Follow-Up Explorers	332
3. The Surprising Discovery of the Dunhuang Treasures	333
4. Havoc in the Art Caves of Xinjiang Grotto	338
II The May Fourth Literary Revolution and the Tide of Social Revolution	341
1. The New Literature Movement and the Western Literature	341
2. The Choice of the Socialist Ideology	345
3. China's New Art Movement	348
4. Introduction and Translation of Western Literature	352
(A) Literature of the Weak and Small Nations	353
(B) Works of the Renowned European Writers	354
(C) The Popular Russian Writers	356
(D) American Writers Known for Their Outspoken Praise for Democracy and Progress	358
III The Widely-Circulated Theories of the Western Society	359
1. John Dewey and His Positive Philosophy	359
2. The Philosophies of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel	361
3. Sociology and the Culturists	363
4. Eugenics	364
5. Anthropogeography	365

6. The Culturist Trend of Comparative History	366
IV China's Modern Sciences and Its Returned Students	368
1. The Enthusiastic Trend of Going Abroad to Study	368
2. The Inception of China's Modern Sciences	371
3. The Riddle of the Peking Man	374
V Chinese Culture and the Western World	377
1. The Rediscovery of Chinese Culture	377
2. China's Classics and Traditional Literature	380
3. The Reevaluation of the History of Chinese Sciences	383
VI The Rejuvenation of Chinese Arts	386
1. Dr. Mei Lanfang and the Reform of Beijing Opera	386
2. Colour Ink Paintings and the International Popularity of Chinese Art	389
<i>Epilogue</i>	
The Outlook of Chinese Culture	394
Index	398

PART ONE
**CULTURAL INTERCOURSE
BETWEEN
CHINA AND THE WESTERN
REGIONS**

Chapter One

The Earliest Contact Between China and the Western Regions Before the Qin Dynasty

I The Western Regions as Described in Ancient Chinese History

The two great rivers of Huanghe (Yellow River) and Changjiang (Yangtze River) flowed across the valleys and plains of East Asia towards the sea, and between them opened an extensive, fertile ground for the inception of Chinese Civilization. It was on this land that emerged the early human society and widespread culture of the Stone Age, which was followed by even more splendid cultures of the Bronze Age and Iron Age. Thereby, China has distinguished itself as the origin of one of the four ancient civilizations in the world, along with the Nile River, Mesopotamia, Indus Valley and the Maya Indians of Central America.

1. The Origins of Chinese Culture

The Xia Dynasty, which was founded during the 21st century B.C., in an area across the middle reaches of the Yellow River between its two tributaries of Yishui and Luoshui, was known as the first slavery state in Chinese history. The dynasty of Xia was succeeded by that of Shang, and later by the Zhou Dynasty. Zhou, which was originally a principedom under Shang in the area of the current northern Shaanxi Province, distinguished itself from the neighbouring ethnics by calling its

nation both "Xia" and "Zhong Guo" (Middle Kingdom). The people of Zhou, claiming themselves to be the descendants of the Xia Dynasty, also called their own territory "Qu Xia" or "You Xia" or "Shi Xia" (meaning Xia territory). The name of "Zhong Guo" was used to indicate their identity as a farming community, as opposed to the nomadic tribes in the surrounding areas.

During the reign of the Xia Dynasty, whose domain was sometimes also called "Hua," its many principdoms—located in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River—referred to their territories as parts of "Hua Xia."

During the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) and the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.), political and economic exchanges increased among the prince states in both the Yellow River and Yangtze River valleys, the territory of "Zhong Guo" also expanded as a result. It was then that people believed that this Middle Kingdom was 3,000 *li* (1,500 kilometres) in both directions, a square-shaped area surrounded by seas. This area, as described in the verses of the ancient literature *Li Ji (The Book of Rites)*, was "extending to running sand in the west, reaching Hengshan Mountain in the south, bordering East Sea in the east and looking upon Mount Hengshan in the north." Such an area, which was already nine times bigger than the Middle Kingdom as earlier claimed in legends, became the territory of "Zhong Xia" or "Zhong Hua" in ancient history. This marked a major expansion of the original concept of Middle Kingdom, which covered just an area of approximately 500,000 square kilometres, embracing parts of the present Henan, Shanxi, Hebei, Shaanxi and Shandong provinces in North China. By the 5th century B.C., the heartland of Chinese Civilization had expanded to more than one million square kilometres in area, whose geographic size was far larger than the other ancient civilizations existing in the contemporary era.

However, despite the spectacular expansion of Chinese Civilization in area, it remained far apart, geographically, from the civilizations of Mesopotamia in the west and the Indus Valley in the southwest, by a distance of some 6,500 and 4,000 kilometres,

respectively. The immense mountains and deserts that separated the East and the West, across which only some nomadic tribes drifted, had, for centuries, blocked the communication between these ancient civilizations.

