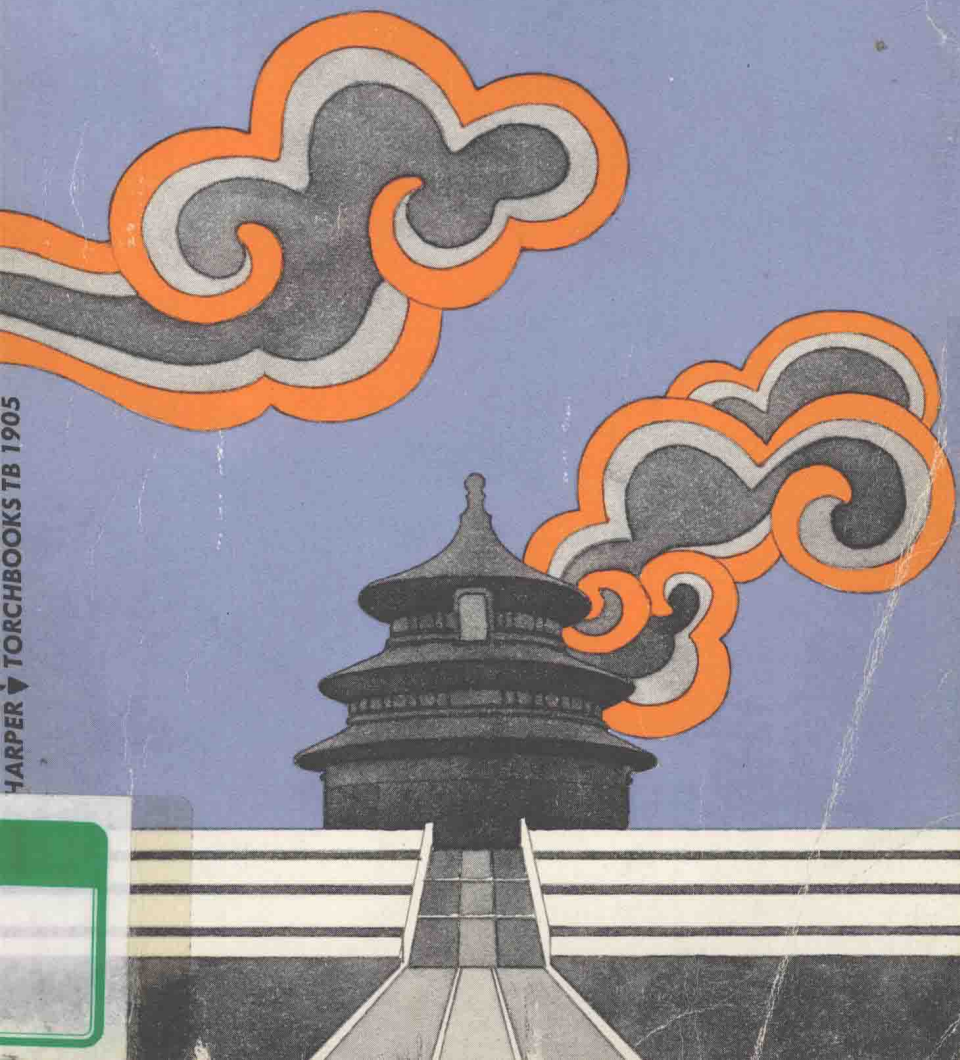


The Religion of the Chinese People

MARCEL GRANET



HARPER ▼ TORCHBOOKS TB 1905

Marcel Granet

The Religion of the Chinese People

*Translated, edited
and with an Introduction by*
MAURICE FREEDMAN



HARPER TORCHBOOKS
Harper & Row, Publishers
New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London

This work was first published in French in 1922 by Presses Universitaires de France under the title *La Religion des Chinois*. It is translated by arrangement.

This book was originally published in Great Britain in 1975 by Basil Blackwell & Mott Ltd. It is here reprinted by arrangement. A hardcover edition is published by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

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First HARPER TORCHBOOK edition published 1977

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER: 74-33106

ISBN: 0-06-131905-9 (PAPERBACK)

ISBN: 0-06-136172-0 (HARDCOVER)

77 78 79 80 81 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The Religion of the Chinese People

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*This English version of her husband's book
La religion des Chinois
is, by permission, dedicated to Mme Marie Granet,
member of the Resistance
to the German Occupation of France,
and its historian*

Editorial Preface

The Introductory Essay explains why I have translated this book. My decision to undertake the translation was made as a result of a few weeks' work in Paris towards the end of 1972 when I was collecting material upon Granet in connexion with a study of the Western perception of Chinese religion. I have to thank the Social Science Research Council (London) for the grant that made it possible for me to work in Paris.

The translation is dedicated to Mme Marie Granet, who stands at the head of the list of people to whom I acknowledge my indebtedness. She gave me the run of her husband's library (still very much as it was when he died), supplied me with copies of printed and unprinted documents, spoke to me about her husband and his work, and introduced me to many of his pupils. No admirer of Marcel Granet could have been more handsomely rewarded. With Mme Granet's name I must link that of her son, Dr. Jacques Granet.

The other people to whom I should like to express my gratitude for help are: Dr. Hugh Baker, Mme Suzanne Bidault, M. Paul Demiéville, M. Georges Dumézil, M. Jacques Havet, Dr. David Hawkes, M. Clemens Heller, Mrs. S. C. Humphreys, M. Max Kaltenmark, M. Victor Karady, M. André Leroi-Gourhan, M. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Professor Piet van der Loon, Dr. Steven Lukes, M. Jean-Pierre Peter, M. Rolf-Alfred Stein, Mlle Alberte Tang, Mme Nicole Vandier-Nicolas, and Mme Françoise Wang. My wife shared my work in Paris and by her constant help with the translation saved me from many errors; those that remain are my own.

In translating Granet I have tried to keep close to his style, wherever possible retaining his punctuation and use of capitals and italics. In the Introductory Essay and Editorial Notes I have translated passages from the French where I thought it would be particularly useful to do so. The Editorial Notes are meant to serve several purposes—among them

to link up points in the text with the general body of Granet's work, to show some of the sources of his ideas, and to comment upon a few problems of translation. The date of publication is given every time one of Granet's works is cited in order to help the reader bear in mind the chronology of his writings. For convenience, page references to works reprinted in *Etudes sociologiques sur la Chine* are given to that book.

M. F.

All Souls College, Oxford
March 1974

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Introductory Essay

Marcel Granet, 1884–1940

Sociologist

Nobody familiar with French thought between the Wars is likely to be surprised to see a book by Marcel Granet in a series devoted to sociology, but it might at first sight seem odd that a work entitled *The Religion of the Chinese People* should appear as a contribution to 'interpretative sociology'. It looks more like sinology or ethnography. As a matter of fact, even if it had been merely either of those things, it would have been worth translating, for it is to my mind the best single brief work on its subject. Yet its significance goes deeper. It is an important document in the annals of Durkheimian sociology. And it was written by a genius.

Granet composed the book in six weeks in 1922. He had been back in France from his war service barely three years. His wife was for the moment teaching in a lycée in Tonnerre (Yonne) to which he travelled frequently from Paris to see her and their infant son. When Maurice Solovine invited him to write a short book for the series 'Science et Civilisation', he seized the opportunity to make profitable use of his life as a commuter separated from his books and papers. It appears that he wrote *La religion des Chinois* in the train and during moments of his intermittent domesticity in Tonnerre.¹ The book has several features that distinguish it from all the other works he wrote. First, it lacks a scholarly apparatus—which I have tried to supply in the Editorial Notes, not as a sort of long-distance criticism, but mainly in order to connect up this odd-man-out among his books with the richly documented scholarship that had gone before it and was yet to come.

¹ I shall cite written evidence on Granet's life whenever I can. Many of the statements I shall make, however, are based upon my conversations with his pupils and associates, and above all, with his widow, Mme Marie Granet, in Paris in November 1972. Some of my remarks are, of course, speculative, but I think that the manner in which I have expressed them shows that I do not offer them as incontrovertible assertions of fact

Although because of the nature of the series to which it was a contribution the book was deprived of references and a critique of the sources upon which it was based, Granet certainly looked upon it as a major component of his *œuvre*, and was later constantly to cite it in the notes to his more technical writings. Second, and more important, the book is the only study that Granet ever wrote which attempted to take in the whole sweep of Chinese history and the full range of its religious developments. Yet a third unique feature of the book may also stem from the peculiar circumstances of its composition: in none of his other writings does Granet make more than passing and anecdotal use of his experiences in China; it may well be that the special conditions in which he wrote *La religion des Chinois* relaxed the constraint he imposed upon himself to abide by the textual sociology which he took as his vocation.