2. The Ancient Chinese Legend About Xiwangmu (Western Queen Mother) and Its Relation with the Western Regions

The Warring States Period saw a rapid growth in exchange between China and other nations inhabiting the neighbouring steppe, which further broadened the world outlook of the Chinese people. As a result, Zou Yan, a scholar of the Qi State, introduced the idea, during the 4th century B.C., that the world was composed of "Great Nine Continents." The world, in Zou's idea, was much larger than the Middle Kingdom surrounded by "Four Seas." According to Zou, China, which was then known as "Chi Xian Shen Zhou" (the Red Sacred Land) to many Chinese, was a continent in itself, surrounded by the nine other continents. Each of these continents, including the central continent of China, was assumed to comprise also "nine smaller regions distinguished by their geographic features," according to Zou. The ancient book, *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals*, compiled during the 3rd century B.C., held that the Great Nine Continents occupied an area of 28,000 *li* (14,000 kilometres) from east to west and 26,000 *li* (13,000 kilometres) from north to south, while the Middle Kingdom measured 3,000 *li* (1,500 kilometres) in both directions.

In geographic concept, the border of this Nine Continent world extended westward to the Kunlun Mountains or the Congling range (the Pamirs) in western Xinjiang. According to the ancient literature *Shanhaijing (Classic of Mountains and Rivers)* written during the Warring States Period, this region was illustrated, in a legendary style, as an area situated somewhere between the "Black Water" (Syr-Darya) and the "Red Water" (Yarkant River) under the Kunlun Mountains. This area, which was surrounded by "deep valleys and blazing hills," was the location of the cave-dwellings of Xiwangmu (Western Queen Mother), who was described as "adorned with hairdress, tiger's

fangs and leopard's tail." And the area "had everything imaginable," according to the legend.

In a later edition of the *Classic of Mountains and Rivers*, Xiwangmu was said to live in Yushan Mountain to the east of the Congling range. This introduction symbolized the shifting of the main route, linking the West with China, from the north of the Tianshan range to its south, following growing trade activities along this route.

In fact, Xiwangmu referred to a matriarchal tribe, which then lived in China's western border area and whose totem consisted of tigers and leopards. Here, Xi stood for the Scythia nationality or a large tribe inhabiting western China. In the ancient Chinese literature *Erya (Literary Expositor)*, Xiwangmu was used to represent the "remote West," where lived an Iranian-speaking nation called "Se" by Chinese and "Saka" by Persians. These Se people, who were said to have originated in the Qilian Mountains of Gansu, had gradually moved westward, thereby losing any real connection with the original legend of Xiwangmu. Since then, Xiwangmu had become a general term connected with "running sand" and "thin water," representing the western nation living at the place "near the sunset."

During the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), after trade relations had begun between China and the Roman Empire, the Chinese came to know that "running sand" (desert) and "thin water" also existed in the land of Africa beyond the Red Sea, which was, then, the western territory of the Roman Empire. In the words of the book *Hou Han Shu (History of the Eastern Han Dynasty)*, the place was "very near to the home of Xiwangmu and almost where the sun sets down." According to the Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 B.C.), the "thin water" (where even a feather could not float) was obviously a stream of petroleum, flowing from Egypt into Ethiopia. "Running sand" referred to Nubian Desert of Africa. Xiwangmu (Western Queen Mother) could be none other than the ruling Queen Kushi of Meroe, which was the site of the court and graves of at least five ruling queens from Queen Bartare (260-250 B.C.) to Queen Amanikhatashan (62-85), besides

Kushi.¹ These female rulers thus became the “Western Queen Mother” described in the ancient Chinese books, which, originating from fascinating historic legends, later became figurative symbols of China’s expanding geographic contact with, and her widening knowledge about the Western world.

Xiwangmu was first used to refer to the Se nationality living in the east of the Congling range. The Se natives were the earliest to introduce the ideals of Babylonian Jardins Suspendus (suspended garden) to the Orient. In the *Book of Huainanzi*, compiled in the early 2nd century B.C., a story told that a person could live forever if he drank the “yellow water” from a well in the garden of the Kunlun Mountains; and if he proceeded from Kunlun Mountains further to the remote “Mountain of Cool Breeze,” he would become immortal. According to the story, if the person continued to climb for a distance twice as far, he would reach the Jardins Suspendus where he should be able to exercise such magic power as ordering rains or winds. Marching still farther would land him in “Heaven” as an “immortal being.” Heaven was where the God lived, which showed that the Chinese Taoist ideology to seek “Ascension to Heaven” had, in part, originated from the Western mythology, and so was the subsequent Taoist ideal of “flying into Heaven with angel’s wings.”

While the legends of Xiwangmu lingered in China until about the 2nd century, a more realistic and geographically sound concept had begun to surface regarding the West. This first happened in the reign of Emperor Wudi (Liu Che 140-87 B.C.) of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 24), when the opening of a westward corridor (called Hexi Corridor) along the west bank of the Yellow River gave rise to a new title for the vast territory, extending from the Qilian Mountains in the east to the Congling range in the west. The name Xiyu (Western Regions) was later applied to the entire Western world—stretching from the Congling range to the extensive area of Central, South and West Asia, Europe and Africa—following the expansion of diplomatic ties

¹ F. Hintze, *Studien zur meroitischen chronologie und zu den Opfertafeln aus den Pyramiden von Meroe*, Berlin, 1959, 24.