It must surely occur to an anthropologist to wonder why Granet made so little use of his observations of Chinese life. Present-day sinologists, for their part, are more concerned with the fact that none of the work he lived to publish, other than *La religion des Chinois* (which in any case non-French sinologues tend to overlook), deals except in a casual way with the imperial China that followed the Han dynasty. Prehistoric, 'feudal', and early imperial China appear to have engrossed his energies. And that chronological restriction, now out of tune with sinological interests (but in accord with the sinological preferences evident earlier in the century), has earned him some neglect by students of China. But in fact, as this book demonstrates, Granet had taken the measure of Chinese history as a whole, and often set himself down to lecture in Paris upon the history of Chinese civilization to the present—although, as one of his pupils put it to me, by the time the end of the academic year had arrived he had reached only the T'ang dynasty, and had got so far only by galloping the last stretch of the course. In his last days he was actively working upon a book that was to have illustrated Chinese conceptions of majesty with data drawn from the history of the eighth and ninth centuries: *Le Roi boit. La Reine rit. Notes sur le folklore ancien de la Chine*. Yet in fact the work had been planned no later than 1929, as we can tell from the reference made to it (p. 234, fn. 1) in *La civilisation chinoise*, 1929. We know enough about *Le Roi boit* from Professor Stein's account of it to realize that if Granet had lived to bring it to its published form it would have marked, for his writings, a leap forward in time. Underlining the unity of Granet's work, Stein says that *Le Roi boit* was to have crowned it: 'Peu d'œuvres ont été élaborées avec autant d'esprit de suite que celle de Granet. Arrivé à la sinologie au moment où il était déjà formé à la sociologie, il a, dès le début, envisagé une grande enquête sur la constitution de la société et notamment de la famille chinoise. Avancé pas à pas, il a

procédé systématiquement à l'édification de ce monument. *Le Roi boit* devait la couronner'.² But one might observe that, dying suddenly at the age of fifty-six, Granet is unlikely to have thought of that book as the culmination of his life's work. Had he lived, he might well have taken further strides towards the present, and in so doing have filled in some of the outlines sketched in *La religion des Chinois* with the passionately intense scholarship of his technical writings.

In France, Granet's work has by no means been forgotten. After the War his most important papers were collected in *Etudes sociologiques sur la Chine*,³ 1953; as we have seen, his distinguished pupil Stein published an account of *Le Roi boit*; his two complementary essays in *haute vulgarisation*, *La civilisation chinoise*, 1929, and *La pensée chinoise*, 1934, were reprinted; and *La religion des Chinois* was itself reprinted in 1951. The Norwegians brought out his Oslo lectures, *La féodalité chinoise*, in 1952. His pupils, by no means all of them professional sinologists, have kept his memory green—although, partly no doubt because of the nature of his teaching and his apparent failure to explain to his sinological audiences the precise character of his sociological premises and reasoning, he has had no true successors in his combination of the roles of sinologue and sociologist. French sinology is now less sociological than when he lived, French sociology only half-aware of the significance of his labours.

In the English-speaking world, Granet's reputation was first generally established by the translation of *La civilisation chinoise* (1929) in 1930 and of *Fêtes et chansons* (1919) in 1932.⁴ The present translation apart, the only other of Granet's works to appear in English is his essay 'La droite et la gauche en Chine'.⁵ The Edwards translation of *Fêtes et chansons* (*Festivals and Songs of Ancient China*) naturally commanded attention because of Granet's striking contribution to the interpretation of the *Shih Ching*, 'The Book of Odes'; but the impact made by the English version of *La civilisation chinoise* (*Chinese Civilisation*) would doubtless have been greatly enhanced if it had later on been matched by a translation of *La pensée chinoise*, 1934, its major partner, in which Granet's analytical and expository powers are dazzlingly displayed.

² R. A. Stein, 'Présentation de l'œuvre posthume de Marcel Granet: "Le Roi boit"', *Année Sociologique*, third series, 1952, published 1955, p. 9.

³ Details of Granet's works will be found in Part I of the Bibliography at the end of this book.

⁴ There appears to have been another English translation of this book circulating in Paris but I have not seen it.

⁵ It is about to be published as I write this Introduction: Rodney Needham, trans., 'Right and Left in China', in Needham, ed., *Right and Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1973.

(It would, however, offer a daunting challenge to a would-be translator.) Some glimpses of that work have since 1963 been afforded to the English reader in C. Wright Mills's essay 'The Language and Ideas of Ancient China: Marcel Granet's Contribution to the Sociology of Knowledge',⁶ but that essay is perhaps more remarkable for the date at which it was composed (1940) and for its assault on American sociological provincialism (as seen by Mills) than for its exposition of Granet's achievement. It follows that readers who must rely upon Granet in English have only an inadequate sample before them. I hope that *The Religion of the Chinese People* will by its conciseness and amplitude be able to exemplify and recapitulate the whole range of Granet's work.⁷ That hope may be thought to be misplaced, given that the book falls in the first half of Granet's career as a writer. But I may echo what Stein has justly said about the unity and continuity of that scholarly vocation. The book now translated into English recurs to all the major themes in the work published from 1912, and, more suprisingly, foreshadows nearly all those to come. Granet's *œuvre*, of which *La religion des Chinois* was for him an important element, is in effect a series of overlapping discussions of a group of central problems in Chinese social organization and thought. The treatment of a theme sometimes changes as time goes on; a 'fact' in an earlier work is dropped; new data are fed into the models; the image of the development of Chinese society grows more complex as study follows study. But as one reads the books and papers in the order in which they were written, one is overwhelmed by the impression that one is the witness of a gradual unfolding over a range of nearly thirty years of a plan designed in great detail at the beginning of the man's career. I shall show presently that the plan was formulated very early on, and certainly before Granet set foot in China.

Students of China apart, scholars in the English-speaking world are not generally alert to the significance of Granet's work⁸ except in so

⁶ In Mills's *Power, Politics and People, the Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills*, ed. Irving Louis Horowitz, Oxford University Press, London, Oxford, New York, 1963.

⁷ In Part I of the Bibliography at the end of this book mention is made of translations of Granet's work into languages other than English. The latest is an excellent Italian version of *La religion des Chinois: La religione dei cinesi*, ed. Bianca Candian, Adelphi, Milan, 1973. The appearance at about the same time of two translations of this book (never before translated, as far as I can discover) suggests a heightened international interest in Granet, which, I suspect, is likely further to increase.

⁸ An important exception is Mrs. S. C. Humphreys, the ancient historian. See her 'The Work of Louis Gernet', *History and Theory, Studies in the Philosophy of History*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1971. That paper, by its account of Gernet, the classical scholar and a fellow-Durkheimian of Granet, is a major contribution to our understanding of the ramifications of Durkheimianism into the periphery

far as anthropology has drawn upon it in its studies of kinship—and in doing so has unwittingly underlined the way in which Granet's concentration upon sinological questions was, as I shall say more fully later, a method of discussing humanity at large. It is indeed ironical that the English-reading sociological public will have learned more about Granet from the translation of Lévi-Strauss's *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté* than from any other source, for that is a work which, for all the homage it pays to Granet's inspiration and the care it gives to expounding the development of his ideas about kinship and marriage in China, does not, in my view, sufficiently appreciate the broad base of Granet's sociological learning and the generality of his aims.⁹

of the sociological world. Mrs. Humphreys's remarks on Granet are very much to the point, and I should like to record my indebtedness both to the paper and to its author for inspiration and help. The parallelism between Gernet's work on Greece and Granet's on China, to which Mrs. Humphreys draws our attention, could be made even more dramatic by a systematic confrontation of passages from their work, when we should see how deep the Durkheimianism bit. Let me illustrate by a few quotations from Louis Gernet and André Boulanger, *Le génie grec dans la religion*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1970 (first published 1932, La Renaissance du Livre, Paris) which, with little modification, could be slotted into Granet's writings on China. 'Une bonne part de la religion officielle de la cité est héritée de cultes agraires. C'est un fonds primitif qui se reconnaît là (p. 36). . . . Chœurs de garçons et chœurs de filles, dans la religion populaire, sont plus qu'un souvenir de coutumes matrimoniales; on les voit affrontés dans un dessin élémentaire que reproduit encore, à une époque tardive, une danse mimée où les troupes se répondent: "Où sont mes roses, et les violettes, où ma belle ache?—Voici les roses, et les violettes, et la belle ache." Les joutes avec fruits paraissent attestées . . . (p. 42) . . . Riches de sentiment, et d'une gravité qui, dans les foules proches de la terre, n'exclut pas plus les bouffonneries et la licence qu'une grâce rude, les fêtes paysannes ont été un milieu de vie religieuse . . . La nature participe de la vie des hommes . . . La nature est de la fête, elle favorise les échanges des hommes et leur dépense allègre. Expressions isolées et fugitives d'un vieux fonds d'idées et de sentiments: le commerce est magnifié où sont engagés, par les réunions saisonnières, les individus, les groupes, les sexes, les générations successives. Une pensée globale inspire les gestes et les symboles (pp. 41-44) . . . Il n'y a pas à insister sur l'importance des lieux sacrés qui sont fréquemment les montagnes, les fleuves, les sources, les bois, etc. Il y a lieu de penser qu'ils doivent leur qualification à des usages paysans (p. 47) . . . dans un fonds de religion populaire singulièrement persistant, l'idée de Terre-Mère est restée l'élément principal (p. 55).'⁹ One could go on.

⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, trans. James Harle Bell and John Richard von Sturmer, ed. Rodney Needham, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1969, chaps. 19-22. And cf. E. R. Leach, *Rethinking Anthropology*, London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology no. 22, Athlone Press, London, 1961, pp. 73ff.; and see note 67 in the Editorial Notes to the translation below.

In a less dramatic and effective fashion Granet has passed into the consciousness of English-speaking anthropology through Radcliffe-Brown, who, it is clear, often referred to him in his teaching in Chicago and Oxford, but failed to inscribe him adequately in his writings. In a public lecture he gave in London in 1951 (and at which I probably heard Granet's name pronounced for the first time in my life) Radcliffe-Brown offered what I take to be an exposition of Granet's ideas on ancient Chinese kinship and its connexions with basic notions of universal order, although the brief account is not entirely accurate.¹⁰ It is possible that, had the Japanese war against China not taken place, the investigation that Radcliffe-Brown planned for a Chinese anthropologist would have made an important ethnographic extension of Granet's work.¹¹ As matters stand, then, Granet may well appear to anthropologists (in both the French- and English-speaking worlds) as a kinship theorist *malgré lui* and who yet stands away from any China that the profession interests itself in. It is necessary to trace the origins of the perplexing situation in which Granet can be described by sinologists as a sociologist and by sociologists as a sinologist, with justice on both sides.

He was born in 1884. After a highly successful career at school (at the Lycée d'Aix-en-Provence and at Louis-Le-Grand in Paris) he entered the Ecole Normale supérieure in 1904 as an historian. He followed a conventional course of study, embracing philosophy and law as well as history, but to these established subjects he added sociology. It will be recalled that Durkheim had begun teaching in Paris in 1902; in 1904-5, Granet's first year there, Durkheim delivered his first course at the Ecole Normale, on education. It was intended for all

¹⁰ 'The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology', the Huxley Memorial Lecture for 1951, reprinted in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, ed. M. N. Srinivas, *Method in Social Anthropology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958, pp. 124f. Radcliffe-Brown's use of the word 'clans' to refer to the units between which brides were exchanged does violence to Granet's conceptions—perhaps in the interests of brevity.

¹¹ *Op cit.*, p. 124: 'The evidence is that the system of marriage was one where a man married his mother's brother's daughter, or a woman of the appropriate generation of his mother's clan. According to my information this kind of organization, which apparently existed forty centuries ago in that region [the Yellow River], still survived there in 1935, but the investigation of it that I had planned to be carried out by Li Yu I was unfortunately prevented by the Japanese attack on China.' On Radcliffe-Brown in China, see my 'Sociology in and of China', *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 13, no. 2, June 1962, pp. 107f., and 'A Chinese Phase in Social Anthropology', *id.*, vol. 14, no. 1, March 1963, p. 12. I recall from my last conversation with Radcliffe-Brown, a few months before he died in 1955, that the Chinese problem sketched in his Huxley Memorial Lecture was still lively in his mind.

students at the University of Paris hoping to be *agrégés* in the faculties of sciences and letters.¹² Granet became a Durkheimian before he ever dreamt of China. He was *agrégé* in history in the competition of 1907,¹³ and in August of that year was appointed to teach history in the Lycée at Bastia.¹⁴ But he was to return to Paris after one academic

¹² For information on Durkheim I have relied heavily (as everyone must now do, and gratefully) upon Steven Lukes, *Émile Durkheim, His Life and Work, A Historical and Critical Study*, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London, 1973. For the facts now being invoked, see especially pp. 379, 619.

¹³ For details see chap. V. Langlois, 'Agrégation d'Histoire et de Géographie, concours de 1907', *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 16, pt. 2, no. 9, 15 Nov. 1907.

¹⁴ I have checked the details of Granet's career in his personal file in the Archives Nationales in Paris. The only published account of his life in French, as far as I can discover, is in Edouard Mestre, 'Marcel Granet (1884-1940)', *Annuaire 1940-1941 et 1941-1942. Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des Sciences religieuses*, Imprimerie Administrative, Melun, 1941. Dying under the German tyranny, Granet was deprived of the usual crop of obituaries, but doubtless various sinological jealousies had something to do with the silence—at least, that is a view held by some in France. After the War a brief obituary was published in the *Année Sociologique*, 3rd series, 1940-48, vol. 1, and two appreciations of his work, the Preface by Louis Gernet and the Introduction by R.-A. Stein, in Granet's collected papers, *Etudes sociologiques sur la Chine*, 1953. On 5 December 1955 a set of memorial addresses was given in Paris (I have copies of those by Mme N. Vandier-Nicolas and Henri Lévy-Bruhl, which I have read with profit) but they have not appeared in print. Hitherto, the only comprehensive account in English has been Marion J. Levy, Jr.'s 'Granet, Marcel', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 6, ed. David L. Sills, Macmillan and Free Press, Chicago, 1968, but it is chiefly an appreciation of Granet's work and is weak biographically. The fullest survey of Granet's intellectual career is in fact Yang K'un's 'An Introduction to Granet's Researches', in Chinese, *Peking University School of French Studies, Social Science Quarterly*, Peking, 1943; it has been of very great service to me in my work on Granet, and I have to thank Dr. Hugh Baker for help with it. And see Yang K'un, 'Marcel Granet: An Appreciation', *The Yenching Journal of Social Studies*, Peking, vol. 1, no. 2, Jan. 1939. The same issue of that journal contains Witold Jablonski, 'Marcel Granet and his Work'. Yang K'un and Jablonski are important witnesses to Granet's teaching. On the latter see P. Demiéville, 'W.-A. Jablonski (1901-1957)', *T'oung Pao*, vol. 45, nos. 4-5, 1957. Yang was much closer to his master in combining sinological and ethnological interests, but I do not yet know much about him beyond the two papers cited above. A list of 9 of his papers in Chinese, dating from 1932 to 1943, appears at pp. 519f. of Ping-yuen Yu, *Chinese History, Index to Learned Articles, Volume II. Based on Collections in American and European Libraries*, Harvard-Yenching Library Bibliographical Series I, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1970. One of the articles listed there is a further piece on Granet (1942), but I have not yet seen it. And cf. Yang K'un, 'An Introduction . . .', pp. 23f. G. William Skinner, ed., *Modern Chinese Society, An Analytical Bibliography*, 1. *Publications in Western*

year, being admitted to the Fondation Thiers in 1908. Having been a member of one elite establishment, the Ecole Normale, he now entered another. In the following year he was joined there by Marc Bloch and Georges Davy.

When exactly he conceived the idea of turning himself into a student of China I cannot discover; but the general circumstances are known, and it is likely that the event they surround took place at the very beginning of his career at the Fondation Thiers. As a student there he started out with an interest in feudalism; it is said that he planned to write a study of the notion of honour in the feudal period. The story goes that Lucien Herr, the Librarian of the Ecole Normale (a man who as a scholar and a socialist exerted enormous influence upon generations of *normaliens*),¹⁵ advised him, when he thought of widening his researches to take in the Japanese case, to seek the advice of Chavannes, then apparently the nearest he could get in Paris to an expert on Japan. Chavannes counselled him to begin with Chinese as the necessary first step towards Japanese studies, but (as one version of the oral tradition has it) warned him that he would probably get entangled in Chinese, never to reach Japanese. If that part of the story is true, then Chavannes saw justly that means would become end. Perhaps, too, by the power he exercised over his new pupil, he in effect willed that conversion, for although Granet eventually registered to learn Chinese at the Ecole des Langues orientales vivantes,¹⁶ he was in fact supervised by Chavannes.¹⁷

During his three years as *pensionnaire* pursuing his researches at the Fondation Thiers we are able to watch the evolution of his interests. In the first Director's report on his work, Granet is shown as a student of European feudal institutions moving towards the study of the Far East. In the third and last such report, Granet stands fully committed to China.

1909: 'M. Granet has undertaken to study as historian and jurist the law of persons in feudal society. He has devoted this first year to the study of texts on French feudalism . . . At the same time, working under

Languages 1644-1972, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1973, p. 418, gives Yang's year of birth as 1901 and lists his doctoral dissertation, 1934, at the Université de Lyon, on the ancestor cult in its relation to ritual succession and inheritance.

¹⁵ Cf. Charles Andler, *Vie de Lucien Herr (1864-1926)*, Rieder, Paris, 1932.

¹⁶ Where the language was taught by Arnold Vissière.

¹⁷ Jablonski, *op. cit.*, p. 242, asserts: 'To Durkheim Granet is indebted for his interest in feudal China . . .' But in its context the statement is ambiguous, for it may mean either that Granet was led by Durkheimianism to the study of feudal China or that Durkheim himself steered him in that direction. If the latter, then I think the evidence, such as it is, is contrary. But I suspect that Jablonski intended the former meaning. Had Durkheim recommended Granet to study an exotic society, it would have been more likely to be Japan

M. Chavannes's direction and at the Ecole des langues orientales, he is preparing himself to tackle texts dealing with the Far East. He sees that from now on his task will be to show the feudal lord at home and at his suzerain's court, in the latter setting merged in a group of peers, in the former, head of a group of vassals. A double set of social obligations flows from this partly double life; and when these obligations conflict, the sentiment of honour then intervenes, in order to cut through the difficulties. That is the theme for which M. Granet will seek illustrations, first in ethnographic sources, then in the literature on the Far East.¹⁸

In his second year, 1910, Granet has reached the Chinese family (i.e. kinship) as a problem: 'He is seeking his field of observation not only in France but in Japan and China . . . He is slowly unravelling how and to what extent the feudal group has taken the place of the family; in what way the form of the family in a given civilization explains the form taken by feudalism within it; finally, what conflicts of obligation spring from the co-existence of two institutions both aiming at the same end: mutual protection.—From that collection of inquiries M. Granet has separated off a part which is more complete than the rest in order to make it the subject of a special study: that which deals with the organization of the Chinese family.'¹⁹

1911: 'M. Granet, setting out with the idea of studying the law of persons in feudal society, and realizing the need to extend his observations to Japan and China, has more and more circumscribed his subject, as was fitting, and, finally, intends to present a study of the Chinese family. In this connexion he has found special texts in many collections containing the formulae of rites which have remained the basis of Chinese society. Such rituals offer the interest that they inform us on the religious aspect of phenomena, which aspect constitutes its inmost nature. By means of these rituals M. Granet is studying the Chinese family chiefly through mourning regulations; for the dead of a family are at least as real and important members of it as the living; and the fact of being bound by such observances on the occasion of the death of such persons is precisely what indicates kinship and its degree. The family is a mystical consubstantiality of the dead and the living. The essential elements of its constitution are linked to that principle. Kinsmen are people who participate in the same sacra. The pivot of the family is the senior branch, heir to the cult; people are kin to the extent that they are close to one another in the cult ceremonies, etc. Two particularly important texts, one dealing with mourning and

¹⁸ *Annuaire de la Fondation Thiers* 1910, n.s., Imprimerie Galignat, Issoudun, 1910, p. 14.

¹⁹ *Annuaire de la Fondation Thiers* 1911, n.s. Imprimerie Galignat, Issoudun, 1911, pp. 9f.